



Orchard Park Central School District Community Report

2020 Budget /Vote Edition

OPCSD is Keeping Connected

In mid-March the Orchard Park Central School District closed its school buildings because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since that time the District has continued to work to support its students and families. The physical, social and emotional health of district students, staff and the community is always of the utmost importance to Orchard Park teachers, administrators, staff members and the Board of Education. Everyone has made an impressive effort when it comes to keeping connected and meeting the needs of students.

Students, staff, and the community throughout the district are showing their support for one another during this time. Windom Elementary student council students sent messages to encourage and support teachers and staff saying that they missed them. Ellicott's student council coordinated a school wide effort to decorate mailboxes with thank you messages for the mail carriers. The high school DECA students donated all the remaining Quaker Corner snacks to health care workers in the emergency rooms at the John R. Oishei Children's Hospital and Buffalo General. A group of Orchard Park teachers made face masks and button headbands for health care workers. These are just a few examples of the different ways our school community is working to support each other.



Our teachers and staff have really stepped up to the plate when it comes to educating their students. Mr. McGarrity said it best when he said we are building a plane mid-flight. The teachers have learned how to host Google Meets with their students, record lessons and interact with students and families. Special Education services, therapies and counseling are continuing, as practicable, through teletherapy methods. Several of the Elementary buildings are holding daily story hours so students can listen to a teacher read one of their favorite books. Schools are having virtual spirit days, clubs are meeting. The Elementary buildings along with the Middle School have been providing weekly morning announcements for the students in order to keep a sense of normalcy. In order to help teachers meet these new challenges the District technology team has been hosting trainings every Tuesday and Thursday in addition to providing office hours.

In addition to making sure Orchard Park students receive the education through online virtual learning, the district is committed to ensuring that the student's basic needs are met as well. Since the closure the Orchard Park Central School District has been providing approximately 550 meals daily meals students by working with the district food service provider Personnel Touch. The district's transportation department is delivering the meals.

As the district navigates this new frontier, staff members are planning for the future. Currently students in grades 4-12 have a District provided Chromebook to work with at home. Throughout the coming fall the district will be rolling out devices for students in grades K-3. During the closure the district has provided students and families who did not have a device at home with a Chromebook and all Special Education students and English Language Learners have been provided a Chromebook. The district has also coordinated with providers to help get internet into the homes of those families that did not have this service.

2020-2021 Annual School Vote Budget, Bus Proposition, and School Board Member Election

June 9, 2020

Absentee Ballot Only

Superintendent's Column

Matthew P. McGarrity

During this time, I hope that this newsletter finds you and your family safe as we work through this challenge. Over the last few months, the administrative team has been working on the development of the 2020-21 operating budget. The process for the budget, like all areas of our daily lives, changed significantly due to the COVID-19



Pandemic. On May 1, Governor Cuomo issued an Executive Order to have all school district vote/elections take place via absentee ballot and the order also changed the vote date to June 9, 2020.

The news from the state regarding support for schools, local governments and other municipalities remains uncertain. For the Orchard Park Central School District, we are expecting to potentially see additional reductions in state aid and other revenue support in the next few weeks and months which will likely impact the budget for the next academic year. The budget before voters is \$107,453,198 which would be the maximum expenditure allowable. This recommended budget is down just over \$1.1 million dollars from the last draft in April in anticipation of revenue reductions from the state. With reduced expenditures this year, due to building closures and utilizing remote learning, any additional fund balance the District has can be used to help offset other reduced revenues in the next academic year. The property tax levy will not be set until August. At that time the District will have a better indication of state aid and other revenue sources and fund balance, and will be able to adjust and reduce the budget appropriately if needed. The budget is under the required tax cap requirements.

plan to continually replace older buses in a cost-effective way without resulting in a new tax. The plan, as always, is funded by state aid reimbursement.

