

# ONTEORA

Budget 2021

## Budget Highlights

- ✓ Proposes a levy amount that meets the allowable NYS Tax Levy Limit;
- ✓ Continues all pre-pandemic programs for students;
- ✓ Increases summer school funding;
- ✓ Increases afterschool academic support;
- ✓ Allocates additional funds for mental health support;
- ✓ Increases High School Science instruction;
- ✓ Provides Social Studies curriculum alignment for Kindergarten-Grade 6;
- ✓ Expands active learning space initiative;
- ✓ Funds transportation and equipment, including the possible purchase of vehicles with non-combustion engines;
- ✓ Invests in maintaining facilities through strategic capital work; and
- ✓ Proposes the creation of a new Capital Reserve to be funded over 10 years, when funds are available, in an amount not to exceed \$10 million.

## Proposed 2021-2022 School Budget Meets Tax Levy Limit

### Supports Educational Programs & Capital Improvements, Addresses Pandemic-Related Needs

THE ONTEORA BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS ADOPTED A \$58,786,143 PROPOSED BUDGET for the 2021-2022 school year that continues all existing pre-pandemic student programs while funding supports to address the academic and mental health challenges that have manifested during the pandemic. The budget also supports a strategic approach to maintaining aging facilities.

The proposed budget increases the tax levy by 1.71 percent, which meets the criteria of the New York State Tax Levy Limit (tax cap) formula for a simple-majority voter approval. This is the tenth year in a row that Onteora has presented a budget at or below the allowable tax levy limit. An increase in State Aid helped reduce the reliance on Fund Balance to \$2,025,000.

There is also a separate proposition that would authorize the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund (which does not increase the budget). The Reserve would be used to address infrastructure needs identified by the District's mandated five-year Building Condition Survey, which is being conducted in collaboration with the District's architects.

Most of the proposed budget (83.41 percent) supports programs that directly benefit students. Capital costs account for 9.0 percent of the budget, and administrative costs for 7.59 percent. The budget proposal will be presented to voters on Tuesday, May 18, from 2-9 PM at Bennett, Phoenicia, and Woodstock Elementary Schools.

### Increases Mental Health Supports

The impact of the pandemic on student mental health has become a great concern. An additional school psychologist would be hired, and the District would continue to offer parent workshops aimed at helping caregivers support their children academically, emotionally, and physically. The workshops, led by the Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility, offer parents and guardians opportunities to connect, share, and explore personal and family coping skills.

### Supports Academic Achievement

The proposed budget increases funding for the District's successful Summer Academic Intervention Support Program, which serves children in Kindergarten through Grade 6. The impact of the pandemic has created a greater need for summer academic support to help some students meet their requirements. The 20-day program, which is coordinated through the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, focuses on improving reading, writing, and math skills. Classes are small to ensure that targeted instruction meets individual student learning needs. The program will run from Monday, July 12, through Friday, August 6. This program is open to students whose teachers believe they would benefit from receiving an academic "booster shot" during the summer, before the next school year begins.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Grade 1 student Silas Sieber (left) and Grade 3 student Athealia Louallen proudly wear crowns on Royalty Day during Spirit Week.  
**SEE MORE ON PAGE 3**

## PLEASE VOTE

The Annual Budget Vote and Election of Trustees will take place on Tuesday, May 18, from 2 PM-9 PM. Qualified voters may vote at ANY of the three Elementary Schools (Bennett, Phoenicia, or Woodstock). There is no longer a polling place in West Hurley.

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To Postal Customer



# Onteora Welcomes Interim Superintendent

THE ONTEORA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION appointed Marystephanie Corsones as interim superintendent of schools at its April 6 Board meeting. Corsones is no stranger to Onteora, having served as the District’s interim assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction from October 2015 through June 2018.

Although Corsones’ appointment as interim superintendent officially begins on May 10, she came on board in an administrator capacity on April 15, to allow as much time for the leadership transition as possible. She is expected to fill the temporary interim appointment through the end of the 2021-2022 school year. This timeline will allow the Board ample time to conduct a thorough, collaborative search for a permanent superintendent.

Speaking about the Board’s decision, Onteora Board President Laurie Osmond said, “The Board is very happy to welcome Marystephanie Corsones back to Onteora as interim superintendent. Ms. Corsones’ impressive background and broad professional hands-on experience as an educator and an administrator, combined with her deep understanding of Onteora, will ensure that the District is in good, steady hands as we prepare for the opening of schools in September, and beyond. We know that she will put the needs of students first, and will work collaboratively with our staff in doing so.”

Corsones is thrilled to be returning to Onteora. “I am both pleased and honored to have been chosen to return to the Onteora School District as interim superintendent,” she said. “In my previous role as Onteora’s interim assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, I was impressed by the exceptional professionalism and dedication of Onteora’s faculty, staff, and administrators in meeting the needs of all of our students.”

Corsones adds that she cares deeply about the students at Onteora, and looks forward to working collaboratively with the entire school community. “I feel certain that with the ongoing, focused cooperation of all District stakeholders, Onteora’s students will continue to thrive and excel in these challenging times,” she said.

Corsones, a resident of Kingston, is currently the CEO of Collaborative Solutions for Educational Innovation, an educational consulting firm. Prior to rejoining Onteora, she was also a project administrator, coordinator, and trainer for Orange-Ulster BOCES, the Executive Leadership Institute, and the New York State Department of Education.

Previously, from April 2001 through June 2014, she was assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction, and assessment for the Kingston City School District, where she served in various roles over the years, including teacher, curriculum director, and principal. She also taught for a Vermont school district, and has extensive experience working in the Federal government as well as the private sector.

