

ONTEORA

Budget 2022

Budget Highlights

- ✓ Proposes a levy amount that is below 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;
- ✓ Provides Social Studies curriculum alignment for Kindergarten-Grade 6;
- ✓ Expands active learning space initiative;
- ✓ Supports the replacement of an aging maintenance truck with a snow plow, and an aging school bus;
- ✓ Invests in maintaining facilities through strategic capital work;
- ✓ Uses federal stimulus funds to address infrastructure needs, including renovating classrooms at the MS/HS; installing generators at Bennett and the MS/HS; replacing aging exterior doors at Phoenicia and Woodstock, and replacing deteriorating sidewalks and steps at Phoenicia.
- ✓ Proposes the authorization of using up to \$675,000 from the Capital Reserve to replace damaged flooring at all school buildings, and to expand and reconstruct exterior site improvements at the Middle School/High School (MS/HS).

Proposed 2022-2023 School Budget is Below Tax Levy Limit;

Supports Educational Programs & Capital Improvements

THE ONTEORA BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS ADOPTED A \$59,991,639 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE 2022-2023 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 1.19 percent, which is BELOW the allowable New York State Tax Levy Limit (tax cap) formula level required for a simple-majority voter approval. This is the 11th year in a row that Onteora has presented a budget at or below the allowable tax levy limit. Fund balance in the amount of \$2,962,206 would be applied to reduce the impact on taxpayers.

There is also a separate proposition that would authorize the use of up to \$675,000 from the voter-approved Capital Reserve Fund (which does not increase the budget). The funds would be used to replace flooring in classrooms throughout the District, and to expand and reconstruct exterior site improvements at Onteora Middle School and High School. These infrastructure needs were identified by the District’s State-mandated five-year Building Condition Survey, which was conducted in collaboration with the District’s architects and engineers.

Most of the proposed budget (80.50 percent) supports programs that directly benefit students. Capital costs account for 9.78 percent of the budget, and administrative costs for 9.72 percent. The budget proposal will be presented to voters on Tuesday, May 17, from 2-9 PM at Bennett, Phoenicia, and Woodstock Elementary Schools.

Increases Mental Health Supports

Federal stimulus funds would be used to help support the mental health of students. 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. The District is also exploring the possibility of partnering with Astor Services, which offers counseling services for children and families.

Supports Academic Achievement

The proposed budget increases funding for the District’s successful Summer Academy, which serves children in Kindergarten through Grade 6, while adding an Academic Enrichment Academy specific to the needs of students in Grades 7 and 8. The impact of the pandemic has created a greater need for summer academic support to help some students meet their requirements. The programs would be coordinated through the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. Classes would be kept small to ensure that targeted instruction meets individual student learning needs. The K-6 program will run from July 11 through August 5. The Grade 7 and Grade 8 programs will run from July 11 to July 29.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Woodstock Elementary School Celebrates Reading, Dr. Seuss, and Pets!

Kindergarten students Nola Fonseca, Lucia Fisher, Sierra Hubbard, Sebastian Colevas, and David Gruber-Hermon wore Seuss-inspired hats on Read Across America Day.

READ MORE ON PAGE 3.



PLEASE ★ VOTE ★

The Annual Budget Vote and Election of Trustees will take place on Tuesday, May 17, 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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Phoenicia Students Restore, and Reimagine, School's Eagle Sign

THIS WINTER, PHOENICIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS HAVE BEEN HARD AT WORK RESTORING THEIR SCHOOL'S ICONIC EAGLE SIGN, which had been created by local sign-maker Kurt Boyer 11 years ago. The students, inspired by their Social Studies lessons, have also added a few touches of their own to the original work.

"This project is part of a learning unit on symbolism," said Karen Hadley, an Onteora teacher on special assignment who is helping Grade 2 and Grade 3 classroom teachers weave Social Studies content into other subject areas. "This is the culminating civic action piece," she explained. "Students are taking what they have learned and applying it to doing something good for the community."

The civics project is being carried out in collaboration with Art teacher Danielle Payette, who has been guiding the young artists as they clean and retouch the sign. After years of exposure to the elements, the sign's original paint was chipping and peeling, and the vibrant colors had faded. In some places, green lichen was growing.

Prior to tackling the sign restoration, the students held classroom discussions focused on the question, "What symbol best represents the United States?" The students began by examining the American bald eagle. The symbol, they noted, is found on our nation's money, is part of the Presidential Seal, and serves as the mascot of both the school district and Phoenicia Elementary School.



Teacher Karen Hadley giving instructions to Phoenicia Grade 2 students (from left to right) Zachary Gibbs, Keenan Giangreco, Carrie Roefs, and Madeleine Haas, who were helping to restore—and reimagine—their school's iconic eagle sign as part of a Social Studies learning unit on symbolism.



Phoenicia students celebrated the unveiling of the refurbished eagle sign on April 8.