There are four individuals seeking election to three seats on the Board with terms beginning on July 1, 2020 and ending on June 30, 2023. The terms of Christine Gray Tinnesz,

Dwight Mateer and David Nielsen are up for election. Christine Gray Tinnesz, Kim Hughes, Dwight Mateer and Jennifer Rogers are the four individuals seeking election to the three seats. Mr. Nielsen has been on the Board since 2008 and has served as the Board President, Vice President and served on numerous committees. He has chosen to not seek re-election. We are thankful for his service and his time and dedication, including time spent away from family events, as he volunteered as a Board Member helping to govern and provide sound oversight to the district.

The district is continuing to support students and families during the COVID-19 Pandemic and our transportation and food service departments are delivering over 1,100 meals to many of our students. We are growing and evolving our online learning and supporting students with their technology needs as they learn remotely. Our most important responsibility is to ensure that we are keeping our students, staff and community members safe during these unprecedented times.

The 2020-21 Operating Budget will help to ensure this continued commitment to our students. As always, we will continue to make our students our first priority. I thank you for your continued support as we navigate this very challenging time.

Author and Illustrator Troy Cummings Visits Windom Elementary



Author and illustrator Troy Cummings visited Windom Elementary in February. The students at Windom prepared for his visit by reading his books, creating a variety of their own art work, and using his books as an inspiration for their own writing.

Troy is a New York Times bestselling author and illustrator. He has published over thirty children's books. His publishing credits include: The Notebook of Doom series, Can I Be Your Dog? and The Eensy Weensy Spider Freaks Out (Big Time!). His illustrations have been used in newspapers, greeting cards, magazines, jigsaw puzzles and even a French opera.

Ellicott Student Council Recognizes Mail Carriers

The student council at Ellicott Elementary met virtually and decided they wanted to show their appreciation for our mail carriers, who are continuing to deliver the mail during the pandemic. All



Ellicott students were invited to join in by decorating their mailboxes and writing a message or a note to show their appreciation for the wonderful job the mail carriers do.

OPMS Hosts 1st STEAM Expo

The Orchard Park Middle School's Science, Technology and Art Departments came together to host the school's first STEAM Expo on Tuesday, March 3, 2020.

The event took place in the Orchard Park Middle School foyer, gymnasium and pool area.

Students, alumni, teachers, and community members actively engaged attendees in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math activities. There were approximately 30 scientific projects, ranging from Kool-Aid Hair Dye to Non-Newtonian Fluids, presented by approximately 45 students in grades 6-8.



One of the highlights of the evening was the cardboard boat races. Middle School students built boats out of cardboard and raced in lanes of the Middle School pool. Pictured above students are getting in the boats and preparing to begin the race.

An Orchard Park School alumni showcased his efforts on the Alfred State Baja Car, while the OPMS Robotics Club, and Girls Who Code Club gave attendees an opportunity to drive student-built, competition robots. The district-wide Art Department, the Orchard Park Visual Arts Boosters, and district-wide Technology teachers provided hands-on STEAM activities such as a green screen photo booth, custom-made kaleidoscopes, balsa wood bridge testing, and a catapult challenge.

Area businesses attended to share insights regarding how STEAM relates to their industry, along with interactive displays.

BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

Annual Budget Vote and Board Member Election
By Absentee Ballot

Proposition # 1 - Proposed Operating Budget

The 2020-21 School District Budget for the Orchard Park Central School District, is \$107,453,198. This is a budget to budget increase of 1.73%. The estimated tax increase is 2.88%. This keeps the budget within the 2.88% allowable tax levy cap.

Proposition # 2 - Purchase and Financing of Vehicles

Voters will decide on the purchases of (2) seventy-seven (77) passenger school buses at an estimated maximum cost of \$132,000 each; (2) sixty-six (66) passenger school buses at an estimated maximum cost of \$127,000 each; and (4) thirty-four (34) passenger school buses at an estimated maximum cost of \$69,000 each. The purchase is part of the District's long-range bus replacement schedule which will not add to the tax burden. These eight buses, at a total cost not to exceed \$794,000, will be funded through state education department reimbursements and contractual agreements. This proposition is similar to propositions over the last fifteen years; and, if approved will have no new tax impact to local taxpayers.

