



ORCHARD PARK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

# COMMUNITY REPORT

May 2016 / Annual Budget Vote Information

## Orchard Park Pride

### *Dinner To Go at the Vote*

The Orchard Park High School Post Prom Committee will host a BW's Barbecue Chicken Dinner on Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> from 3-7 p.m. (or until they run out) on the Freeman Road side of the High School. Chicken dinners are \$11. Rib dinners are \$14. Meals include meat, potato salad, coleslaw, roll and butter. Proceeds benefit the Post Prom Party, a school supported, drug & alcohol-free event for seniors and their dates after the dance.

*Summer  
Community  
Education  
Brochure  
Enclosed*

*Pull Out and  
Save Center  
Insert!*



Congratulations to the 39 seniors recognized by the district, the Orchard Park Chamber of Commerce and the business community as Orchard Park Pride. These students were recognized for their outstanding character, leadership and achievement at an awards dinner held on April 28<sup>th</sup>. Orchard Park Pride honorees are pictured above, from left to right; Row 1: Grace Wiest, Anna Swetz, Michael Gossel, Jessica Visco, Theresa Gossel, Hala El Solh, Skylar Vitko-Woods, Rachel Bebak and Elena Kamis. Row 2: Grace Ruh, Kaitlyn Bartz, Amanda Mellerski, Alexandra Zurbrick, Maxime Legros, Karina Kuchumov, Porscha Colville, Serafima Zdjelar and Sara Braun. Row 3: Christie Witkowski, Shaan Legros, Lena Pasqualetti, Margaret Ahern, Lucy Covello, Elizabeth Crinzi, Dominique Detwiler, Bailey Saskowski, Madison Dolce and Travis Wolf. Row 4: Ryan Paolini, Zachary Stebbins, Zachary Roman, Lauren Chavanne, Riley Heywood, Emily Sacks, Madelyn Rominger, Andrea Ernst, Kayla Wasiewicz and Bryan Somerville. Emily Geiger is not pictured.

*2016-2017 Annual School Vote  
Budget, Bus Proposition, and  
School Board Member Election*

*May 17<sup>th</sup> 2016 - 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.*

*Orchard Park High School - 4040 Baker Road  
(For easy access, please use the Freeman Road Entrance)*

# Total Operating Budget: \$94,632,633

Budget to Budget Increase 3.45%

Tax Levy Increase 1.68%

Keeps Budget **Within** the 1.68% Allowable Tax Levy Cap which will result in a “tax freeze rebate” issued to homeowners with the STAR Exemption

## Property Tax Report Card 2015-2016

	<b><u>Budgeted 2015-2016</u></b>	<b><u>Budgeted 2016-2017</u></b>	<b><u>Percent Change</u></b>
Total Proposed Spending	\$91,474,440	\$94,632,633	3.45%
A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount, Net of Reserve	\$59,176,463	\$60,170,654	
B. Tax Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Tax Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable <sup>2</sup>	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy	\$59,176,463	\$60,170,654	1.68%
F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$2,178,885	\$2,195,632	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions <sup>3</sup>	\$56,997,578	\$57,975,022	
H. Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, Excluding Permissible Exclusions and Levy for Library Debt, Plus Prior Year Tax Cap Reserve	\$56,997,578	\$57,975,022	
I. Difference: (G-H); (negative value requires 60.0% voter approval) <sup>2</sup>	\$0	\$0	
Public School Enrollment	5,220	5,079	- 2.70%
Consumer Price Index			.12%

	<b><u>Actual 2015-2016</u></b>	<b><u>Estimated 2016-2017</u></b>
Adjusted Restricted Fund Balance	\$5,806,383	\$5,063,832
Assigned Appropriated Fund Balance	\$2,500,000	\$2,000,000
Adjusted Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$2,479,665	\$3,050,754

# An Investment In Student Achievement Kindergarten to Graduation

## Annual Vote and Election of School Board Trustees

Voting will take place at Orchard Park High School, 4040 Baker Road, Orchard Park, from 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, 2016. For easy access to the Gymnasium, please use the Freeman Road Entrance.