After cleaning and repainting the sign, the students brainstormed about what values are associated with the American eagle. They came up with words like "pride," "strength," and "community," which they proceeded to paint around the sign's borders.

In support of the project, Ms. Hadley also arranged to visit Mr. Boyer, video-recording the outing so students could enjoy a "virtual" field trip to his Phoenicia shop. The sign-maker expressed his pleasure in learning that the school, where his daughter had once been a student, was bringing new life to his old work.

The student artists were excited to be doing something positive for their school community. "We're giving the sign love—yeah, baby!" exclaimed Grade 2 student Connor Liverani. "I'm amazed that someone else made it, and it's really cool to restore it," said Grade 3 student Owen Reese.

Other students expressed pride in being a part of their school's history. "I look at this sign every day, and it gives me a proud feeling," Grade 3 student Sidney Spire said. "It's a very big responsibility—a once-in-a-lifetime experience!" added one of his classmates, Sloane Bailey.

Onteora's multi-faceted approach to Social Studies is being guided by New York State Education Department's Social Studies Toolkit (<https://bit.ly/SocialStudiesToolkit>).

CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES AND SHARED EXPERIENCES



Dr. Michael ("Mykee") Fowlin, the creator of thought-provoking programs on bullying, discrimination, violence prevention, and diversity, made two visits to Onteora High School in March, leading an assembly for each grade level. Dr. Fowlin, a psychologist, performer, and poet, delivered one of his award-winning presentations, "You Don't Know Me Until You Know Me." Dr. Fowlin combines his professional acting talents with his psychological training to help people understand and celebrate their differences as well as their shared experiences. For more information on the program, please visit <https://bit.ly/MykeeFowlin>

ONTEORA PRE-K STUDENTS HAVE HEART!

For Onteora students enrolled in the Pre-Kindergarten program administered by Woodland Playhouse, Valentine's Day was not only a celebration—it was also an excellent learning opportunity. During the month of February, Woodland Playhouse used the holiday, and conversations about love and the heart, as springboards to delve into learning about the human body. Through Simon Says-style games as well as songs like "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes," students practiced identifying body parts. They also learned about bodily autonomy and respecting each other's personal space.

The children had fun exploring puzzles, dolls, and other materials to identify the different layers and parts within themselves. Students also engaged in muscle-building (learning that push-ups can be fun!), discussed their varying skin tones, and learned about fluctuating heart rates (by moving fast, then breathing slowly). In addition, the children examined themselves in mirrors and created self-portraits that will be displayed at a community art show!



Woodstock Elementary School Celebrates Reading, Dr. Seuss, and Pets!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

SILLY RHYMES AND WACKY “PETS” ABOUNDED AT WOODSTOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ON READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY, a nationwide celebration of reading sponsored by the National Education Association each year. The event, which occurs in March on or near the birthday of beloved children’s book author Dr. Seuss, was observed on March 2 at Woodstock.

On this special day, Reading teachers Nicole Polacco and Andrew Vail visited classrooms to read *What Pet Should I Get?* (one of the lesser-known works by Dr. Seuss). In this delightfully zany story, a brother and sister consider many possibilities when shopping for a pet, ranging from the ordinary (a dog, a cat, a bird) to the extraordinary (including a “yent” who lives in a tent).

The teachers, dressed for the occasion like the Cat in the Hat (Seuss’s most famous character), then invited the students to imagine what kind of pet the siblings ultimately chose, and to depict it using paper plates, bendy pipe cleaners, sparkly glitter, plastic googly eyes, and colorful markers, pom-poms, and felt.

The children’s pets were impressively Seussian. “I made a submarine kitten!” exclaimed Kindergarten student Vuk Krsikapa, who, appropriately enough, was wearing a wolf hat while he worked.

After the glue dried, the plates displaying the children’s fantastical creatures were showcased in a “pet store” (a glass case located in a school hallway). “Every plate had an idea that I didn’t think of, and that’s so Dr. Seuss!” Mr. Vail told one class.

Although the Reading teachers planned the Dr. Seuss-themed project, it was the classroom teachers who ensured its success, said Mrs. Polacco. “Classroom teachers like first grade teacher Cassie Kothe and Kindergarten teacher Tammy Sorbellini are so supportive when we plan these fun and exciting events,” she noted. “Their support allows the kids to experience the joy of reading in another way.”

Read Across America Day is always one of the highlights of the school calendar, according to Principal Scott Richards. “The children always have a great time,” he said. “But it’s not only a celebration of Dr. Seuss – it is also a reminder of how important reading is to education!”



Reading teacher Nicole Polacco admires the “pet” being created by Woodstock Kindergarten student Mary Delgado.

Bennett Students Learn About Birmingham Children’s Crusade

DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH, GRADE 6 BENNETT STUDENTS in Robin Panico’s Writing Workshop class created an informative bulletin board that helped educate their school community about a pivotal time in the civil rights movement: the Birmingham Children’s Crusade of 1963.