Election of Three Candidates to the Board of Education

See pages 6 & 7 for Candidate Profiles.

ArtSplash 2020



Artwork by: Bridget Horan

The 32nd year of ArtSplash looked a little different than previous years. This year the ArtSplash show was a virtual exhibit. It launched on Friday May 15th. Please click the link to check out the impressive pieces of student artwork that were displayed in this year's show! <https://www.opvab.com/artsplash-2020.html>



Artwork by:
Holly Quagliana



Artwork by: Ella Ruffino

ArtSplash is sponsored by the Orchard Park Visual Art Boosters (OPVAB). The OPVAB's mission is to support the

visual arts and creative opportunities for all Orchard Park students.



Artwork by:
Penelope
Hageman

Expenditures

Components	2019-20	2020-21	Change
Program	\$79,562,433	\$81,342,609	\$1,780,176
Capital	\$16,375,246	\$16,448,880	\$73,634
Administration	\$9,685,253	\$9,661,709	-\$23,544
TOTAL	\$105,622,932	\$107,453,198	\$1,830,266

Program Expenditures

Proposed Operating Budget - Program Component

Program	2019-20	2020-21	Change
Regular Education	\$40,192,795	\$41,690,371	\$1,497,576
Special Education	\$15,802,350	\$15,418,900	-\$383,450
Transportation	\$4,924,288	\$5,034,338	\$110,050
Benefits	\$18,643,000	\$19,199,000	\$556,000
TOTAL	\$79,562,433	\$81,342,609	\$1,780,176

Capital Expenses

Proposed Operating Budget - Capital Component

The capital component of the budget includes maintenance and upkeep of the district's facilities and property including electricity, gas, water, sewer, and telephone services. It also includes principal and interest payments on capital projects and salaries and benefits for maintenance and custodial staff.

Program	2019-20	2020-21	Change
Operations & Maintenance	\$6,375,705	\$6,363,605	-\$12,100
Debt Service	\$7,424,241	\$7,631,975	\$207,734
Benefits	\$2,575,300	\$2,453,300	-\$122,000
TOTAL	\$16,375,246	\$16,448,880	\$73,634

Administrative Expenses

Proposed Operating Budget - Administrative Component

The administrative component of the budget provides for overall general support and management activities including the Board of Education, the superintendent's office, business and personnel departments, curriculum and staff development, supervision and support in each of the six schools. Also included are expenses for legal services, liability and property insurance, BOCES administrative costs and salaries and benefits for all staff in the administrative offices.

Program	2019-20	2020-21	Change
Board & District Office	\$4,764,385	\$5,102,770	\$338,385
Building Supervision	\$2,314,868	\$2,061,939	-\$252,929
Benefits	\$2,606,000	\$2,497,000	-\$109,000
TOTAL	\$9,685,253	\$9,661,709	-\$23,544

Estimated Revenue

Source	2019-20	2020-21	Change
Property Tax Levy	\$66,242,431	\$68,153,068	\$1,910,637
PILOTS	\$750,000	\$700,000	-\$50,000
State & Federal Aid	\$27,771,661	\$28,490,290	\$718,629
Erie County Sales Tax	\$5,400,000	\$4,300,000	-\$1,100,000
Other Revenues	\$1,013,000	\$864,000	-\$149,000
Fund Balance & Reserves	\$4,445,840	\$4,945,840	\$500,000
TOTAL	\$105,622,932	\$107,453,198	\$1,830,266

School Districts are funded through State Aid, property tax, and other revenue sources including sales tax and fund balance.

