## North Tonawanda City Schools



May 2015

### **NT SPIRIT BUDGET EDITION**

Gregory J. Woytila
Superintendent of Schools

### Budget Message from Board President, Colleen Osborn

Dear North Tonawanda Community:

It is budget time again for the school district and we realize that the last few budgets from North Tonawanda have been financially painful for our district and community. While there was a lot of uncertainty from Albany this year over the school budget runs, we were happy to see an increase of state aid of \$1.9 million. Unfortunately the sad truth is that this increase just now brings us slightly above the 2010 funding level we had before the state put the Gap Elimination Adjustment in place. With this in mind the Board felt it was important to put forth a budget that included no increases for our residents. We are able to do that this year and still maintain our current level of programs as well as bring back some electives for our students. Over the past four years we worked to try and close the budget gap with the selling of land and buildings which help us maintain programs and keep the budget under the 2% limit. We recognize the hardships the residents here are facing with an ever increasing demand for money from every direction. We are always working to balance that with the needs of our faculty, staff and students.

The Board of Education continues to work tirelessly with administrators and teachers trying to come to grips with an ever changing educational system. We work to find ways to creatively adjust and align with new ways of doing things that meet high state and local standards. Many new "realities" now exist for educators and the commu-

nity they serve. Many unfunded mandates like APPR (Annual Professional Performance Review), Common Core, and Modules are just a few that have left districts like ours and districts across the region struggling to fund these mandated initiatives while keeping educational offerings alive for students.

Even with the recent budget issues, shortages, and pitfalls I have been proud to sit on the North Tonawanda City School District's Board of Education. I am thankful to sit with such a great group of individuals on the board who selflessly sacrifice of themselves trying to help out our city and schools. I can only hope people continue to step up to make positive changes, to continue to help this community learn, grow, and flourish in the coming years. In closing it has been my pleasure to serve you as the School Board President. Let's continue to work together to make North Tonawanda second to NONE!

| In this issue                                  |             |
|--|-------------|
| DECA Team Takes Home Awards                    | Page 2      |
| Drake Students Attend Regional Spelling Bee    | Page 3      |
| Top Ten NTHS Graduates                         | .Page 4 & 5 |
| Expenditures                                   | Page 6      |
| Revenues                                       | Page 7      |
| School District Budget Notice                  | Page 8      |
| Leadership Niagara's Youth Development Program | 1 Page 9    |
| Interested in Being a Host Family?             | Page 9      |
| Remember Ryan Foundation                       | Page 9      |
| NTCSD District of Distinction                  | Page II     |
| PreK & Kindergarten Registration               | Page 11     |
| Half Days Announced                            | Page 12     |
| Proposition #2                                 | Page 12     |
| Voter Qualifications                           | Page 12     |

Budget Vote and Board Election - Tuesday, May 19, noon - 9 p.m.
Alumni Student Activity Center, 405 Meadow Drive

#### **DECA Team Takes Home Awards from State Competition**

The NTHS DECA team did exceptionally well at the state competition in Rochester to bring home a slew of awards.

The team brought home four first place awards, one second place, three third place,

and 11 of the 14 members placed within the top 10.

The Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) study business principles of merchandising, sales, public relations, entrepreneurship and finance and compete at the local, state and national levels. Competitions take the form of role-plays and presenting projects. Seven students will compete at the international level in Orlando in April.

Earning first place:

Lauren Candlena and Rebecca Rozicki, who competed as a team in Buying and Merchandising Operations. They compiled a comprehensive 30 page paper

and a 20 minute presentation complete with visuals.

Chris Manth and Megan Weaver, who competed as a team for the Community Service Project. They planned a community event, compiled a comprehensive 30 page paper and prepared a 20 minute presentation complete with visuals.

Earning second place:

Jason Swan for Wholesale Selling. He brainstormed and prepared a 20 minute sales presentation complete with visuals.

Earning third place:

Valerie Goranites, Carlie McClinsey and Emily McClinsey who competed as a team for an Entrepreneurship Written Plan. They compiled a comprehensive 30 page paper and a 20 minute presentation complete with visuals.

Earning a Top 10 Spot:

Desiree Doucette for Sales Demonstration. She brainstormed and prepared a 20 minute sales presentation complete with visuals.

Richelle Kloch for Personal Financial Literacy. She took a 100 question test, prepared a response within 10 minutes to a business scenario with no prior knowledge of the top-ic

Chloe Zuch for Chapter Scrapbook. She compiled a "year in review" 100 page scrapbook.