During this week-long event, thousands of children bravely – and peacefully – marched in the streets of Birmingham to draw attention to segregation laws. The extremely harsh treatment of the young marchers by the Birmingham authorities provoked widespread public outrage, which ultimately prompted the city to agree to desegregate businesses.

According to Mrs. Panico, an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher, the multi-faceted project involved reading, research, writing, vocabulary-building, and meaningful class discussions about racism and segregation. First, the students watched videos and read books about the march, and identified important facts to include in their bulletin board. “The facts they chose show the timeline of the event, but also express the experience of the children involved in the march,” said Mrs. Panico.

Each student then selected one or two facts or incidents to write about, making sure to incorporate some of the vocabulary words that they had been studying. The vocabulary words included words like “diversity,” “equality,” persevere,” “community,” “respect,” and “bias.”

Speaking about the project, student Kamila Espinoza Vargas said, “We learned how the march was planned, and how the youngest girl was about 9 years old. I had heard about the march, but I didn’t know much about it. We also learned how a Baptist church was bombed by people who wanted to keep segregation.”

Another student, Kalkidan Adelman, spoke about how “The marchers wanted freedom, and for people to come together,” she said. Noting that at the time of the march there were separate schools, movie theaters, and even water fountains for people of different colors, she expressed sadness over how many of the marchers were arrested, attacked by police dogs, or soaked with firefighters’ hoses. But she also expressed satisfaction at how the march was ultimately successful, and how much has changed since then. “Today, we’re all going to the same school,” she pointed out.



Bennett students Kalkidan Adelman (left) and Kamila Espinoza Vargas show off some of the books they read while learning about the Children’s Crusade.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Onteora Community,

This year, as in the past, our Onteora budget reflects the District’s commitment to opportunity and excellence in education. Dr. Donald Gottlieb, our Interim Superintendent for Business, worked closely with Interim Superintendent Marystephanie Corsones and the Board of Education to address our community’s needs. The past two years have presented new and diverse challenges for our students, staff, and taxpayers. We take our responsibility for meeting these challenges seriously and with great humility.

One of our core values here at Onteora is a focus on civics and positive civic engagement. With three open seats on the Board and five excellent candidates, we encourage our community to stay informed and vote on Tuesday, May 17.

Thank you,

Kevin Salem
President, Onteora Central School District Board of Education

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION IS OPEN!



Woodstock Kindergarten teacher Elohim Pacheco assists one of her students, Cassano Rega, during a recent handwriting lesson.

If you have a child who will be eligible to enroll in Kindergarten in the Onteora Central School District next September, it’s time to register your child. The school district’s online Kindergarten registration system is now open.

To register online, parents or guardians should go to www.onteora.k12.ny.us and click on “Registration & Displaced Families.” The link for online registration is in the middle of the page. Please be sure to choose the 2022-2023 school year.

Children who turn five on or before December 1, 2022 are eligible to enroll in Kindergarten beginning in September 2022. Current Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) students should simply update their already established registration.

Once your child is completely registered, you will be contacted with an appointment for Kindergarten screening. Screening will take place during the week of June 6-10.

If you have any questions, you may contact Sharon Wood, Onteora’s District Registrar, by calling 845-657-6383 ext. 1023 or emailing swood@onteora.k12.ny.us.



Proposed 2022-2023 School Budget is Below Tax Levy Limit Supports Educational Programs & Capital Improvements

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The proposed budget would also increase MTSS (multi-tiered systems of support) training for teachers in Kindergarten through Grade 6, and expand professional learning on MTSS to the secondary level. MTSS is a prevention-based framework in which there are tiered systems of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional learning support for students.

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 Requirements

The proposed budget funds a "teacher on special assignment" at Woodstock and Phoenicia Elementary Schools to help the schools align their curriculums with the New York State standards for Social Studies.

Expands Active Learning Initiative

The initiative, which is being implemented at the Middle School/High School, will be expanded so that up to 15 classrooms can be modified 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 workstations in each of these classrooms. Soft seating is a hit with students looking for a comfortable place to complete work.

Maintains Infrastructure

The proposed budget uses federal stimulus funds to address infrastructure needs. Funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) of 2021 and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) of 2021 would be used to renovate Middle and High School classrooms. At Phoenicia, stimulus funds would be used to replace the school's aging sidewalk, steps, and ramp. At Phoenicia and Woodstock, the funds would be used to replace circa 1950s exterior doors as well as outdated unit ventilators (heating systems).

Addresses Transportation and Equipment Needs

The proposed budget includes funds to replace an aging maintenance truck with a snowplow, as well as an aging school bus.

Proposition 2: Authorizes Use of Funds from the Capital Reserve

Proposition 2 would authorize the use of up to \$675,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund (which was established with voter approval in 2016) for replacing damaged flooring in our school buildings, and expanding and reconstructing exterior site improvements at the Middle School/High School.

A Capital Reserve is a multi-year financial savings tool created to pay for large expenses associated with major repairs, renovations, and construction projects. Using funds from a Capital Reserve does not increase the budget. The reserve is funded with money that may become available at the end of the school year after all expenses have been paid.