Orchard Park Central School District Estimated Tax/STAR Impact of Typical Home 2020-21

	Actual 2019	Estimated 2020
Home Value (Orchard Park) Rate per \$1,000	\$100,000 36.2384	\$100,000 37.0381
Tax Bill w/o STAR:	\$3,624	\$3,704
Increase		\$80
Percentage Increase		2.21%
Tax Bill w/Basic STAR Exemption:		
STAR Reduction (46.5% equalization rate)	-\$562	-\$549
Tax Bill	\$3,062	\$3,155
Increase		\$93
Percentage Increase		3.04%
Tax Bill w/Enhanced STAR Reduction: (For persons over 65, under \$88,050 income)		
STAR Reduction (46.5% equalization rate)	-\$1,180	-\$1,179
Tax Bill	\$2,444	\$2,525
Increase		\$81
Percentage Increase		3.31%

OPCSD Named One of the Best Communities For Music Education



The Orchard Park Central School District has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from the NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education for the fourth year in a row.

The Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students.

Orchard Park By The Numbers

Business First Rankings

Metric	Western NY (Out of 96 Districts)
Academic Ranking	#4
Cost Effectiveness	#9
Administrative Efficiency	#23
Per Pupil Spending	#8

DECA Donation



In April OPHS DECA donated all of the snacks from the Quaker Corner school store to Kaleida Health workers in the emergency rooms of Oshei Children's Hospital and Buffalo General.

Board of Education Candidates - Elect Three

Below and on the following page are the candidates running for the Orchard Park Board of Education. They are listed in alphabetical order. District residents will elect three candidates to the Board.

The information was provided by the candidates. The Board of Education is elected by District voters to govern schools and determine educational policies. Technically, Board of Education members are Local Officials, their authority and duties are defined by the state and federal constitutions and laws as well as by rules and regulations promulgated by the Board of Regents and commissioner of education, and other regulatory agencies. Members of the Board of Education are volunteers and receive no salary for their work. They do not have the day-to-day duties of running a school district, rather their role is oversight and setting policy; the superintendent is responsible for all aspects of the district and he/she reports to the Board.

1A On The Ballot Christine Gray-Tinnesz

**Candidate Address:**

7278 East Quaker Rd, Orchard Park, NY 14127

Family Information:

Husband, Dylan
Daughters, Ellie 18 and Casey 17

Education:

Ph.D University at Buffalo, M.S.
Syracuse University, B.S. SUNY
Oswego

Career:

Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Communication, University at Buffalo

Reasons for Running:

I have served as a trustee on the Orchard Park School Board for the past six years, with two years as President of the board. It has been an honor to represent our district at New York State conferences and to meet with local representatives to express our concerns about the funding of education. I have served on various district wide committees including: audit, policy, technology, CDEP, and nutrition. My professional background in education makes me uniquely qualified to advocate for Orchard Park. I strongly believe in Orchard Park's commitment to a comprehensive educational program. I understand we need a balanced budget that is mindful of our district's taxpayers, while also preserving quality education.

I am the proud parent of Ellie (senior) and Casey (junior) who attend Orchard Park High School. I have witnessed as a parent and as a board member the dedication of our faculty and staff to this district. We are living in an unprecedented time. Our district is dealing with many changes. Consequently, I believe it is extremely important to have continuity on our board at a time like this. It has been an honor to serve over the last six years and I would be grateful to again represent citizens of Orchard Park.

2A On The Ballot – Kim Hughes

**Candidate Address:**

3 Taylor Drive West Seneca, NY 14224

Family Information:

Husband - Michael P. Hughes- Senior Vice President at Kaleida Health
Daughter - Emma Hughes (finishing her freshman year at Brockport)
Son - Owen Hughes (finishing his junior year at Orchard Park High School)

Education:

Masters - Elementary Education
Bachelors - Secondary Social Studies Education

Career:

Secondary Social Studies Teacher at Frontier High School for the past 20 years. Also served as class advisor, coached for several years, and served on many building and district committees.