Corsones received her B.S. in Education from the University of Vermont, her M.S. in Education from the State University of New York at New Paltz, and an M.B.A. in Finance and Accounting from the University of Washington. She also holds a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration from the State University of New York at New Paltz.

Corsones is replacing Superintendent Victoria McLaren, who accepted a position with a neighboring school district.



## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

**Dear Onteora Community,**  
We hope that you are all well and safe and working your way through this long, difficult time. We know how important being connected is to our students, our staff, and our community, and are hoping for better days ahead very soon.

As the school year nears its end, we want to thank everyone in the Onteora schools for giving their all for the sake of the students, and really going above and beyond to provide as much semblance of normalcy throughout this pandemic as possible. Whether providing academic learning; arts and physical education; mental health support; healthy meals; clean, sanitary buildings; or heartfelt encouragement, you have all shone.

Innovating and being flexible for students learning remotely, in hybrid form, and in-person has required a lot of constant pivoting, and your dedication to our students in doing so has been profound to see.

The ability of the District to flex in this new paradigm has allowed us to continue to retain our employees. These staff members are your neighbors. Throughout this pandemic, they have shown over and over again that they are committed to this community and are consistently generous with their time and donations. As the community supports the school, the school in turn supports the community. We are all in this together, and our partnership is a vital relationship.

As more of our population gets vaccinated against COVID-19, we look forward to emerging from the end of this long and often dark tunnel. Our administrators are working closely with local and State officials to plan a meaningful, mindful, and safe return to school for all in September.

School may look different In September than it has in the past, but the level of caring for our students will be higher than ever. We know that this prolonged isolation has been incredibly difficult for children, and they will need higher levels of social and emotional support than ever before, in addition to increased academic support.

As things unfold, we may also discover new and better ways of doing things, rising from the dust of this weary road we’ve been traveling together.

All of us at Onteora continue to be overwhelmingly impressed by and proud of our students and their families for their efforts to participate in learning while dealing with all the challenges that this whole pandemic year has presented. We also appreciate and acknowledge your honesty when things have not been going well. We know that it is not easy, and we appreciate that everyone is simply doing their best.

We also want to offer special congratulations and appreciation to our graduating seniors. This past year is not what you had imagined for yourselves, and we admire your ability to be resilient and make the best of this unprecedented situation. We are looking forward to celebrating your achievements and are all really proud of the Class of 2021.

Wishing you all the very best,  
**Laurie Osmond, Board President**

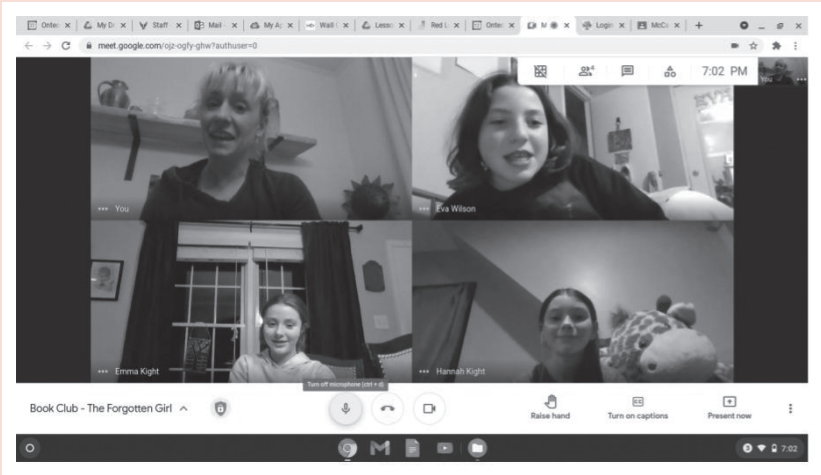
## BENNETT CLUB NURTURES LOVE OF READING

A book club for Grade 5 students is up and running at Bennett Elementary School, despite the ongoing pandemic.

The club, which began meeting evenings via Google Meet shortly before the winter break, was founded by Reading Specialist Julie McCarthy. The group started out with five members, who agreed to read *Because of Winn-Dixie* (by Kate DiCamillo) upon Mrs. McCarthy’s recommendation. Since then, interest in the club has been growing.

Club member Emma Kight recommended the group’s second selection, *The Forgotten Girl*, by India Hill Brown. Emma, who describes the book as a ghost story, says that she likes reading scary books and adventure stories. She also enjoys the social aspect of the hour-long meetings. “I get to hang out with some of my friends and talk about books!” she said.

Mrs. McCarthy is impressed with the students’ willingness to meet with her in the evening, on their own time. “They want to talk about books nonstop for an hour—and many of them meet the club’s next reading goal by the next day! They are so excited, and they keep asking what the next book is going to be!”



Bennett’s Grade 5 book club members meeting via Google Meet.



# PHOENICIA CELEBRATES SPIRIT WEEK!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Phoenixia Elementary School students and staff are a spirited bunch. That much was clear the week of March 22-26, when their school celebrated Spirit Week. “This was a great way to celebrate everyone’s success in a difficult year,” explained Grade 3 teacher Robert Hallock, who teamed up with Kindergarten teacher Melissa Johnson to make the fun-filled week happen with the support of their fellow teachers, staff members, and Principal Elizabeth Fallo. Each day of the week had its own theme, ranging from Comfy Cozy Day to Book Character Day to Ontario Colors Day, and students and staff dressed accordingly.