Just as voter approval was needed to establish the Capital Reserve, it is needed 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 proposed projects that would be funded by the Capital Reserve were identified as high-priority needs by the District's architects, who completed a mandated five-year Building Condition Survey (BCS) in 2021. This report takes a comprehensive look at the condition of our facilities and prioritizes recommendations for improvements.

Contingency Budget

If Onteora's proposed budget fails, the District would have the option of re-submitting the same budget, presenting a different budget, or going to a contingent budget. A second budget vote would be held on June 21, 2022, 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 2022-2023 tax levy would remain at the same level as the 2021-2022 school year. A contingent budget would eliminate all equipment purchases (\$258,500) 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 17, 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.

HOW WOULD THE PROPOSED BUDGET USE FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS?

Onteora has received a total of \$7,068,932 in federal stimulus funds through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) of 2021 and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) of 2021. This funding is for multiple years. The proposed budget for the 2022-2023 school year would use some of these funds to:

- support students' social, emotional, and mental health;
- address learning loss;
- upgrade classrooms;
- support summer and afterschool programs;
- sustain safe operations (through school facilities repairs and improvements).

For more information, please see our budget story, which begins on page one. Information on stimulus funding can also be found on the District website, www.onteora.k12.ny.us. (Click on the tab for the 2021-2022 school year, then click on the State COVID Funds tab.)

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 1.19 percent increase to the tax levy.

Since the budget is below 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 (\$258,500), 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.

VOTE

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

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.

Board of Education
Candidates

(in the order they will
appear on the ballot)

Five candidates are seeking election to three available seats. Two members will serve three-year terms commencing on July 1, 2022 and expiring on June 30, 2025. One member will serve a one-year, six-week term to begin May 17, 2022 to fill the unexpired seat of Bennet Ratcliff.

Leon Savage, EMPLOYEE AT THE WAYFINDER EXPERIENCE

Lives in Woodstock • Resident of District for 13 years

Savage, who graduated from Onteora High School in June of 2021, was a student representative to the Board of Education for two years. His community involvement has included working for the Woodstock Youth Center and volunteering for Family of Woodstock.

Kristy Taylor, REGISTERED NURSE AT VASSAR BROTHERS MEDICAL CENTER

Lives in Olivebridge • Resident of District for 26 years

Taylor has two daughters (Grades 9 and 11) attending Onteora High School. A graduate of Catskill High School, Taylor has an Associate in Science from SUNY Ulster and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from SUNY New Paltz. She previously served as a substitute School Nurse at Onteora.

Joanna Drescher, U.S. MARKET MANAGER & GLOBAL HOST OPERATIONS MANAGER, KID & COE

Lives in Woodstock • Resident of District for 8.5 years

Drescher has two children enrolled in Onteora schools: one in Grade 4 and the other in Grade 7. She holds a Bachelor of Science from Cornell University in Labor Relations and a Master of Public Health from the University of Michigan. She previously served as a member of a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) at a public school, and co-chaired an auction committee that held an annual fund-raising event. Her previous work experience includes working as a retail director and as a public health researcher.

Sarah Hemingway Lynch, SENIOR PUBLIC POLICY CONSULTANT FOR GLOBAL HEALTH VISIONS, SAUGERTIES

Lives in Olive • Resident of District for 6 years

Lynch, who has three children attending Phoenicia Elementary School, is a co-owner of Marty’s Mercantile in West Shokan. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Journalism from Boston University. Her community service involvement includes serving on the board of the Phoenicia PTA as Recording Secretary as well as the board of the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) as Child Advocate.

Meghann Reimondo, SELF-EMPLOYED AT MIRA’S NATURALS AND THE EMPOWERED APPROACH

Lives in Woodstock • Resident of District for 4 years

Reimondo has a ninth grade son who attends Onteora High School, and an 18-year-old daughter who attends Ulster BOCES in Port Ewen. Her community service includes volunteering for the Holiday Food Basket Program. She also helps to facilitate Longyear Farm Day, which raises funds to benefit the Woodstock Land Conservancy.

Phoenicia and Woodstock Students Combat
Climate Change Through Recycling



Woodstock students (from left to right) Jonah Schachter, Revel Austin, Emma Lobb, Lucas Hochman, and Sierra Hubbard were among the many students participating in the recycling challenge.

PHOENICIA AND WOODSTOCK STUDENTS, WHO HAVE BEEN LEARNING ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE IN THEIR SOCIAL STUDIES LESSONS, are doing their part to help protect the earth. After learning about the major role that plastics play in global warming, the children enthusiastically participated in a plastic-recycling challenge sponsored by the Trex Company.

During the challenge, which ran from November 15 to April 15, the children collected more than two tons of plastic film, earning them top honors as well as two new eco-friendly benches for their schools. Many local businesses also made weekly contributions of plastic to the schools’ collection sites (special thanks to H. Houst & Son Hardware in Woodstock and The Emerson in Mt. Tremper).

