



SWEET HOME CENTRAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Superintendent Report

OUR MISSION: EVERY STUDENT,
ONE COMMUNITY, READY FOR THE FUTURE.



2024 - 2025

#WEARESWEETHOME



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Tonight's Report:

- Welcome Home HH Teachers from Ghana
- Tax and Reserves Report
- Electric Bus Charging Stations/TIPS
- Seal of Civic Readiness
- DEI Update
- Building Project Update/Discussion
- BOCES Special Education Facility
- Elementary Enrollment Update
- August Graduation
- Opening Day TUESDAY, Sept. 3

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Heritage Heights Teachers Trip to Ghana This Summer

- Jill Grugnale
- Lindsey Perry
- Mary Rao
- Debbie Zehler
- Jessica Spiesz
- Stephanie Bickelman

2024-2025

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HH4GlobalEdu
GHANA GROOVES & YOGA MOVES
A FUNDRAISING EVENT FOR
April 24, 2024
Event Check In: 5:30-6:00 PM
Yoga Class: 6:00-7:00 PM
Heritage Heights Elementary School
2545 Sweet Home Road, Amherst, NY 14228 (side door entrance)
Minimum Donation: \$5 per person

1. Registration
2. Payment

WHAT TO BRING
TOWEL
WATER BOTTLE
BRING A MAT BUT NOT REQUIRED



GHANA EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH
DONATE TODAY CHANGE TOMORROW
EVERY STUDENT, "EVERY" COMMUNITY, READY FOR THE FUTURE

OUR PLAN
• June 20th: Teachers travel to Ghana
• Collaborate with Ghanaian teachers
• Share cultural experiences to cultivate an appreciation for diversity
• Train students and teachers at the Hermon International School and a local government school in Accra, Ghana
• Extend support by donating essential supplies and materials

WHAT TO BRING
TOWEL
WATER BOTTLE
BRING A MAT BUT NOT REQUIRED

Donate Essential Items until April 30, 2024

School Supplies	Personal Hygiene	Food Items
• notebooks • pens/pencils • paper • markers • erasers	• soap • toothbrush • toothpaste • deodorant • hairbrush	• canned soup • rice • beans • instant noodle • instant ramen

Make Checks Payable to: Hermon International School, Hermon, NY 12526



**SWEET HOME CENTRAL
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2024-25 Tax Rates, Unassigned Fund Balance & Reserves

**Sweet Home Board of Education
Tuesday, August 20, 2024**

2024-2025
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Tax Levy vs. Tax Rate

Tax Levy: Total amount of property taxes to be collected

- ★ Developed during the budget process
- ★ Property Tax Cap law applies to the **levy**
- ★ Tax Levy, state aid, other local revenue, and fund balance/reserves finance the budget to operate the District

Sweet Home Tax Levy for 2024-25: **\$54,268,072**

- ★ Increase of \$946,484
- ★ Percentage Increase of 1.8%
- ★ Falls below the New York State Tax Cap of 3.90% for Sweet Home CSD

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Tax Levy vs. Tax Rate

Tax Rate: The rate per thousand of assessed value that is needed to attain the Tax Levy

Variables Affecting Tax Rate:

- ★ **Amount of the Tax Levy (set by school district)**
- ★ **Total assessed value of real property (set by assessor)**
- ★ **Equalization Rate (determined by the State)**
 - **Town of Amherst 24-25: 100% (62% in 2023-24)**
 - **Town of Tonawanda 24-25: 23% (24% in 2023-24)**

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Equalization Rates

An equalization rate is New York State's measure of a municipality's level of assessment.

Total assessed value of the municipality ÷ total market value of the municipality = Equalization rate
Equalization rates are percentages.

Equalization rate = 100: AMHERST

- town is assessing property at 100% of market value
- most likely a reassessment was conducted in recent years
- your property's assessment should be roughly its market value (the price for which you could sell your property)

Equalization rate < 100: TONAWANDA

- overall property in the town is assessed less than market value
- the lower the equalization rate, the longer it has probably been since the last reassessment
- equalization rate of 23 means overall property in the town is assessed at 23% of market value

Equalization rate > 100:

- overall property in the town is assessed higher than market value
- property values may have decreased since the last reassessment, but assessments were not adjusted downward



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2024-25 Tax Rate Projection May 2024

Assumptions:

- **Assessed Values remain at 2023 levels for Tonawanda**
- Amherst Equalization Rate **increased** from 62% to 100%
- Tonawanda Equalization Rate reduced from 29% to 24%
- Rates based on going to a balanced budget tax cap of \$54,268,072