Mr. Hallock and Mrs. Johnson created morning messages, one for each day of the week. The videotaped messages were filled with playful banter, silly jokes, and game show-style activities like “Classroom Feud.” All students, including remote learners, were able to participate in the games, which could be accessed via Google Classroom.

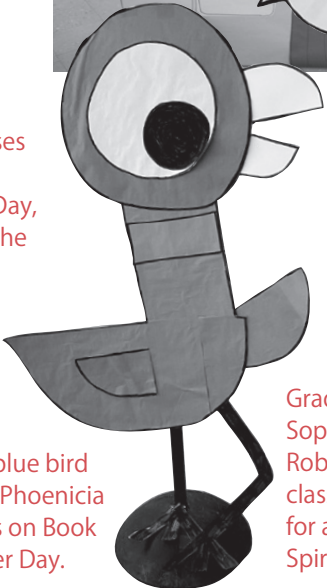
Principal Fallo was thrilled with this special week. “The adventures of Spirit Week brought a wonderful energy and excitement to Phoenixia and to our learners, both remote and in-person!” she said. “After such a challenging year, watching our students and staff come in with a bit more spring in their step brought us a renewed hope for even better things to come!”



A royal couple: Phoenixia Grade 3 teacher Jaclyn Sobolewski poses with one of her students, Stella Jansen, on Royalty Day, which was held during the school's Spirit Week.



Phoenixia teachers and staff members (above) dressed as their favorite book characters during Spirit Week. Below, Principal Elizabeth Fallo guards her palace.



A giant blue bird greeted Phoenixia students on Book Character Day.

Grade 3 student Sophia Kneissl, in Robert Hallock's class, was princess for a day during Spirit Week.



## SHARING THE LOVE AT WOODSTOCK

**EMBRACING THEIR SCHOOL'S MOTTO, “PEACE, LOVE, AND LEARNING,”** Woodstock Elementary School students participated in State Senator Michelle Hinchey's Valentines for Seniors Program, which delivered Valentines to more than 2,000 nursing home residents and staff across the 46th Senate District. In a letter addressed to the school's students, faculty, and staff, Senator Hinchey wrote, “You made some of the most beautiful cards, and we could all see how much thought, time, and effort you put into creating them. As you all know, it's an especially hard time to be in a nursing home away from family, and it's actions like this that remind people they are loved, and we know it made their Valentine's Day that much brighter.”



## Full “STEAM” Ahead at Bennett School

Ordinary copy paper plays a central role in Bennett's “Fun Fridays,” when Grade 6 students have been tackling a number of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) challenges.

“Students have enjoyed rising to the challenges, which have included building a paper bridge that can hold textbooks, creating a paper boat designed to hold as many pennies as possible before sinking, making the longest chain from one piece of paper that can hold its own weight, and engineering and modifying paper airplanes to increase flight distance,” said Grade 6 teacher Kelly Downs.

Fun Fridays are also giving the students a welcome break from computer screens. “They have provided our students with opportunities to use their hands, creativity, and ingenuity, and to work beyond the digital world,” Mr. Downs pointed out.

The Grade 6 teachers chose these particular activities in an effort to make sure that all students, even those learning at home, could participate. “Due to the difficulty of creating a hands-on science program when many kids are learning remotely, we have worked on offering these small challenges, which all kids can attempt,” Mr. Downs said.



Responding to a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) challenge, Bennett Grade 6 student Adam Keary creates a paper chain from a single piece of standard copy paper.





## Proposed 2021-2022 School Budget Meets Tax Levy Limit

Supports Educational Programs & Capital Improvements, Addresses Pandemic-Related Needs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In addition, funds are dedicated to increasing afterschool academic support, as well as continuing support for the District's half-day and full-day Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) programs, which provide a strong foundation for children beginning their educational journeys.

### Supports Curriculum and Graduation Requirements

The proposed budget funds a "teacher on special assignment" at the elementary schools to help them align their curricula with recently issued New York State standards for Social Studies. A part-time Science teacher would also be added, to enable the High School to offer courses based on student need and graduation requirements (this teacher would help cover the required Science classes needed for next year's large incoming freshman class).

### Expands Active Learning Initiative

The Active Learning Initiative, which has begun being implemented at the High School/Middle School (HS/MS), will be expanded so that additional classrooms can be modified at the schools to create active learning spaces. These flexible classroom environments accommodate different learning styles and promote collaboration, exploration, and teamwork. At the MS/HS, this initiative has included the purchase of furniture that allows teachers and students the flexibility to rearrange their classrooms for whole-group instruction, small-group instruction, group projects, Socratic seminars, and individual work as needed (though the ongoing pandemic, with its social distancing requirements, is currently limiting how these spaces are being used). There is a variety of seating and work stations in each of these classrooms. Soft seating is popular with students looking for a comfortable place to complete work.

### Maintains Infrastructure

The proposed budget addresses infrastructure needs. Potential projects include renovating the worn MS/HS cafeteria bathrooms, removing and replacing aged oil tanks at Phoenicia and Bennett, updating sewer and storm drain lines at Woodstock, repointing bricks, repairing cracked asphalt, and replacing selected interior and aluminum exterior doors. See the complete list of this work on page 6.

### Addresses Transportation and Equipment Needs

The proposed budget includes funds to support the purchase of a mower and floor scrubber, as well as the potential purchase of a transportation van and a pickup truck. Environmentally friendly vehicles with non-combustion engines are being considered. With the help of a consultant, the District is investigating whether this would be economically feasible.

### PROPOSITION 2:

#### Establishes a Capital Reserve Fund

Proposition 2 would authorize the establishment of a Capital Reserve to be funded over 10 years in an amount not to exceed \$10 million. A Capital Reserve is multi-year financial savings tool created to pay for large expenses associated with major repairs, renovations, and construction projects.