Instead of being thrown out and winding up in a landfill, the plastic film was weighed and dropped off at our West Hurley Hannaford, which shipped it to Trex, where it was reused to make wood-alternative decking, railing, and outdoor furniture.

The students were enthusiastic about giving back to their community and their planet. “I want to help save the earth,” said Woodstock Kindergarten student Wylder Downton after dropping off a bag of recyclables in the school lobby. Another Woodstock recycler, Grade 3 student Ann Leggett, said, “The reason I recycle is because it helps to cool down the planet. In my house, my parents and I collect all the plastic we use and bring it to school. This makes me feel important because I know I’m helping to reduce greenhouse gases.”

Karen Hadley, the teacher who coordinated the recycling challenge, is continuing to encourage the students to bring in their recyclable plastics from home even though this year’s Trex contest has ended. She also hopes to expand the recycling program to Bennett School next fall.

ONTEORA'S
SCIENCE
OLYMPIAD
TEAM SCORES!

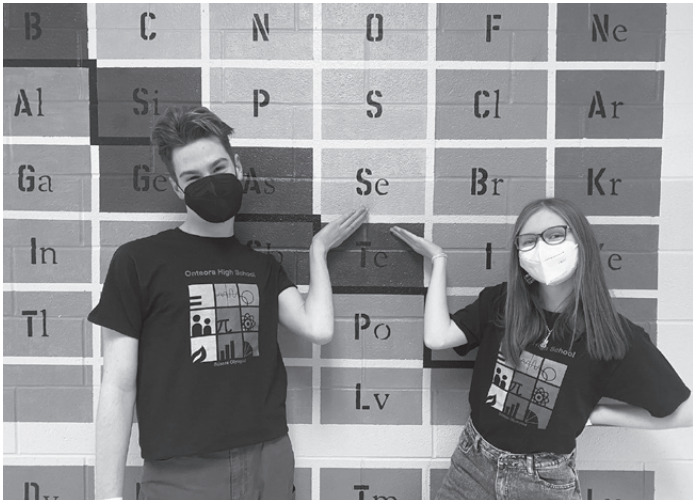
ONTEORA HIGH
SCHOOL'S SCIENCE
OLYMPIAD TEAM

put their skills and
knowledge to the test
at the Mid-Hudson

Valley Regional Tournament, which was held at John Jay High School on February 6. Competing in a field of 32 teams, Onteora earned 18 medals! Kudos to the following students, who excelled in their respective events:

- ▶ Shane Stackpole and Joey Driscoll placed 1st in “Environmental Chemistry.”
- ▶ Nicholas Drucquer and Frederick Luttinger placed 2nd in “Gravity Vehicle.”
- ▶ Eleanor Schackne-Martello and Auden Stellavato placed 4th in “Write it - Do It.”
- ▶ Sydnee Schilling and Joey Driscoll placed 4th in “Rocks and Minerals.”
- ▶ Ari Green and Sophia Grinberg placed 4th in “It’s About Time.”
- ▶ Zoe Gabriel and Charlie Weisz-Hoolihan placed 6th in “Ornithology.”
- ▶ Jett Conti and Amelie Belfiore placed 7th in “Cell Biology.”
- ▶ Sophia Grinberg and Shane Stackpole placed 8th in “Forensics.”
- ▶ Sophia Grinberg and Sydnee Schilling placed 8th in “Anatomy and Physiology.”

Congratulations to the entire team on a great performance and season!



Shane Stackpole (left) and Joey Driscoll were the team’s senior captains.



ONTEORA BOARD OF EDUCATION APPOINTS NEW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT



The Onteora Central School District is pleased to announce the appointment of Victoria McLaren as Superintendent of Schools. Ms. McLaren, who was approved at the April 20 Board of Education meeting, will be assuming her new position on June 6.

Ms. McLaren is currently the School Business Administrator at the Highland Central School District. She previously served as the Superintendent of Schools at Onteora, and has been part of the Onteora community for more than 15 years.