Reasons for Running:

As a mother of two and a teacher for 20 years, I will be a great asset to the Orchard Park School District. As my children age, I now have time to work on my goal of becoming more involved in the community. Orchard Park was rated #4 in 2019; that along with my experience of having my children go through the district, I know that being on the board would give me the opportunity to be part of something exceptional. During my teaching career I have taught in an integrated co-teaching setting with students that have disabilities, sat on several committees, coached a sport and served as class advisor. I am well versed, very motivated and have great team working skills. By being a teacher and a parent, I have been involved with different aspects of the operation of schools. This has allowed me to see what it takes to help the school run efficiently. After working with kids for so long, I have seen first hand the difference that just one person can make on a student's trajectory. I also know the importance of making sure that there is support not just for students but for teachers, parents and administrators as well. We are entering uncharted waters in the coming months and possibly years. I believe that I have the knowledge and skills to help the district overcome the adversity that all schools will be facing, and help us come out even more successful!

3A On The Ballot – Dwight Mateer

**Candidate Address:**

36 Hobby Lane, Orchard Park, NY 14127

Family Information:

My wife and I have two children in college.

Education:

Masters of Engineering in Civil Engineering from the State University of New York at Buffalo

Bachelors of Science in Civil Engineering from the State University of New York at Buffalo

Associates of Science in Liberal Arts and Science from Erie Community College

Career:

I have 27 years of experience as a Civil Engineer partnering with community groups, municipalities, concerned citizens and private business while planning, designing, constructing and maintaining large highway, bridge, and building projects.

Reasons for Running:

It's been an honor and a privilege representing voters the past 6 years. My first year on the board I was bluntly told I asked more questions than any other trustee had their entire time on the board. I don't think that was meant as a complement but I took it as one. I've gained a substantial understanding of how to best serve the taxpayers while providing exceptional instruction for students and positive motivation for staff.

It's important to not just serve the community, but to serve it well. I've always listened to community concerns and continuously learned about district operations, functions, needs & accomplishments. I've asked tough questions, made difficult decisions and provided solutions while always striving to find the best value.

I've met many exceptional hard working staff supporting a high standard of student distinction and excellence. These outstanding people empower students to achieve their fullest potential. I strongly support staff development and the recruitment of a highly qualified & motivated workforce.

For the past six years, the Orchard Park Central School District's budget was under the tax cap while still providing quality academics and programs. I am persistently mindful of people on fixed incomes and the community affects of budget decisions. Through long-range planning and fiscal responsibility I only support budgets under the tax cap.

We are in for difficult times ahead and I'm prepared. This is a time when the District needs Board Members with knowledge, experience, reasonability and perseverance.

I humbly ask for your support.

4A On The Ballot – Jennifer Rogers

**Candidate Address:**

4093 Connors Way, Blasdell, NY 14219

Family Information:

Husband: Anthony (Andy) Rogers
Children: Benjamin (9), Parker (5), Ethan (5), Cameron (4)

Education:

High School: Orchard Park, Class of 2000

B.S. University of Rochester, Chemical Engineering, 2004

M.D. SUNY Stony Brook School of Medicine, 2008

Career:

Physician with UBMD Emergency Medicine

Director, Department of Emergency Medicine, Eastern Niagara Hospital

Reasons for Running:

My decision to run for the Orchard Park School District Board of Education is multi-factorial. Most importantly, I am the mother of four young boys who are just beginning their educational journey. It is important to me that they and all OP students are not only prepared academically, but also encouraged to be well-rounded, inquisitive individuals who are equipped to succeed beyond the classroom. I am also a graduate of the OPCSD and care deeply about the schools and community.

My goals as a Board member will include optimization of learning opportunities for students of all academic ability. I value the hard-working educators and want to ensure they have materials and support needed to achieve this. I believe in the importance of the athletic and extra-curricular programs, which foster lifelong skills not found in textbooks. I believe the district can better leverage technology to provide maximum benefit to students. Moreover, the recent circumstances have undoubtedly created challenges for the upcoming school year(s). The district will need to balance educational demands with health, safety, and disparity concerns as well as fiscal responsibility as we navigate a return to normalcy.