Also competing were Tim Zamyslov, Lilly Williams and Annie Williams. Annie is a first year competitor who won at the Regional level in her event to move her to the State level. Tim and Lilly prepared Sales presentations and although they did not place in the top 10 are to be commended for their hard work.



#### Building a Better Bridge

North Tonawanda students took home 8 of the top 10 awards during the 31<sup>st</sup> annual ABATE Balsa Wood Bridge Competition at the end of February. This annual event for high school students in the Buffalo area, sponsored by local engineering companies, was held again at Classic V Restaurant in Amherst.

First place went to the team of Rory Farkas and Austin Tober.

Second place was the team of Matt Slominski and Tyler Slominski.

Third place was the team of Chris Labonte and Colby Moultrie.

Fourth place went to the team of Allison House, Gaby Schrock and Alex Marchiolo.

There were 68 bridges entered into the contest. North Tonawanda students in grades 9-12 built a creative collection of 18" long balsa wood bridges and competed in a field against their classmates, as well as students from eight other local high schools. Most of the students worked in groups of three or four per bridge.

The balsa wood bridges varied in design from very light "spaghetti" bridges to heavy beam styled structures. The scores of each bridge are determined by an efficiency rating of how much it holds to how much the bridge weighs along with a complexity, engineering and craftsmanship score.

## Drake School has Successful Basket Raffle

The community came out in full force to help support the students at Drake School for their annual basket raffle sponsored by the PTA. Donations included four one day park hopper tickets for Disney World, certificates for local restaurants and businesses and movie passes to name a few. Funds earned from the basket raffle will go toward developing a new playground at Drake. Pictured left is a sign the students made to thank the community for their donations and for all who came out to support the raffle.



#### From NTHS to WGRZ, WKBW and ...

orth Tonawanda High School is well represented on the airwaves of Western New York. NTHS graduate Maryalice Demler delivers the news every evening on WGRZ, while Aaron Mentkowski, also a graduate of NTHS, is the chief meteorologist at WKBW. What's missing in this picture? Sports. This may someday be rectified if current NTHS Junior, Joe Kraus, has his way.

Joe has been on the North Tonawanda schools' airwaves for six years now. In sixth grade, he was asked to start a sports show on the morning announcements over the PA system. As he entered middle school Joe started what has become known as the "Sports Cor-

ner" under the guidance of Mr. Ben Ladik. Beyond that, Joe was also asked that year to be the public address announcer for the NT Youth Center basketball program.

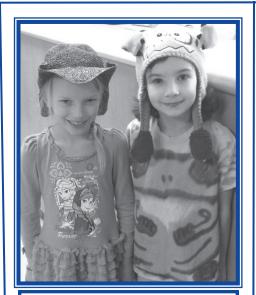
Upon entering high school, the opportunity to write and produce a daily sports show prior to the morning announcements came when high school Principal, Mr. Fisher, gave "Sports Corner" the green light to air each morning with the support of then-advisor Mrs. Annette Follendorf and Mr. Robert Lucas. Now with a more technically advanced studio, joe is able to get his reports out to the entire school. Many are grateful for his reports, remarking that they learn more from Joe than they do from mainstream media. "Joe works tirelessly and I really admire that he writes his own copy every night", remarked current co-advisor of the Telecommunications Club, Mr. Vince Capolupo. Capolupo, along with Lucas, continue to produce the show every morning and work in conjunction with Mr. Corey Zayatz, who teaches 21st Century Communications and coaches the regular anchors of the morning announcements. "Joe's Sports Corner is extremely thorough and exuberant and his delivery is both passionate and professional", said Zayatz. Joe's work and ambitions stretch far beyond NTHS. He's written articles for the Buffalo News' "NeXt" section and has appeared as a commentator for LCTV in Lockport. Known as the "Professor" to both students and staff alike, Joe even covered a Niagara Purple Eagles Hockey game. "Let's just say that Rick Jeanneret has a really hard job.", commented Kraus.

With Joe Kraus' passion for sports and his almost unbelievable work ethic, it's not too difficult to believe that Joe may one day be completing NTHS' hat trick of news, weather and sports on the airwaves of Western New York.