Establishing a Capital Reserve does not increase the budget. It is funded with money that may become available at the end of the school year after all expenses have been paid.

Voter approval is needed to establish the account, as well as when the time comes to apply the funds to a proposed project. Using funds from the reserve allows a district to lower bond payments or avoid borrowing altogether, thereby saving interest costs.

The District's architects are expected to complete a mandated five-year Building Condition Survey (BCS) later this year. This report takes a comprehensive look at the condition of our facilities and prioritizes recommendations for improvements. The new Capital Reserve would help the District fund any projects that are identified during the BCS process. The Board believes establishing a Capital Reserve at this time is an effective and responsible fiscal management method to reduce the tax impact of caring for our facilities in the future.

### Contingency Budget

If Onteora's proposed budget fails, the District would have the option of resubmitting the same budget, presenting a different budget, or going to a contingent budget. A second budget vote would be held on June 15, 2021, a date established by New York State.

If a budget is defeated a second time, then the District would be required to adopt a contingency budget. Under a contingency budget, the 2021-2022 tax levy would remain at the same level as the 2020-2021 school year. A contingent budget would eliminate all equipment purchases (\$279,500) from the budget. There would also be mandated reductions in the administrative, non-instructional component of the budget. By law, the District would also need to eliminate free community use of facilities.

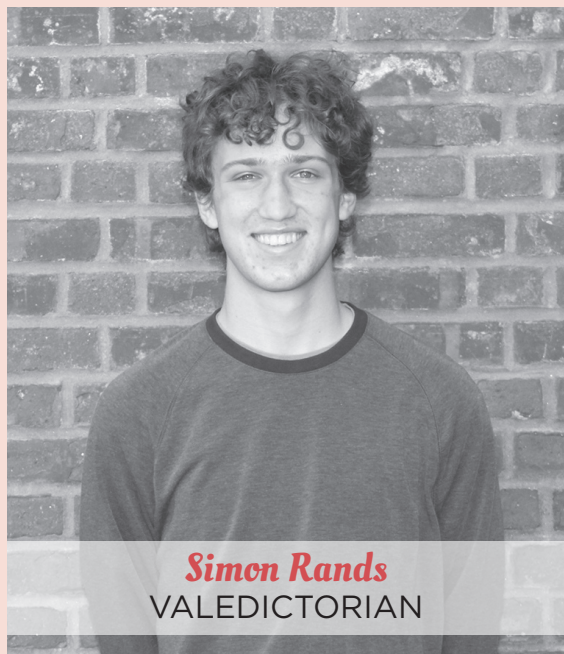
### Please Vote

The community is encouraged to participate in the school budget vote and Board of Education election on Tuesday, May 18, from 2-9 PM. Qualified voters may vote at ANY of the three Elementary Schools (Bennett, Phoenicia, or Woodstock). There is no longer a polling place in West Hurley.

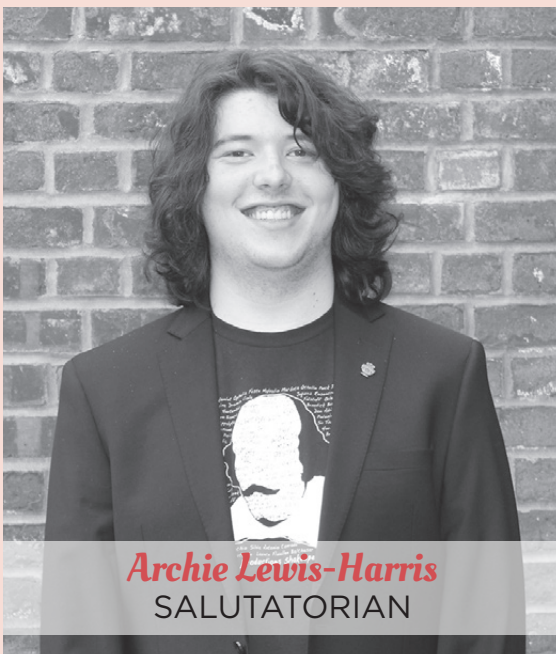
## HIGH SCHOOL ANNOUNCES VALEDICTORIAN, SALUTATORIAN, PRINCIPAL'S AWARD RECIPIENT

**ONTEORA HIGH SCHOOL (OHS)** is pleased to announce that Simon Rands is Valedictorian, Archie Lewis-Harris is Salutatorian, and Emily Peck is the Principal's Award Winner for the Class of 2021.

OHS Principal Lance Edelman is extremely proud of these three honorees. "They possess all of the qualities that we hope for in our students," he said. "They are exemplary students who have positive attitudes, thrive when challenged, have optimistic perspectives, and are strong student ambassadors."



**Simon Rands**  
VALEDICTORIAN



**Archie Lewis-Harris**  
SALUTATORIAN



**Emily Peck**  
PRINCIPAL'S AWARD WINNER



Board of Education Candidates  
(in the order they will appear on the ballot)

Four candidates are seeking election to two available seats.  
The seats are for three-year terms, effective July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024.

Joseph-Daniel Letendre, REGISTERED NURSE  
Lives in West Hurley • Resident of District for four years

Letendre, a registered nurse at Hudson Valley Hospice, previously worked as a paraprofessional aide with the Special Education Department at Darien High School (where he assisted two disabled students during school hours), a retail manager, and a home health aide. He also served as a chaplain in the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps.