### Proposition 1

General Fund Budget - Pages 3-5

### Proposition 2

Purchase of Buses - Page 7

## Election of Two Trustees to the Board of Education

Page 8

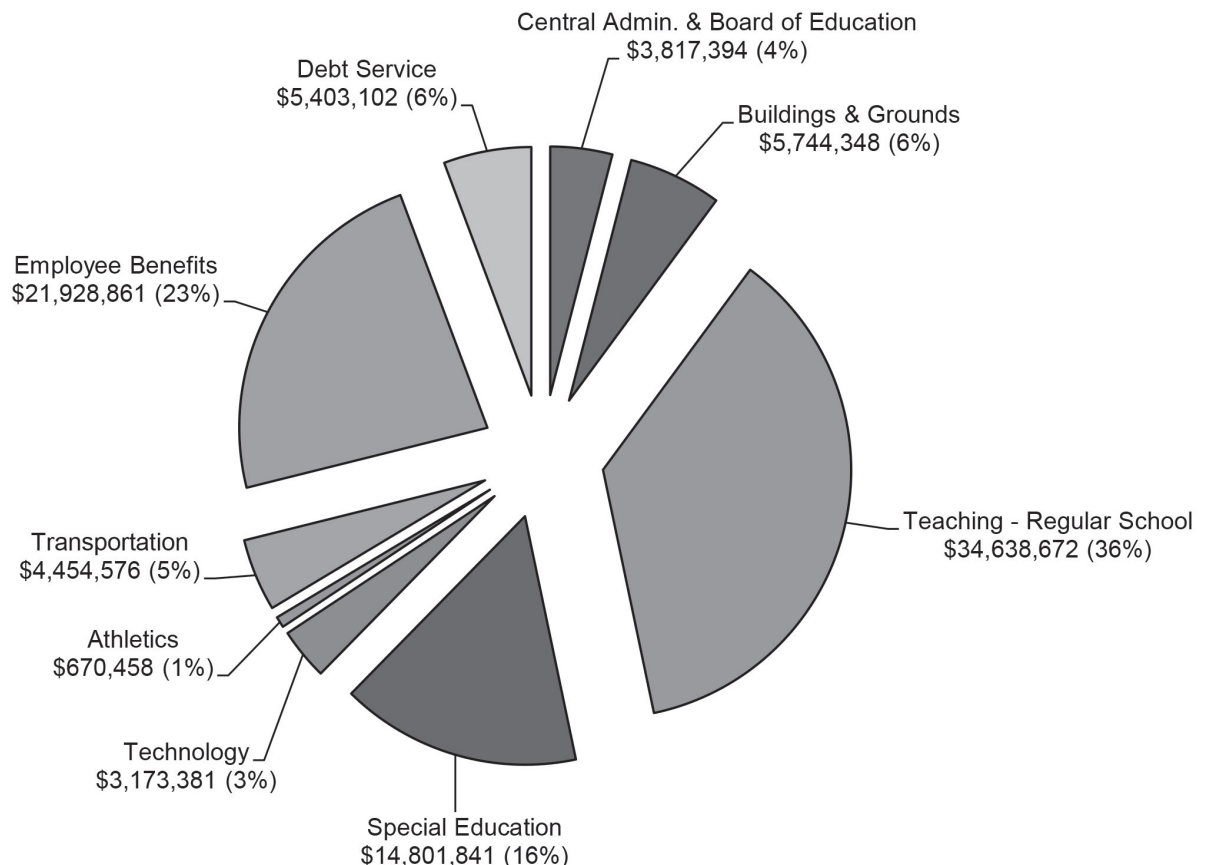
Dwight D. Eagan (1A On the Ballot)

Robert J. Mahany (2A On the Ballot)