Fifth grade students in Mrs. Beutel's class recently spread a bit of kindness to their heroes at Veteran's Hospital. Students were recorded reading a book and then sent those CD's and books to the VA of Buffalo. Below, Celebrating Random Acts Of Kindness Week, are Paige Bronson, Gabrielle Kogo, Everett Tucker, Andrew Kosikowski, Kendra Andrews, and Andrew Traina.





#### **MEADOW DAY OF CARING**

Meadow School students recently participated in the fourth annual North Tonawanda School-Community Day of Caring. For a suggested donation of 25 cents, students were allowed to wear hats on a designated day. All money raised was donated to two local charities that benefit North Tonawanda residents. Pictured above are Marissa Shingleton and Kayla Davidson.

#### **Drake Students** Attend Regional Spelling Bee



Recently, fourth and fifth grade students participated in a Spelling Bee at Drake School, sponsored by the Niagara Regional PTA. The top winners from each grade level then advanced to the Regional Bee held at Newfane School on March 21. Pictured, sporting their official tshirts are Kendra Andrews, Dylan Palotta, Simon Griskonis, Jacob Scheisser, Lukas Drees and Jack Yackamovich . Congratu-

lations!! Jacob Scheisser (holding trophy) went on to WIN the fourth grade Regional Bee.





#### **VALEDICTORIAN**



Stephen Craig
College Plans: Princeton University
Major: Chemistry

# Congrats!



Nathan Proefrock College Plans: SUNY - Buffalo Major: Biomedical Engineering





Steven Sass College Plans: NCCC Major: Nursing

#### SALUTATORIAN



William Alvarado
College Plans: Princeton University
Major: Science Engineering





Isaac Gifford
College Plans: SUNY@Buffalo or
Grove City College
Major: Electrical Engineering or
Computer Science



Jason Swan College Plans: University of Pittsburgh or Univ. of Minnesota **Major: International Business** 



**Richelle Kloch** College Plans: SUNY@Buffalo or Niagara University Major: Law



**Kate Dotterweich** College Plans: SUNY Fredonia or SUNY Geneseo **Major: Biology** 





**A**nya Fike College Plans: SUNY Canton or Medaille College Major: Pre-Veterinary Science

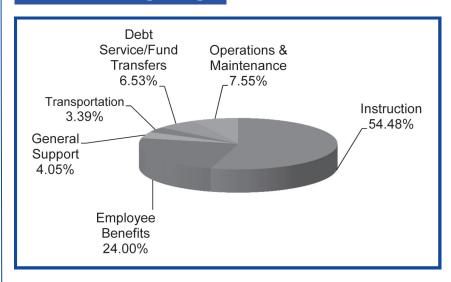


NTHS



**Danielle DalPorto College Plans: Cornell University** or **SUNY** Geneseo **Major: Human Development** or Psychology

#### **EXPENDITURES**



## PROPOSITION #1 VOTE ON BUDGET

Shall the proposed budget of Expenditures of the North Tonawanda City School District for the 2015-2016 school year in the amount of \$70,548,964 and for the purposes shown in the statement of estimated expenditures adopted by the Board of Education, be and the same hereby is approved and the amount thereof shall be raised by a levy of a tax upon the taxable property of the school district, after first deducting the monies available from State Aid and other sources provided by law.

| YES |  |
|-----|--|
|     |  |

NO

|             | 2014-15      | 2015-16      | Percent Change from 2014-15 |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Instruction | \$36,858,292 | \$38,432,746 | 4.27%                       |

Includes: K-12 Instructional program, supervision, curriculum development, BOCES, special education programs, occupational education, interscholastic athletics, co-curricular programs, health services, library media, computer instruction, pupil personnel services.

Employee Benefits \$16,110,684 \$16,933,169 5.11%

Includes: Employee retirement systems, health insurance, unemployment insurance, Social Security and Worker's Compensation.

General Support \$ 2,733,113 \$ 2,852,196 4.36%

Includes: Legal services, personnel, insurance, school board, refund on property tax, BOCES administrative charges, administrative and financial services, public information, central data processing and auditing.

Transportation \$ 2,713,912 \$ 2,394,895 -11.75%

Includes: Transportation to public and non-public schools, vocational schools, educational field and athletic trips and transportation of special education children.

Debt Service/Fund Transfers \$ 4,689,987 \$ 4,606,587 -1.78%

Includes: Principal and interest payments on debt for district building reconstruction projects and energy conservation projects. Also, this includes the District's share of special education summer programs.