The winner of an Excellence in Nursing Award from *Hudson Valley Magazine* in 2019, Letendre also received Hudson Valley Hospice’s Heart of Hospice Award in 2018, and the Nightingale Award for Excellence in Nursing in 2008. His community activities include serving on the board of the West Hurley Library and as a member of the Kingston Food Coop.

Letendre holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing with a minor in Psychology from Sacred Heart University, an Associate of Science in Business Management and Accounting from Norwalk Community College, a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, and a Master of Divinity in Theology from St. Mary’s Seminary.

David Alterio, SALES MANAGER  
Lives in West Hurley • Resident of District from 1987-2000 & since 2020

Alterio, a sales manager with Fehr Brothers in Saugerties, graduated from Onteora in 1992 and has a son who is currently attending Onteora High School. He previously worked for Lith-Art Press in Woodstock, where he was vice president and then president. He was Onteora’s Varsity Football coach from 1994-2002, and Assistant Varsity Track coach from 2000-2001. He also served as commissioner, coach, and board member for the Mountain Valley Flag Football League, president and coach for the Mountain Valley Little League, and coach for the Kingston Area Soccer League. Currently, Alterio is a coach with Hudson Valley Mountaineers Adult Amateur Football.

Valerie Storey, HOMEMAKER  
Lives in Glenford (Hurley) • Resident of District for 42 years

Storey, who graduated with Onteora’s Class of 1996, is running for reelection to the Board of Education. A school board trustee for six years, she is a member of the Health and Safety Committee and the co-chair of the Facilities Committee, where she has served for a total of six years.

Storey has a son who is in Grade 9 at Onteora High School (OHS) as well as a daughter who graduated from OHS in 2019. Her husband is also an OHS graduate. She earned an associate’s degree from SUNY Ulster.

Storey was honored with a New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) Level 4 Board Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021.

Cynthia (Cindy) Bishop, DIRECTOR OF PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES  
Lives in Hurley • Resident of District for seven and a half years

Bishop, who has been Onteora’s Director of Pupil Personnel Services since May 2012, will be retiring in June 2021. Her previous work experience includes serving as a general education teacher, special education teacher, and summer school principal for the Monticello Central School District; a special education training and resource center coordinator for Ulster BOCES; and the director of special education for the Hyde Park Central School District.

Bishop holds a master’s degree in Special Education for Kindergarten through Grade 12, as well as a bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education for Pre-K through Grade 6, both issued by SUNY New Paltz. She also earned an associate’s degree in Business from SUNY Orange and a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Educational Leadership from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

Bishop has a granddaughter who attended Onteora’s Universal PreK program at Beginnings Preschool before moving on to Woodstock Elementary School, where she is in Grade 3. Her community service includes being a member of Woodstock Immigrant Support and the Ulster Immigrant Defense Network, and serving as a volunteer Ashokan Rail Trail Steward.

Phoenicia Students Learn Secrets of Maple Sugaring

PHOENICIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS participated in the ancient pre-spring ritual of maple sugaring, thanks to Physical Education teacher Patrick Burkhardt. Mr. Burkhardt, who has been making his own maple syrup for years, showed the youngsters how to make the sweet treat using trees growing near the school.

In March, Mr. Burkhardt set up an evaporator in back of the school to show the students how to boil sap, a process that removes water from the sap in the form of steam. As the clear-colored sap was boiled down, its natural sugars became more concentrated, and the sugars underwent caramelization. Eventually, the sap was transformed into a delicious brown syrup, which the students happily sampled, comparing the taste to that of sap that had not yet been boiled.



The students’ maple sugaring lessons had started in early February, when snow still blanketed the school grounds. Mr. Burkhardt and the students had donned snowshoes, enjoying some exercise while searching for suitable trees to tap. Three weeks later, when there was enough sap collected to boil, he came back to demonstrate the process of turning it into syrup.

Mr. Burkhardt’s lessons during the hands-on learning unit covered a range of topics, including the history of maple sugaring in our area, the tools used, the identification of maple trees, and how a tree’s circulatory system works. As he has in past years, Mr. Burkhardt also visited Woodstock Elementary School this year, sharing his knowledge and expertise about the art and practice of maple sugaring.

Signs of Spring: sap being collected from a maple tree in front of Phoenicia Elementary School.



Grade 2 Phoenicia students in Allison Mitchell’s class answering questions about maple syrup posed by Physical Education teacher Patrick Burkhardt (right). Mr. Burkhardt is standing in front of an evaporator, which he is using to boil sap that has been collected from sugar maples located on the school grounds.

Maple sugaring, suggested Mr. Burkhardt, is an ideal pandemic activity. “It’s a great time of year to get students outdoors exploring the woods and being physically active, especially since we have been stuck indoors so much during the pandemic,” he said. “They really enjoyed the rigorous physical activity of snowshoeing out to the trees and checking the sap during Physical Education class. This year, not even COVID could stop the sap from running or the kids from enjoying this tradition!”