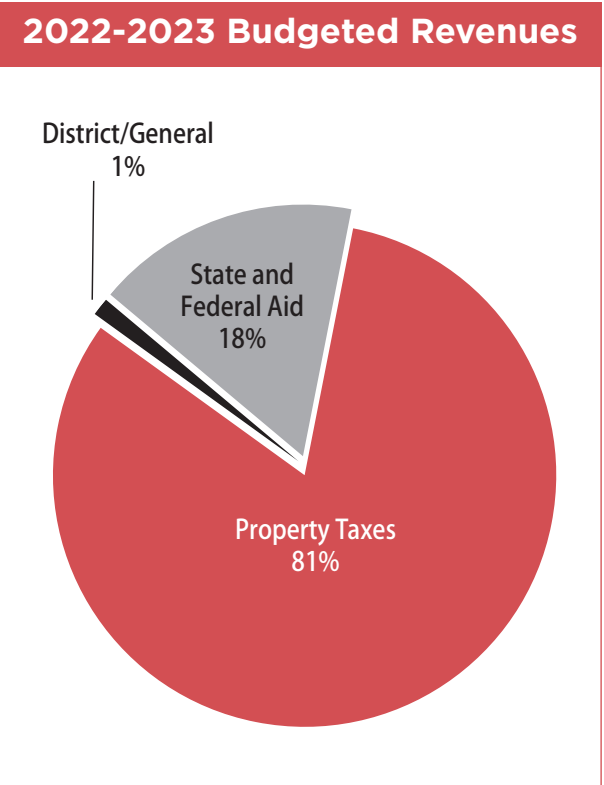
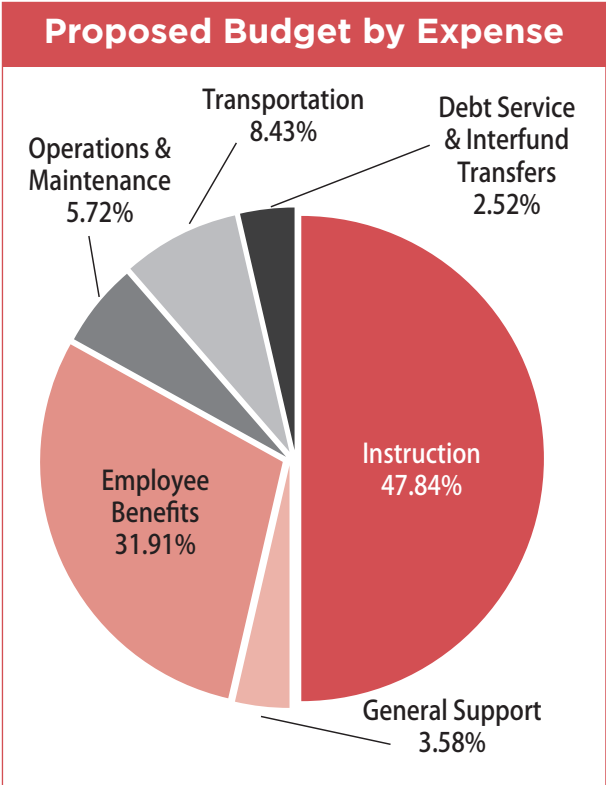
Following a national and state search, there were 11 applicants for the position, said Board of Education President Kevin Salem. Three finalists were interviewed by the Board during the week of March 28.

“We’re thrilled to welcome Ms. McLaren back to Onteora,” said Mr. Salem, who expressed gratitude for the assistance of the consultant who guided the search, as well as the many other people from the Onteora community who participated in the process, including parents, teachers, students, and administrators. “The process of selecting a superintendent is one that requires a lot of care,” he explained. “Our search consultant, Dr. Bill Christensen from McPherson & Jacobson, was a tremendous source of support and guidance, as were all the many and diverse stakeholder groups in the District. We look forward to the collaborative work ahead.”

Ms. McLaren is excited to be taking the helm at a school district she admires and knows well. “Onteora is an amazing school district and school community,” she said. “I have tremendous respect and affection for this district, and I am excited to have the opportunity to move forward and support the students, faculty, staff, administration, and Board of Education.”

Now that the superintendent search has been completed, Dr. Christensen will continue working with the Board of Education and the new superintendent to help establish performance objectives.

2022-2023 Budget Summary			
	Administrative	Program	Capital
Instruction	\$2,412,551	\$26,287,483	\$0
General Support	\$1,895,151	\$0	\$253,566
Employee Benefits	\$1,526,810	\$16,526,012	\$1,091,304
Operations & Maintenance	\$0	\$0	\$3,433,542
Transportation	\$0	\$4,988,600	\$70,000
Comm./Debt/Transfers	\$0	\$485,000	\$1,021,620
TOTAL	\$5,834,512	\$48,287,095	\$5,870,032
Percentage of Budget	9.72%	80.50%	9.78%



Onteora Middle School Inducts National Junior Honor Society Members

Congratulations to the 23 Onteora Middle School students who were inducted into Onteora’s chapter of the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) during a candlelit ceremony held in March. The new inductees are: Gabrielle Alterio, Jasmine Barker, Juliet Barry, Aoife Bronston, Charles Denton, Abigail Elliott, Giuliana Frisenda, Connor Gierloff, Bernadette Hughes, Charlee Kennoch, Talula Kirschner, Foster Knoche, Sadie Konjas, Delilah Lieberman, Alexandra Lukowicz, Lucia McDonagh, Luc Millenson-Wilens, Reisa Reynolds, Makayla Robbins, Maxwell Scanlon, Jake Slater, Liliana Smith, and Andrew Umhey.



Members of Onteora’s chapter of the National Junior Honor Society pose for a group photo after a candlelit induction ceremony held on March 24.