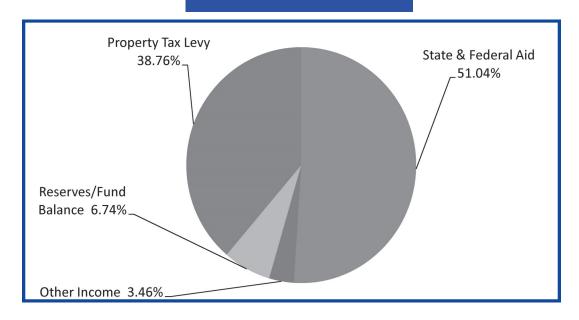
Operations & Maintenance \$ 5,317,980 \$ 5,329,371 0.21%

Includes: Maintenance of district facilities, custodial services and utility costs.

TOTAL BUDGET \$68,423,968 \$70,548,964 3.11%



#### **REVENUES**



|                   | 2014-15      | 2015-16      | Change from 2014-15 |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| State/Federal Aid | \$34,065,695 | \$36,010,852 | \$1,945,157         |

State/Federal Aid represents the largest portion of revenue for the District. In the 2015-16 school year, it is projected to be 51.04% of all revenue. Last year it was 49.79%. This year, the aid increased by \$1,945,157.

Other Income \$ 2,262,836 \$ 2,442,675 \$ 179,839

Any income received by the School District other than State and Federal Aid, Fund Balance or Tax Levy is included under this heading. Examples of other income would be: rentals, interest earnings, payments in lieu of taxes, refunds of prior year's expenses, gifts, fees, tax penalties, commissions and athletic event gate receipt.

Reserves/Fund Balance \$ 4,757,385 \$ 4,757,385 \$0

**Reserves:** The District maintains Reserve Funds in accordance with guidelines established by the State of New York and adopted and accepted by the Board of Education. With the significant financial issues currently affecting districts across the State, the Board of Education has adopted a fiscally responsible process to use those reserve funds that are available. They have adopted a process which attempts to maintain quality programs while keeping the tax levy reasonable and within the Tax Cap threshold.

**Fund Balance:** Funds which are budgeted but unexpended at the end of the budget year, and revenues which are realized in excess of those budgeted for the year, are available at the end of the fiscal year to be carried forward as fund balance.

Tax Levy \$27,338,052 \$27,338,052 \$0

This is the amount to be raised through local property taxes. The Board of Education desires to keep any increases in the levy as low as possible. For the 2015-16 school year, it is anticipated that there will be no increase in the tax levy set by the Board of Education. This amount stays within the legislation that enacted the Tax Cap threshold.

| TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUES \$68,423,968 \$70,548,964 | \$2,124,996 |
|--|-------------|
|--|-------------|

#### **School District Budget Notice**

| Overall Budget Proposal  | Budget Adopted<br>for the 2014-15<br>School Year | Budget Proposed<br>for the 2015-16<br>School Year | Contingency Budget<br>for the 2015-16<br>School Year * |
|--|--|---|--|
| Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions   | \$68,423,968                                     | \$70,548,964                                      | \$70,426,713   |
| Increase/Decrease for the 2015-16 School Year  |  | \$2,124,996                                       | \$2,002,745  |
| Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget  |  | 3.11 %  | 2.93%  |
| Change in the Consumer Price Index   |  | 1.62 %  |  |
| A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount  | 27,338,052                                       | 27,338,052  |  |
| B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable   | -  | -   |  |
| C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **  | -  | -   |  |
| D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy   | -  | -   |  |
| E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)   | 27,338,052                                       | 27,338,052  | 27,215,801   |
| F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit   | \$ -   | \$ -  |  |
| G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions   | \$27,356,720                                     | \$27,856,524                                      |  |
| H. Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, <u>Excluding</u> Permissible Exclusions and Levy for Library Debt, Plus Prior Year Tax Cap Reserve (E - B - F + D) | \$27,338,052                                     | \$27,338,052                                      |  |
| I. Difference: (G – H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **   | \$18,668   | \$518,472   |  |
| Administrative Component   | \$6,324,859                                      | \$6,565,304                                       | \$6,555,653  |
| Program Component  | \$50,782,687                                     | \$52,712,648                                      | \$52,635,998   |
| Capital Component  | \$11,316,422                                     | \$11,271,012                                      | \$11,235,062   |