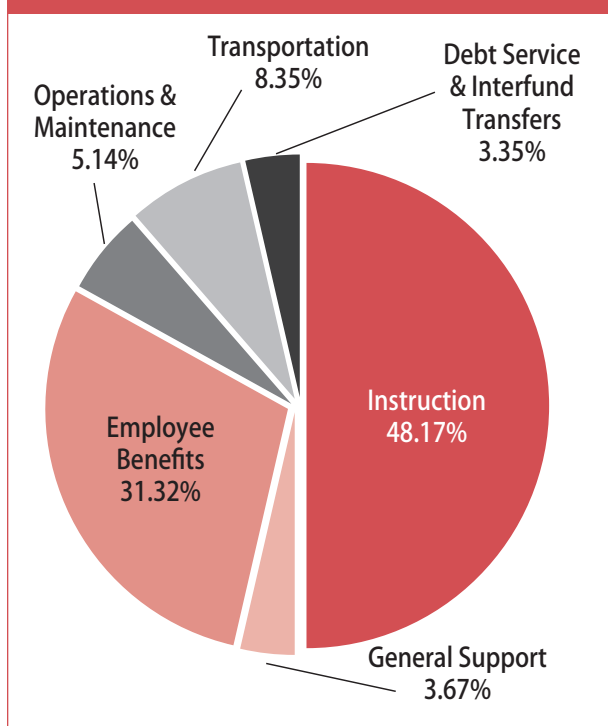




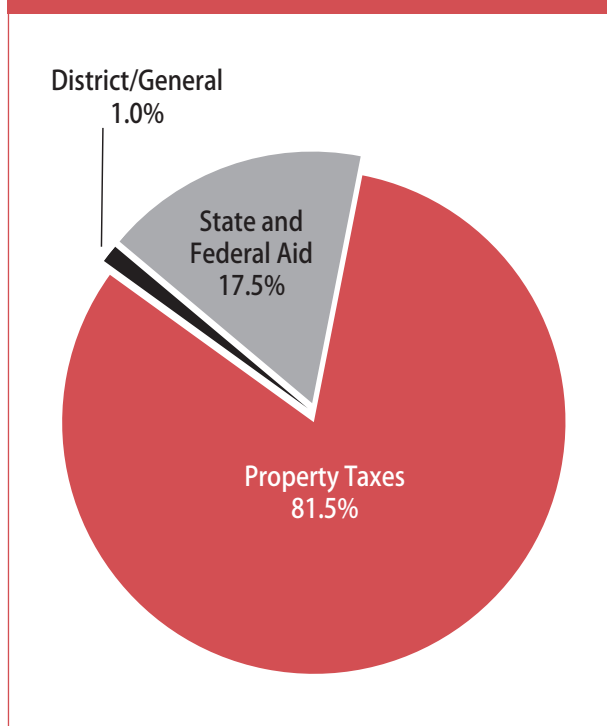
## 2021-2022 Budget Summary

	Administrative	Program	Capital
Instruction	\$2,094,263	\$26,227,454	
General Support	\$1,927,169		\$227,267
Employee Benefits	\$441,944	\$17,493,595	\$478,772
Operations & Maintenance			\$3,020,170
Transportation		\$4,829,790	\$75,000
Comm./Debt/Transfers		\$485,000	\$1,485,719
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,463,376</b>	<b>\$49,035,839</b>	<b>\$5,286,928</b>
<b>Percentage of Budget</b>	<b>7.59%</b>	<b>83.41%</b>	<b>9.00%</b>

### Proposed Budget by Expense



### 2021-2022 Budgeted Revenues



## TAX INFORMATION

### What is the Tax Levy?

The tax levy is the total amount of taxes a school district raises to help fund its budget, after accounting for all other revenue resources. The tax levy is the basis for determining the tax rates for each municipality within a school district. Tax rates are impacted by changes in town assessments and state equalization rates and are not determined by the school district. The Board of Education has adopted a budget that utilizes a 1.71 percent increase to the tax levy.

### Since the budget meets the State Tax Levy Limit, why do I have to vote?

Even though the District's proposal meets the New York State Tax Levy Limit parameters regarding the levy increase, voter approval is still needed. The 2012 legislation commonly called the Two Percent Tax Cap law made many changes to the school budget approval process. One of the major changes was the method for computing a contingency budget. If the proposed budget is defeated two times, the District would have to make budget reductions to reach a zero percent tax increase. In addition to requiring the elimination of all equipment purchases (\$279,500), there would also be reductions in the administrative, non-instructional, component of the budget in order to meet the cap requirement of a contingency budget.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE PROPOSED CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

### What is a Capital Reserve Fund?

A Capital Reserve Fund allows the District to set aside money for future construction projects. The Capital Reserve Fund is established with voter approval, and can have a maximum of \$10,000,000. Voter authorization is needed to make withdrawals from the fund.

### How much money is the District proposing to set aside in the Capital Reserve Fund?

The District is proposing the creation of a new Capital Reserve Fund in the ultimate amount of \$10 million over 10 years.

### Would my taxes go up due to the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund?

No, your taxes would not increase due to the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund.

### How will it be funded?

Once the Reserve is voter authorized, the Board of Education may direct funds into the Reserve by resolution at a regularly scheduled public meeting. These funds consist of unused operating

funds at the end of the school year or through the transfer of unused funds from other Reserve accounts.

### Why do we need a Capital Reserve Fund?

The District believes it is an effective and responsible fiscal management method to reduce the taxpayer share of future construction projects.

### Why establish a Capital Reserve Fund now? Didn't the District just approve a building project?

There are still areas within the District that need to be renovated and/or will be in need of replacement in the future.

A required Building Condition Survey will be completed this year with the assistance of the District's architects. The new Capital Reserve would help the District fund projects that are brought up during the Building Condition Survey process.

## POTENTIAL CAPITAL PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY PROPOSED BUDGET

Please note that the costs for building supplies and oil are rising, which means that the District may not be able to complete all the items on this list. The Facilities Director will work closely with the administration and the District's architects to identify the best use of the available funds.