The new members were congratulated by Principal Jennifer O’Connor, who praised the students’ skills in time management and perseverance, and told parents that it was their support that helped ensure their success.

Interim Superintendent Marystephanie Corsones also spoke to the inductees, stressing that their “small everyday actions” and “good choices and work habits” led to this moment.

In addition, Class of 2022 Valedictorian Joey Driscoll shared some words of wisdom with the honorees, encouraging them to “take advantage of every learning opportunity” that comes their way.

Faculty co-advisors Brian Schaffer and Corey Cavallaro noted that although students who achieve academic honors for two consecutive quarters are eligible to apply for membership, the NJHS is more than just an honor roll. “Applicants are also required to show leadership, citizenship, and community service involvement,” Mr. Schaffer explained. “In addition to school support activities, NJHS members conduct two major service projects each school year.”

After several current members spoke about the honor society’s essential values of scholarship, leadership, service, character, and citizenship, each inductee was presented with their medal. The night ended with members—both new and old—reciting the NJHS pledge.

Honorees, we are so proud of you!

PROPOSED BUDGET

WHAT YOU WILL SEE ON THE BALLOT

PROPOSITION #1 2022-2023 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 \$59,991,639 (which includes \$20,000 to support public library) for the year commencing July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023, and the Board is authorized to levy and collect the necessary tax thereof on the taxable property of the District.

PROPOSITION #2 PROPOSITION TO AUTHORIZE A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Shall the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District be authorized to reconstruct and construct improvements to District-wide facilities, including the replacement of flooring at its school buildings, and expansion and reconstruction of exterior site improvements at the Onteora Middle/High School, and the acquisition of equipment, machinery, apparatus and incidental work, at an estimated maximum cost of \$675,000, which amount shall be funded entirely from the 2016 Facilities Capital Reserve Fund?

BOARD CANDIDATES (VOTE FOR ANY THREE)

- Leon Savage
- Kristy Taylor
- Joanna Drescher
- Sarah Hemingway Lynch
- Meghann Reimondo

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 10 if the ballot is to be mailed to the requestor (at least seven days before the election). If the ballot is being picked up, the application must be received by the District Clerk on or before May 16, 2022 (the day before the election and vote).

Applications for absentee ballots are available on the District website (www.onteora.k12.ny.us) or at the Central Administration Office between 8 AM and 4 PM Monday through Friday. Applications can be mailed to: District Clerk, Onteora Central School District, P.O. Box 300, Boiceville, NY 12412 or emailed to districtclerk@onteora.k12.ny.us.

Once you have been confirmed as a qualified voter, you will be mailed an absentee ballot or a ballot can be picked up at Central Administration. Absentee ballots must be received by the District no later than 5 PM on May 17, the day of the election and vote.

Where are Copies of the 2022-2023 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

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 2021-2022 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2022-2023 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2022-2023 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$58,786,143	\$59,991,639	\$58,784, 143
Increase/Decrease for the 2022-23 School Year		\$1,018,290	\$0
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		1.89%	
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.7%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$45,486,297	\$46,101,388	
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)	\$45,486,297	\$46,101,388	\$45,486,297
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$402,720	\$600,040	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$0	\$0	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$45,083,577	\$45,501,348	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$4,463,376	\$5,834,512	\$5,277,016
Program Component	\$49,035,839	\$48,287,095	\$48,487,095
Capital Component	\$5,286,928	\$5,870,032	\$5,020,032

* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2022-23 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

A Contingent budget would eliminate all equipment purchases (\$258,000) from the budget. In addition, \$949,496 will be eliminated from the 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
Use of Capital Reserve Fund	\$675,000

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

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹

\$360

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2022-23 by the qualified voters of the Onteora Central school district, Ulster County, New York, will be held at Bennett, Phoenicia and Woodstock Elementary Schools in said district on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 between the hours of 2:00 pm and 9:00 pm, prevailing time in the Bennett, Phoenicia and Woodstock Elementary schools, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

Onteora Musicians Rock!



The Onteora High School Orchestra performed in Albany during Music In Our Schools Month.

ONTEORA’S STUDENT MUSICIANS HAVE EARNED A NUMBER OF HONORS THIS YEAR. HERE ARE JUST A FEW HIGHLIGHTS:

★ Congrats to the following **Bennett Elementary School** students, who were selected to perform in this year’s All-County Orchestra: Rama Gabriel, Madison Murphy, and Seth Reece (Violin); Eva Wilson (Viola); Walker Melville, Kira Jule, Alice Slips, Fiona Turck, and Haley Schmidt (Cello).

★ Kudos to the following **Onteora Middle School** students, who were chosen for this year’s All-County Orchestra: Oskar Baron, Charles Denton, Jeremy Huber, Amelia Swasey, and Cimarron Waldo (Violin); Ezra Smith and Liliana Smith (Viola); and Rebecca Simco (Cello).