<sup>\*</sup> Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2015-16 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

\*\*\* 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  |  |
|--|--|
| Proposition #2 – Non-Binding Advisory Proposition on |  |
| Alternative Veteran's Exemption Under RPTL § 458 - A |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

|   | Under the Budget Proposed for the 2015-16 School Year |
|---|---|
| Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup> | \$632.66  |

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2015-2016 by the qualified voters of the North Tonawanda City School District, Niagara County, New York, will be held at the North Tonawanda High School in said district on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 between the hours of 12:00 noon and 9:00 pm prevailing time in the Alumni Student Activity Center, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

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



#### Seven NTHS Students Complete Leadership Niagara's Youth Development Program



For the past eight months, a

group of seven NTHS students have used their spare time to learn about leadership. Chosen to be part of Leadership Niagara's Youth Development program, the students explored a topic a month since the fall. The student leaders heard from industry experts and community leaders throughout the course of the eight-month program along with learning leadership development

concepts and principles, characteristics and values, problem-solving, communication, diversity and inclusion, teamwork and collaboration. The students also had executive-level coaches and mentors to guide them through each month's sessions and through their team projects. William Alvarado, Danielle DalPorto, Valerie Granites, Aidan McMahon, Jessica Robins, Cody Sikora and Elisabeth Williams received certificates during a Leadership Niagara graduation program on

March 16 at the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Niagara County's Training Center.

Leadership Niagara earned fully funded scholarships for 100 students per year to participate in the program through a grant made possible through the generous support of the Irene Witkowski Agrawal Foundation. In addition, over 60 volunteers, 12 organizations, and 13 schools have helped make this year's program a great success.

## Interested in Being a Host Family?

The North Tonawanda-Gymnasium Schenefeld is entering its tenth year this fall, with the arrival of 16 students from NTHS's partner school outside of Hamburg, Germany. Organized solely by the teachers involved, Frau Mechthild Hahne and Robert Lucas, German Teacher at NTHS, the short-term exchange is meant to give high school students a look into other cultures, school systems and, above all, to forge relationships between families from both sides of the Atlantic. Many families and students are still in touch years after their exchange and several have visited one an-



other well after the exchange was over.
This year's 16 German students, eight boys and eight girls, accompanied by Frau Hahne and her colleague Frau Taija Korbik, will arrive Oct. 4 in NT and depart on

Oct. 21. Host families are currently being sought for the exchange. The following summer, June/July 2016, Mr. Lucas along with NTHS ESL teacher, Chris Heyer, will take 16 NTHS students to Germany for a three week exchange during the summer months.

If you and your family are interested in hosting, please contact Mr. Lucas at <u>rlu-cas@ntschools.org</u> or at 807-3600, ext. 1319. Please leave your name, contact information and the best time to call. Expressing interest does not obligate you to anything! Vielen Dank im Voraus! (Thank you in advance!)

## Generosity from Remember Ryan Foundation



The music departments at Drake and Ohio School have been working hard on music for the spring concerts. The fifth and sixth grade choruses are especially excited to accompany one of their songs with tubano drums purchased through funds acquired through a grant from the Remember Ryan Foundation. Pictured above are sixth grade students in Mrs. Young's class practicing a drumming ensemble piece.





## Entrepreneur Day 2015

Children in Mrs. Dexheimer's kindergarten class at Spruce Elementary were busy setting up their businesses along with their fathers (or special guests) on "Entrepreneur Day". The children each brought in shops with goods, clearly marked signs displaying what they were selling along with the price. This math activity was reinforcing pennies, nickels and dimes. The children came equipped with their shopping bags. When they were given time to shop, their fathers were watching the shops for customers. The program ended with the children and fathers singing, "You'll be in my heart" along with some delicious treats.



Pictured left to right: Daxton Tompkins, Frank Nowicki, Jeff Kramarz and Gavin Kramarz





Many district elementary teachers are collaborating and learning from one another while working directly with students. This innovative "hands-on" approach to professional development is both effective and efficient. Above, literacy lessons are being modeled, discussed, and reviewed. Such collaboration is part of reflective teaching and best practices.

## Students Create Mural Sized Paintings

Thanks to a donation from Smurfit, Mrs. Wright's art students were able to recreate puzzle pieces in the form of Henry Matisse's Fauvist style. Students studied and re-created the shapes and sizes that Matisse, the sculptor, created with himself.