Town of Amherst Taxable Assessment Values

- **Homestead: \$1,166,200,477 / 2023-24**
- **Homestead: \$2,050,183,407 / 2024-25**
- **Non-Homestead: \$1,158,217,124 / 2023-24**
- **Non-Homestead: \$1,980,827,570 / 2024-25**

**Information provided by Town Assessor Office*

School Tax on an Average Assessed Value Home				
	Amherst		Tonawanda	
	2023-24	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25
Equalization Rate	62.0%	100.0%	24.0%	24.0%
Assessed Value	\$93,000	\$150,000	\$36,000	\$36,000
Tax Rate	\$15.47	\$9.16	\$40.11	\$39.20
Calculated Tax Bill	\$1,439	\$1,374	\$1,444	\$1,411
Estimated Increase (Decrease)		-\$65		-\$33



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2024-25 Tax Rate Recommendation

August 2024

Assumptions:

- **Assessed Values adjusted to 2024 levels**
- Amherst Equalization Rate **increased** from 62% to 100%
- Tonawanda Equalization Rate reduced from 24% to 23%
- Rates based on going to a balanced budget tax cap of \$54,268,072

Town of Amherst Taxable Assessment Values

- **Homestead Aug: \$2,032,657,632 / 2024-25****
- **Homestead May: \$2,050,183,407 / 2024-25***
- **Non-Homestead Aug: \$1,833,372,591 / 2024-25****
- **Non-Homestead May: \$1,980,827,570 / 2024-25***

**Information provided by Town Assessor Office*

*** Final Information used for Tax Rate Calculation*

School Tax on an Average Assessed Value Home				
	Amherst		Tonawanda	
	2023-24	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25
Equalization Rate	62.0%	100.0%	24.0%	23.0%
Assessed Value	\$93,000	\$150,000	\$36,000	\$34,500
Tax Rate	\$15.47	\$9.67	\$40.11	\$42.22
Calculated Tax Bill	\$1,439	\$1,451	\$1,444	\$1,457
Estimated Increase (Decrease)		\$12		\$13