★ A number of talented Onteora vocalists participated in All-County Chorus this year! The following students performed with the **Junior High All-County Chorus**: Owen Martinez, Hailey Keator, Melanie Milla, Sarah Caloro, Lila Metawee, and Sara Metawee. Selected for the **Senior High All-County Chorus** were Sean Foster, Ada Helm, Bernice DeLaura, Madelynn Taylor, and Olivia Weiss.

★ Onteora High School student **Maria Grinberg** performed with the prestigious New York State Band Directors Association Honors Band in early March. The band, composed of students from across New York State, were chosen based on their New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Solo Festival scores from 2021.

★ The **Onteora High School Wind Ensemble** performed in the South Concourse of the Empire State Plaza on March 3 as part of Music In Our Schools Month. The performance was sponsored by NYSSMA. The band performed “Celebration and Dance” by Swearingen, “Villages” by Sweeney, “Asylum,” by Perkins, and “Alligator Alley” by Daugherty.

★ The **Onteora High School Orchestra** and **Chamber Ensemble** showcased their talents at Albany’s Empire State Plaza as part of Music In Our Schools Month. The March 1 performance was sponsored by NYSSMA. The orchestra performance included the selections “Farandole” by Georges Bizet, “Romeo and Juliet” by Tchaikovsky, and “The New World Symphony” by Dvorák. The Chamber Ensemble performed “Pavane” by Faure, and “Schindler’s List Theme” by John Williams. The latter featured Joey Driscoll, who performed this violin solo.



These Bennett students were selected for the All-County Orchestra.



Members of the Senior High All-County Chorus pose for a photo.



These Middle School musicians were chosen for the All-County Orchestra.

ONTEORA STUDENTS CELEBRATE WORLD LANGUAGES

In early March, the hallways of the Middle School/High School were filled with artfully illustrated foreign proverbs, as students in foreign-language classes celebrated World Language Week (March 7-11) by participating in a schoolwide contest. Continuing a longstanding Onteora tradition, they created colorful posters that showcased their creativity as well as their language skills.

Choosing from lists of Spanish and French proverbs, World Language students in Grades 7 through 12 translated their chosen phrases into poster form and then shared their creations with their classmates. Each World Language teacher then picked 15 or so posters to display in the hallways, where they delighted passersby.

Among those participating was Grade 8 student Fiona Green, who illustrated the Spanish proverb, *Quien mucho duerme, poco aprende* (He who sleeps a lot, learns little). Explaining her choice of proverb, Fiona said, “I thought it would be fun to draw backgrounds and a person.”

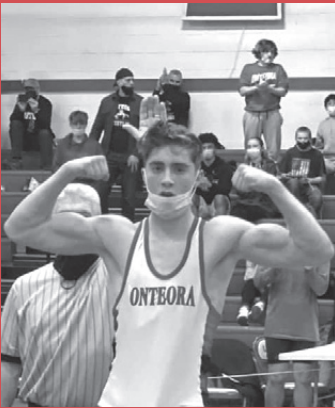
Another Grade 8 student, Ruby Gahagan, selected the French words of wisdom *La faim chasse le loup du bois* (Hunger drives the wolf from the woods). “I had a vision,” said Ruby, referring to her decision to depict a ravenous-looking wolf passing by two dark, leafless trees.

According to Valerie Stewart, who serves as Onteora’s World Languages Liaison, Onteora recognizes the importance of teaching its students world languages, so they can compete in the global market when they graduate. “Learning new languages will open doors for our students to travel abroad and, most importantly, they will learn to accept and appreciate other cultures,” she said.



Lucy Jennings (top) and Finn Douma show off the posters they made for World Language Week.

WRESTLERS WIN BIG AT SECTIONALS



Kudos to Onteora Grade 12 wrestlers Wyatt Konjas (left) and Elisa Rhodes, who both won individual Section titles this winter! Congratulations!

USEFUL DISTRICT CONTACT INFORMATION
www.onteora.k12.ny.us

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

Interim Superintendent
Marystephanie Corsones.....657-6383 x1010
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Stephanie Laffin.....657-6383 x1023
District Clerk
Fern Amster.....657-6383 x1010

Interim Assistant Superintendent for Business
Dr. Donald Gottlieb.....657-6383 x1030
Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Amanda Allison.....657-3320
Universal Pre-Kindergarten
Amanda Allison.....657-3320

Director of Physical Education, Athletics, and Health
Ryan Naccarato.....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

NON DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT The Onteora Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, weight, national origin, creed, religion, religious practice, ethnic group, political affiliation, gender (including gender identity, expression, or nonconformity to stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity), marital status, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, or other legally protected status in access to programs and/or employment provided by the District. Inquiries to the District concerning discrimination or harassment based on sex or sexual orientation may be referred to the Title IX/Title VI Compliance Officer, Stephanie Laffin, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, at: Onteora Central School District, slaffin@onteora.k12.ny.us. Inquiries regarding discrimination can also be made to the United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 32 Old Slip, 26th Floor, New York, NY 10005, (646) 428-3900, ocr.newyork@ed.gov.