### Middle School/High School

- Renovate cafeteria bathrooms
- Replace interior doors
- Abate classroom floor tiles
- Renovate classrooms
- Repair roof leak
- Repoint bricks

### Phoenicia

- Remove & replace oil tank
- Replace exterior doors
- Repave deteriorated asphalt as needed
- Remove carpeting/abate floor tiles
- Carry out concrete work (steps, sidewalk, ramp)
- Repoint bricks

### Woodstock

- Replace aluminum doors
- Update sewer and storm drain lines
- Repair roof pitch
- Repair gymnasium stairs & railing
- Repair asphalt
- Repoint bricks

### Bennett

- Remove & replace oil tank
- Repoint bricks



Senior Ori Jordaan-Grady taking advantage of one of the new work stations created through the District's Active Learning Initiative, which would be expanded under the proposed budget. This particular work station, located in English teacher Laura Loheide's classroom, has soft seating and low tables. The room also features stools, high-topped tables, desks equipped with wheels, and an interactive whiteboard that allows remote learners to participate in classroom lessons.

# PROPOSED BUDGET

## WHAT YOU WILL SEE ON THE BALLOT

### PROPOSITION #1 – 2021-2022 BUDGET

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Onteora Central School District Board of Education be and is hereby authorized to expend the sums set forth under the various headings which are voted upon in gross and not in detail in the total amount of \$58,786,143 (which includes \$20,000 to support public library) for the year commencing July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022, and the Board is authorized to levy and collect the necessary tax thereof on the taxable property of the District.

### PROPOSITION #2 – CAPITAL RESERVE

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District submit the following proposition to be included on the ballot for the creation of a capital reserve fund at the Annual Meeting and Election, to be held on May 18, 2021.

Shall the Onteora Central School District Board of Education be authorized to establish a capital reserve fund, to be known as the “2021 Building Capital Reserve Fund” for the purpose of appropriating sufficient funds necessary to construct renovations to, reconstruction of, and/or additions to its facilities as identified from time-to-time, including but not limited to those recommended in its five-year capital facilities plan, and including original furnishings, equipment, machinery, apparatus, appurtenances and incidental improvements and expenses in connection therewith, in the ultimate amount of \$10,000,000.00, over a probable term of ten (10) years, to be funded with surplus fund balances at the end of each fiscal year, funds transferred from other reserves. and other available funds, as permitted by law?

### BOARD CANDIDATES (VOTE FOR ANY TWO)

- Joseph-Daniel Letendre
- David Alterio
- Valerie Storey
- Cynthia "Cindy" Bishop

## Questions & Answers About Voting

**Am I Eligible to Vote?** In order to be eligible to vote, you must be at least 18 years of age, a U.S. citizen, a resident of the Onteora Central School District for at least 30 days prior to the vote, and not otherwise prohibited from voting under the provisions of Section 5-106 of the Election Law (e.g. a person who had been adjudged to be mentally incompetent).

**Absentee Ballots** Eligible voters who cannot make it to the polls to vote may request an application for an absentee ballot. The District Clerk must receive the application by May 11 if the ballot is to be mailed to the requestor (at least seven days before the election). If the ballot is being picked up by the voter, the application must be received by the District Clerk on or before May 17, 2021 (the day before the election and vote).

Applications for absentee ballots are available on the District website (<http://bit.ly/2VqJZrF>) or at the Central Administration Office between 8 AM and 4 PM Monday through Friday. Applications are to be mailed to: District Clerk, Onteora Central School District, P.O. Box 300, Boiceville, NY 12412.

Once you have been confirmed as a qualified voter, you will be mailed an absentee ballot. Absentee ballots must be received by the District no later than 5 PM on May 18, the day of the election and vote.

**Where are Copies of the 2021-2022 Proposed Budget Available?** Copies are available for review at the following locations:

- High School/Middle School Offices
- Bennett Elementary School
- Woodstock Elementary School
- Phoenicia Elementary School
- The Business Office at Central Administration
- Public Libraries within the District
- The District Website, [www.onteora.k12.ny.us](http://www.onteora.k12.ny.us)

**Where Can I Vote?** Any eligible voter can vote at any one of the three elementary schools:

- Woodstock School, Route 375, Woodstock
  - Bennett School, Route 28, Boiceville
  - Phoenicia School, Off Route 214, Phoenicia
- (There is no longer voting at West Hurley.)

## School Budget Notice

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL	Budget Adopted for the 2020-2021 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2021-2022 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2021-2022 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$57,938,542	\$58,786,143	\$58,396,563
Increase/Decrease for the 2021-22 School Year		\$847,601	\$458,021
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		1.46%	0.79%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.23%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$44,721,240	\$45,486,297	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$44,721,240	\$45,486,297	\$44,721,240
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$511,662	\$402,720	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$44,209,578	\$45,083,577	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$44,721,240	\$45,486,297	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$4,284,172	\$4,463,376	\$4,317,296
Program Component	\$48,397,002	\$49,035,839	\$48,985,840
Capital Component	\$5,257,368	\$5,286,928	\$5,093,428

\* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2021-22 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

A Contingent budget would eliminate all equipment purchases totaling \$279,500 from the budget. In addition, an extra \$250,475 will be removed from the administrative portion of the budget in order to meet the requirement of an administrative cap in a contingency budget.