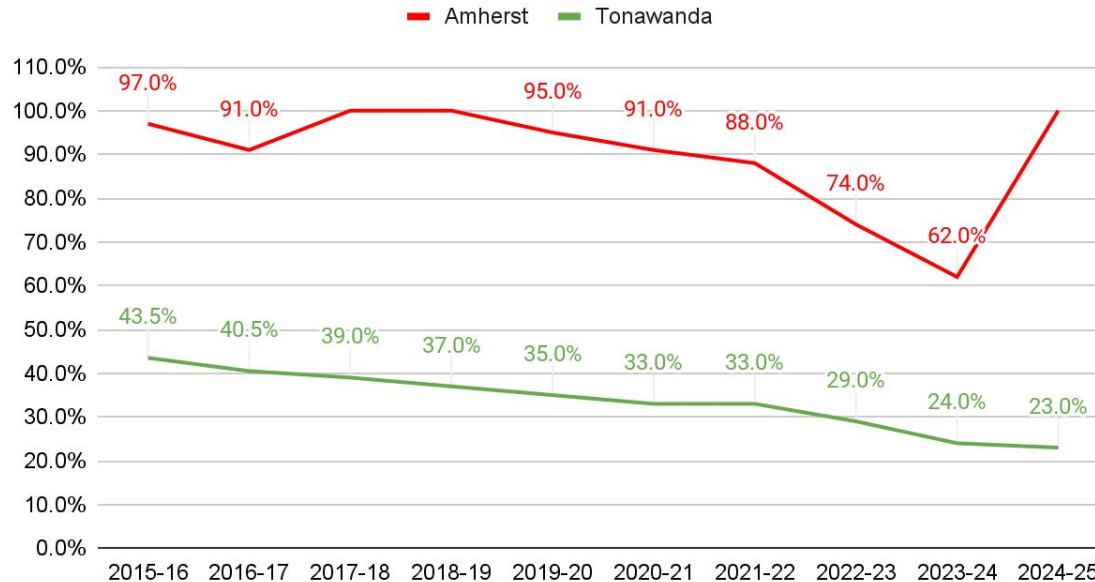


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Equalization Rates

Equalization Rates



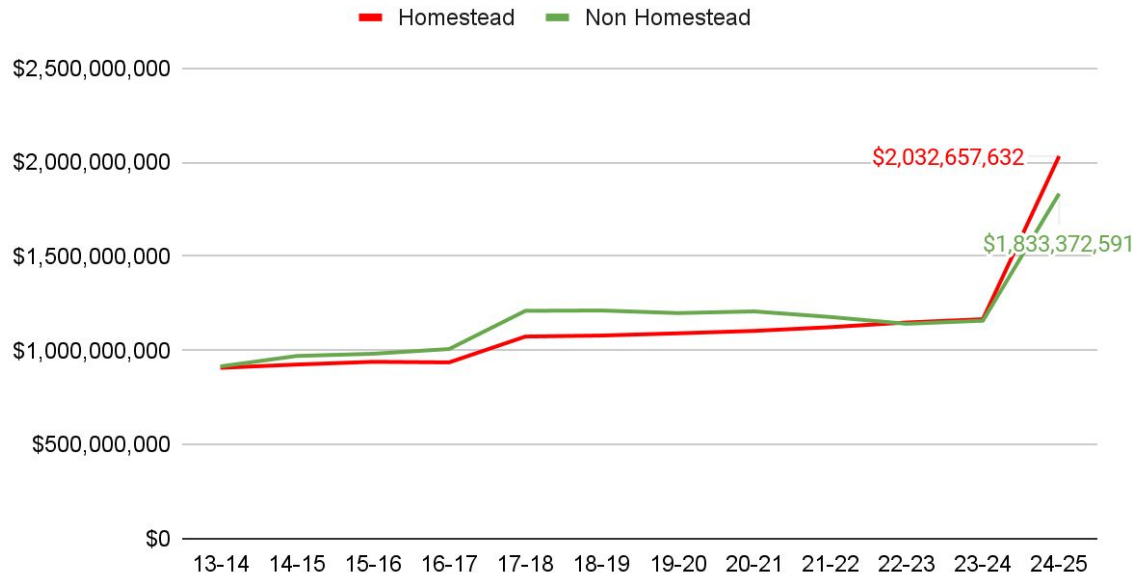


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Amherst Taxable Assessed Value

Taxable Assessed Value



2024-25 Town of Amherst

Homestead:

\$2,032,657,632

Non-Homestead:

\$1,833,372,591

2023-24 Town of Amherst

Homestead:

\$1,166,200,477

Non-Homestead:

\$1,158,217,124

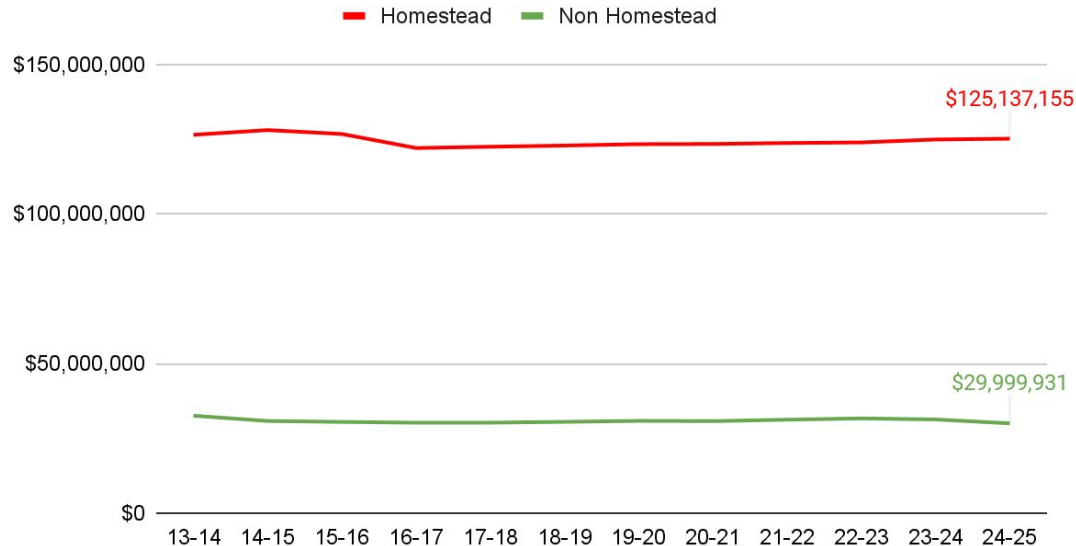


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Tonawanda Taxable Assessed Value

Taxable Assessed Value



2024-25 Town of Tonawanda

Homestead:

\$125,137,155

Non-Homestead:

\$29,999,931

2023-24 Town of Tonawanda

Homestead:

\$124,865,117

Non-Homestead:

\$31,302,874



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2024-25 Tax Levy Breakdown

	2023-24	2024-25
Amherst		
Homestead	\$18,038,080	\$19,645,969
Non-Homestead	\$28,328,158	\$27,410,209
Total Amherst	\$46,366,238	\$47,056,178
Tonawanda		
Homestead	\$5,008,628	\$5,283,071
Non-Homestead	\$1,946,722	\$1,928,823
Total Tonawanda	\$6,955,350	\$7,211,894
Total Tax Levy	\$53,321,588	\$54,268,072