#### **Heroes are All Around Us!**

Meredith Roberts and Luke Caskie, students in Mrs. Kiedrowski's first grade class at Spruce Elementary, won first and second place, respectively, in the Orleans-Niagara Teacher Center Learning Through Literacy writing contest. The students had to identify traits of a hero and choose a text that had a character that exhibited those traits. The students then used the Common Core Learning Standards to compare themselves to the character in the text. They will be honored and will read their entry at a ceremony in May at Lockport High School.



Meredith Roberts and Luke Caskie



## NTCSD Officially Named District of Distinction for Health Initiatives

North Tonawanda City Schools was named a District of Distinction by District Administration magazine for its successful health initiatives which led to the creation of the annual Health Fair, 5K and Fun Runs. NTCSD is listed in the March 2015 online issue on page 54.

Districts of Distinction is a national recognition program created by District Administration magazine to honor school districts that are leading the way with new ideas that work. The award recognizes established initiatives that are yielding quantifiable benefits, and that could be replicated by other districts.

North Tonawanda was among 62 districts that were honored in the March 2015 round of Districts of Distriction, the magazine's national recognition program for K12 school districts.

"We are pleased to honor North Tonawanda as a District of Distinction," says JD

Solomon, editorial director at District Administration magazine. "Like all our honorees, North Tonawanda City School District serves as a model for school leaders across the country."

Positive
Thinking
Better Healthy
Living Feel
Regular
Exercise



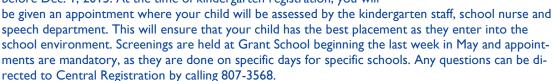
2015 Health Fair Bald for Bucks session

### Have You Registered Your Child for PreK or Kindergarten?

Thank you to the many parents that took advantage of our prek and kindergarten registration days during March and April. If you missed out on those days, there is still time to register your child for either program. Registration for all students is held at the Administration Building located at 176 Walck Road from 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday. NYS mandates state that to be eligible for the prek program your child must be four on or before Dec. I,

2015 and to be eligible for kindergarten your child must be five on or before Dec. I, 2015. At the time of kindergarten registration, you will







#### **Butterfly Effect at Ohio School**

Pictured right is Mrs. Lequeux's class spreading kindness after being inspired by a wonderful man named Chris Rosati, who came up with the idea of the "Butterfly Effect". One act of kindness can spread across the globe and inspire others to do the same. The students enjoyed writing and sharing about his inspiration!



North Tonawanda City School District 176 Walck Road North Tonawanda, NY 14120

Non-Profit Organization
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North Tonawanda, NY



## ECRWSS RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER NORTH TONAWANDA, NY 14120



### June Half Days Announced For Elementary Schools

The following days have been designated as half days for the elementary schools only.

- Monday, June 8
- Wednesday, June 17
- Wednesday, June 24 (last day of school)

## PROPOSITION #2 NON-BINDING ADVISORY PROPOSITION ON ALTERNATIVE VETERANS' EXEMPTION UNDER RPTL § 458 – A

Shall the following advisory resolution be adopted, to wit: RE-SOLVED: that the voters of the North Tonawanda City School District ("District") hereby support the adoption of the Alternative Veteran's Exemption by the District pursuant to Real Property Tax Law Section 458 – A, and subject to the further terms and requirements set forth therein, with the following maximum allowable exemption limits, as may be further adjusted pursuant to Section 458 – A: (a) Wartime - \$6,000, (b) Combat Zone - \$10,000, and (c) Disability - \$20,000.



NO





- You must be a citizen of the United States.
- \* You must be 18 years of age.
- \* You must be a resident of the school district for a period of 30 days immediately prior to the vote.







#### **Board of Education Candidates**

Information on Board of Education candidates can be found on the district website, www.ntschools.org. Voters will elect four board members.

#### High School Chemistry Exam Review

Mrs. Darlak and Mrs. Zygmont will hold chemistry exam reviews after school. Mrs. Darlak will be in room 321 every Thursday and Mrs. Zygmont will be in room 143 every Monday. All students are welcome. Please bring your review book, calculator and reference tables.



North Tonawanda City School District

176 Walck Road North Tonawanda, NY 14120 807-3500 **Board of Education** 

Colleen Osborn, President
Dorothy Kuebler, Vice President
Ann Finkle

Kevin LoCicero James Martineck Barbara McCarthy Cheryl McMahon



www.ntschools.org