Finally, as a physician and Director of an Emergency Medicine Department, I have leadership and management experience. My position requires me to be direct, efficient, and data-driven. As a graduate of OPCSD, I have benefited from the strong education and programs this district can provide and look forward to supporting the next generation of students.

A Word From Board of Education President

Christine Gray Tinnesz, Ed.D

Words cannot express my feelings about the last few months of the school year. I know it is cliché, but we truly are living at an unprecedented time. However, we must press on and proceed with our duty to educate students as effectively as possible. On May 9, 2020, the Board of Education adopted the 2020-2021 budget proposed by Superintendent McGarrity. The budget adheres to the criteria established by the Board at a budget work session in early January 2020. It focuses on District safety and security which includes social emotional learning and mental support for our students. It also stays within the tax levy cap, ensures staffing to comply with current class-size guidelines, and, perhaps most importantly, maintains the comprehensive nature of the District's educational program. The adopted budget represents months of building-level and district-level meetings and a tremendous effort by Superintendent McGarrity and the entire administrative team. We are fortunate to have a group of administrators so committed to both the stability and excellence of the District.

This year the vote will be done through absentee ballot. In addition to voting on the budget, the community will also be asked to approve a proposition for the purchase of buses, identical to the bus-buying proposition that has been on the ballot for the past 10-14 years. The yearly purchasing of several buses permits the District to keep its fleet in top condition, to keep bus maintenance costs low, and to maximize state aid for the purchase.



Finally, the community will also elect three school board trustees on June 9. Our District is fortunate that each year community members of different backgrounds, experiences and interests come forward to run for the school board. Effective school boards are critical to the success of school districts. The role of the

school board is to oversee district operations and to focus on the "big picture." Some of the more important responsibilities within this oversight function are hiring and evaluating the Superintendent; adopting policies pertaining to all areas of District operations; and, establishing priorities and goals for the short- and long-term success and stability of the district. Before you cast your vote for school board trustees, consider these questions suggested by the New York State School Boards Association:

1. Does the candidate understand the role of the school board?
2. Is the candidate focused on a single issue or on a broad range of school district concerns?
3. Does the candidate's approach make it likely that he or she will be able to work effectively with the rest of the board?
4. Will the candidate enhance the mix of skills and backgrounds on the board and help represent the diversity of the community?
5. Does the candidate have the commitment to do what's right even in the face of strong opposition?

On behalf of the Board, I encourage everyone to become as informed as possible about the budget, the bus proposition and the school board candidates, and to send in your ballots by June 9, 2020.

Date, Time and Location of Public Vote

Voting will take place by absentee ballot as per Executive Order 202.26.

Absentee Ballots, with a postage paid return envelope, were mailed to residents of the Orchard Park Central School District, on May 21, who are registered to vote through the Erie County Board of Elections. A Qualified voter (defined above) may request a ballot by contacting the district clerk at 716-209-6280 or by clicking here to fill out an online request for an absentee ballot to have be mailed. Please note that absentee ballots will not be counted unless they are received in the District

Voter Eligibility

- At least 18 years of age.
- A United States citizen.
- A District resident for at least 30 days before the date of the vote.

On The Ballot

Proposition I: Operating Budget

- Expenditure Increase is 1.73% & Tax Levy increase is 2.88% (Within Allowable Tax Levy Cap).
- The 2020-2021 Budget keeps the Tax Levy within the tax cap requirements.

Proposition II:

- Continues the 15 year Bus Replacement Program (no new tax impact).

Election of Three Board Members (They are listed in the order they will appear on the ballot).

- 1A On The Ballot Christine Gray-Tinnesz
- 2A On The Ballot – Kim Hughes
- 3A On The Ballot – Dwight Mateer
- 4A On The Ballot – Jennifer Rogers