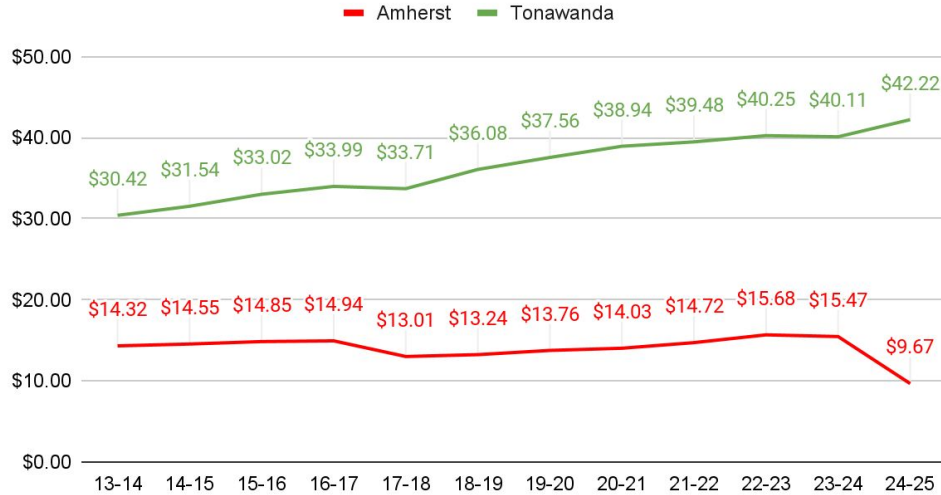


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Sweet Home Tax Rate History

Sweet Home Tax Rate History



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Proposed Tax Rate Summary

Tax Rate to Nearest Cent	2023-24	Proposed 2024-25
Amherst Homestead	\$15.47	\$9.66
Amherst Non-Homestead	\$24.46	\$14.95
Tonawanda Homestead	\$40.11	\$42.22
Tonawanda Non-Homestead	\$62.23	\$64.29

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23-24 Fund Balance & Reserve Fund Activity

Unassigned Fund Balance

2023-24 Approved Budget: \$96,886,588

4% of Budget: \$3,875,464** (4% is the maximum allowable legal limit for Unassigned Fund Balance)

2024-25 Approved Budget: \$100,410,422

4% of Budget: \$4,016,417

Recommendation 2024-25 Unassigned Fund Balance: \$2,962,107

Percentage of 2024-25 Budget: 2.95% (Under the 4% maximum legal limit)

Difference: \$1,054,310

Why the Recommendation?

- 2023-24 Budget Key Points of Interest

- Items not budgeted for:

- \$1.8 million in teacher retirement incentives (24 retirees)
 - \$700,000 in increased McKinney Vento contracted transportation
 - \$300,000 in interest costs related to higher interest rates in bonding of capital project
 - Total of \$2.8 million in expenses not budgeted for - 23/24 budget was able to cover all but \$1 million

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23-24 Fund Balance & Reserve Fund Activity

	Employee Benefits	Tax Certiorari	Workers Comp	ERS/TRS	Debt	Unemployment	Capital	Total Reserves	Unassigned Fund Balance
Balance 6/30/23	\$639,896	\$1,018,386	\$851,042	\$2,740,647	\$1,703,358	\$432,975	\$2,870,224	\$10,256,528	\$3,875,464
Interest Income	\$20,536	\$29,113	\$25,607	\$81,187	\$151,420	\$12,943	\$85,525	\$406,331	
Use of Reserves	0	0	\$75,000	\$1,163,000	\$1,039,000	0	0	\$2,277,000	
Additions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Balance 6/30/24	\$660,432	\$1,047,499	\$801,649	\$1,658,834	\$815,778	\$445,918	\$2,955,749	\$8,385,859	\$2,962,107

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Questions from the Board



ANY QUESTIONS?