\*\* 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)

Description	Amount
Create a Capital Reserve Account	\$0

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

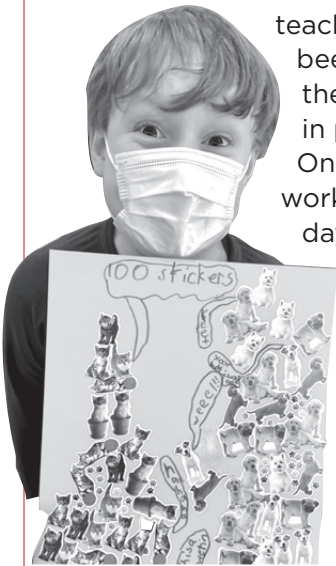
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup>	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2021-2022 School Year
	\$353

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2021-22 by the qualified voters of the Onteora Central School District, Ulster County, New York, will be held at Bennett, Phoenicia and Woodstock Elementary school(s) in said district on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 between the hours of 2:00 pm and 9:00 pm, prevailing time in the Bennett, Phoenicia and Woodstock Elementary school(s), at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.



# One Hundred Days of School— And Counting!

One hundred days of learning is something to celebrate! Considering how different this school year has been due to the pandemic, we are prouder than ever of the amazing job our students, teachers, and families have been doing. Whether they're attending school in person or remotely, Onteora students are working hard every day!



Woodstock Grade 1 student Emma Lobb (right) showing off her 100th Day of School hat.



Phoenicia Grade 3 student Colden Burgher (left) proudly displays his collection of 100 stickers on the hundredth day of school.

## Onteora Celebrates World Languages

WORLD LANGUAGES WEEK, a longtime tradition at Onteora, continued this year despite COVID-19. In March, Middle and High School students—including those who were learning remotely—enthusiastically participated in a poster contest that showcased their creativity as well as their language skills.

“The World Languages Department decided that we wanted to keep traditions alive during a time when most normal activities in the lives of our students have either been altered, revised, or taken away completely,” explained World Languages Liaison Valerie Stewart.

Choosing from lists of Spanish and French proverbs, students in Grades 8 through 12 translated their chosen phrases into poster form and then shared their creations with each other over Google Meet. The results, illustrating such words of wisdom as *Ponte las pilas!* (Put in your batteries!), *La parole est d’argent, mais le silence est d’or* (Speech is silver, but silence is golden), and *Es el mismo perro con diferente collar* (It’s the same dog with a different collar), were truly *magnífiques/magníficos!*

“Even though we could not all be together to present this year, our students and teachers did an amazing job of keeping this treasured tradition alive in our hybrid format,” concluded Mrs. Stewart. “This project brought a celebration of culture and language, which unites us during this socially distanced time of our lives.”

Onteora students showing off the posters they created for World Languages Week.



## MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER REVAMPED TO MEET STUDENT NEEDS

SHORTLY AFTER SPRING BREAK, Onteora Middle and High School students got their first look at some of the changes that have taken place in their school’s Library Media Center.

Library Media Specialist Amy Weisz hosted a series of Open Houses in April to show off some of the library’s brand-new furniture, which ranges from comfortable upholstered seating for individual reading to stools and high-topped tables for small-group work. For students who want to minimize distractions, there are study carrels with hard-backed chairs facing a back wall. The teaching area, which includes long work tables and a large computer monitor, was reconfigured to make it more user-friendly, said Mrs. Weisz.

“Our goal was not only to accommodate different learning styles, but to also continue to make the library an inviting place for students to read, study, conduct research, or even perhaps relax with a puzzle or a game,” she said.

During the Open Houses, Mrs. Weisz also reminded the students about the various ways students can safely order books this year, including by filling out an online reader interest survey if they want to receive an “Eagle Crate” with three books personally selected by Mrs. Weisz.

To encourage students to check out every corner of the “new” library, riddles and virtual puzzles were strategically placed throughout the space. Before returning to their classes, each attendee was also treated to a sweet treat: a cookie decorated with—you guessed it—book titles!



During an April Open House held in the reconfigured Library Media Center at the Middle School/High School, Grade 7 student Ana Lemus used her phone to access a “Google Puzzle Party.” Students were invited to solve virtual puzzles, either by themselves or with the assistance of friends they invited to the online “party.”

## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT LEARNS TECHNICAL SKILLS

Onteora High School student Daniel Tapia, who is enrolled in the Ulster BOCES Welding & Metal Fabrication Program, gathers electrodes to use for stick welding.



### USEFUL DISTRICT CONTACT INFORMATION

[www.onteora.k12.ny.us](http://www.onteora.k12.ny.us)

#### DISTRICT OFFICE..... (845) 657-6383

**Interim Superintendent**  
Marystephanie Corsones..... 657-6383 x1010

**Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction**  
Dr. Jodi M. DeLucia..... 657-6383 x1023

**District Clerk**  
Fern Amster..... 657-6383 x1010

**Assistant Superintendent for Business**  
Monica Kim LaClair..... 657-6383 x1030

**Director of Pupil Personnel**  
Cindy Bishop..... 657-3320

**Universal Pre-Kindergarten**  
Cindy Bishop..... 657-3320

**Athletic Director**  
Kim Pilla..... 657-2373 x2113

**Director of Transportation**  
Nicole Sommer..... 657-2537

**School Lunch Manager**  
Christine Downs..... 657-6383 x2181

**Director of Facilities**  
Kyle Harjes..... 657-6384

**HIGH SCHOOL • 657-2373**  
Principal, Lance Edelman  
Asst. Principal, Dieter Schimmelpfennig

**MIDDLE SCHOOL • 657-2373**  
Principal, Jennifer O'Connor

**BENNETT ELEMENTARY • 657-2354**  
Co-principals, Gabriel Buono and Linda Sella

**PHOENICIA ELEMENTARY • 688-5580**  
Principal, Elizabeth Fallo

**WOODSTOCK ELEMENTARY • 679-2316**  
Principal, Scott Richards

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