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NYSERDA Bus Incentive Program

1. \$165,000 Award
2. For Purchase of at least 3
Charging Stations



NYSERDA



2024-2025

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Update on Electric Buses - Wendel

District team met with Wendel team on Tuesday, August 6th

- **Three charging stations in final stages of approval with SED**
- **Presented an option for purchasing through co-op**
 - **TIPS (The Interlocal Purchasing System)**
 - **Cooperative construction procurement service recognized by State**
 - **Expedites bidding process because we use vendors vetted by TIPS**
 - **Wendel acts as Construction Manager**
 - **Proposal cost - not to exceed \$280,000**
 - **District received \$165,000 from NYSEERDA School Bus Incentive Program**
 - **Net cost to the District is at most \$115,000**

Tonight's agenda / Board authorization

- **Authorize the use of the \$165,000 from NYSEERDA (SED request) for project**
- **Approve TIPS as a cooperative purchasing agent of the District**





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Update on Electric Buses - Wendel

Construction Timeline

- Following SED approval, approximately 3 months
- Will go through bid process with TIPS
- Make recommendation to the BOE at future meeting

Electric bus timeline

- Per Matthews Bus - our three (3) electric buses are due to arrive late calendar year 2024





NYS SEAL OF CIVIC READINESS

The intent of the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness is to **encourage the study of civics** and civility through **experiential learning**; certify attainment of **civic readiness**; provide employers with a method of identifying high school graduates with skills in civics and civility; provide universities with an additional method to recognize applicants seeking admission; prepare students with twenty-first century skills; recognize the value of K-12 Social Studies education in schools as a means to **build civic knowledge**; **empower students as agents of positive social change** to redress historical and contemporary oppression and strengthen our diverse democracy.

Approved
August 14th

The Sweet Home SCR goal is aligned to SP Goal 2: Sweet Home coursework provides real-world experiences that engage students across a series of pathways while teaching and nurturing critical life skills in everyone. The rationale and objective for this goal area is:

- Rationale: Students must be given the opportunity to explore their personal talents, these talents must be presented in ways that do not inhibit unseen aptitudes, skills and gifts of students.
- Objective: Provide students with choices within a series of experiences tailored to meet their interests that address clearly defined outcomes.

The Seal of Civic Readiness was identified as essential to support the student opportunities of the future focused goal. Through this pathway, Sweet Home will expand access to all students in grades 6-12.





DEI MISSION

Cultivating a community where all members experience a sense of belonging

Revisit the structure of the sub-committees to ensure the focus remains on breaking down barriers and build connections.

- Cabinet anchor in on our big rocks:
 - Developed ideas on how to shift to school level teams
- Reconvene the DEI committee in October to get feedback and finalize the direction of the committee
 - Communication projected to go out in September
- Main focus areas:
 - revision and redesign the district code of conduct through a DEI lens.
 - Grow out to school level teams through district driven focus areas while being specific to schools

DEI VISION

To foster an equitable environment that is culturally responsive, inclusive of all voices, and dedicated to lifelong learning





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Capital Construction Project Update

1. Met with NYSED Facilities Planning on July 22
2. Greenlighted idea to Preliminary Plan for expansion projects at MM and Glendale to ease spacing issues. Scope would also include major renovations at all elementary schools
3. With green light from Board, next step is to plan with Y&W and Campus to begin prep for preliminary plan submittal to SED.



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

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BOCES Special Education Facility



The Vision

Create a centralized, **state-of the art** facility founded on **research-based design**, where students with special needs can **thrive in a community** that instills pride and belonging.

- To consolidate resources under one roof.
- To provide a full continuum of programs and related services.
- To provide opportunities for integration across all grade levels.
- To design learning labs that mimic activities for daily living and real-world work experiences.
- To offer highly differentiated learning opportunities for all students including those with significant developmental delays like autism.

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Elementary Enrollment/Class Size Update

Grade	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	Projected 2024-25 Total	2023-2024 Total	Difference
GL	54	70	66	71	69	66	53	449	437	12
HH	54	63	71	67	59	55	73	442	419	23
MM	53	40	80	85	92	87	78	515	486	29
WR	37	68	63	52	59	75	60	414	397	17

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Elementary Enrollment/Class Size Update

Glendale

24-25 # of Sections

Students per section

Exceptional Class Student Numbers

-1	0	1	2	3	4	5
3.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	3.0
18.0	17.5	16.5	23.7	23.0	16.5	17.7

7

6

7

Heritage Heights

24-25 # of Sections

Students per section

-1	0	1	2	3	4	5
3.0	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.0
18.0	21.0	20.3	19.1	19.7	18.3	24.3

Maplemere

24-25 # of Sections

Students per section

Exceptional Class Student Numbers

-1	0	1	2	3	4	5
3.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	4.0
17.7	10.0	16.0	21.3	18.4	21.8	19.5

7

7

Willow Ridge

24-25 # of Sections

Students per section

Exceptional Class Student Numbers

-1	0	1	2	3	4	5
2	3	3	3	3	4	3
18.5	22.7	21.0	17.3	19.7	18.8	20.0

5

7



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August Graduation

- August 22, 4 p.m.
- HS Library

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Opening Day of School

- **TUESDAY, September 3**



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Questions from the Board?

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