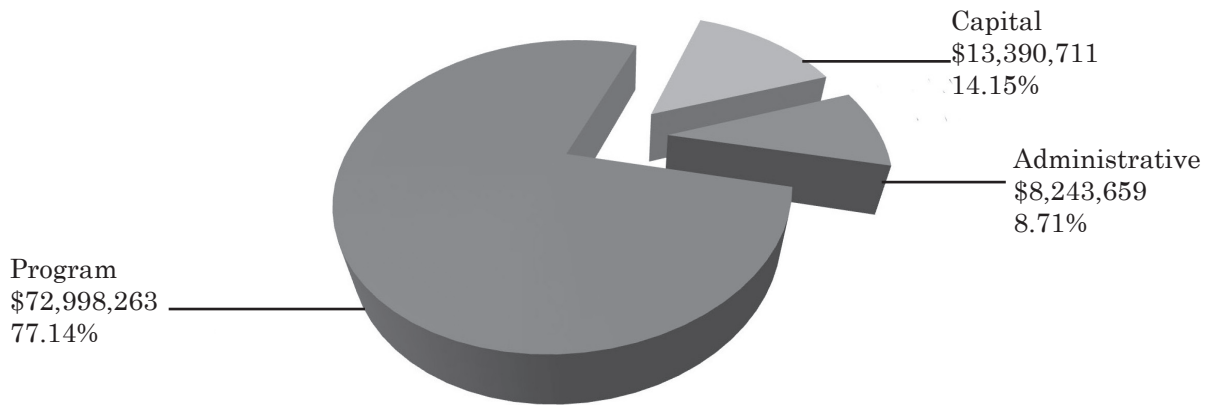
Saverio F. Marrazzo "Sam" (3A On the Ballot)

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## *Departmental Budget Comparison 2016-2017*



# 2016-2017 Three-Part Budget (Common Language)



## **Administrative Component: 2015-16**

Board of Education	\$8,500
District Clerk	\$200
District Meetings	\$35,000
Superintendent's Office	\$296,154
Business Administration	\$463,146
Auditing	\$34,000
Treasurer	\$250
Tax Collection	\$14,000
Fiscal Agent Fees	\$3,000
Legal Services	\$175,000
Personnel	\$218,471
Public Information	\$68,655
Central Printing & Mailing	\$183,000
Unallocated Insurance	\$230,000
School Association Dues	\$23,000
Assessments on School Property	\$40,000
Refund on Real Property Taxes	\$25,000
BOCES Administration & Capital	\$687,452
Curriculum Development	\$893,165
Supervision - Regular School	\$2,012,745
Research, Planning & Evaluation	\$110,699
Computer Assisted Instruction	\$99,782
Employee Benefits	\$2,221,875
<b>Administrative Component Total:</b>	<b>\$7,843,094</b>

## **2016-17**

Board of Education	\$9,500
District Clerk	\$200
District Meetings	\$25,000
Superintendent's Office	\$299,497
Business Administration	\$475,019
Auditing	\$35,000
Treasurer	\$300
Tax Collection	\$15,000
Fiscal Agent Fees	\$3,000
Legal Services	\$300,000
Personnel	\$235,983
Public Information	\$73,774
Central Printing & Mailing	\$185,000
Unallocated Insurance	\$242,000
School Association Dues	\$20,000
Assessments on School Property	\$40,000
Refund on Real Property Taxes	\$25,000
BOCES Administration & Capital	\$687,269
Curriculum Development	\$1,021,464
Supervision - Regular School	\$2,102,565
Research, Planning & Evaluation	\$124,388
Computer Assisted Instruction	\$109,000
Employee Benefits	\$2,214,700
<b>Administrative Component Total:</b>	<b>\$8,243,659</b>

8.57%

8.71%

## **Program Component:**

Teaching - Regular Day School	\$27,091,478
Special Education	\$14,424,507
Occupational Education	\$673,379
Teaching - Special School	\$244,730
School Library & Audiovisual	\$498,317
Computer Assisted Instruction	\$2,790,404
Guidance & Counseling	\$1,073,450
Health Services	\$664,997
Psychological & Social Work Services	\$753,050
Co-Curricular Activities	\$366,500
Interscholastic Athletics	\$648,813
Transportation	\$4,443,263
Employee Benefits	\$17,127,860
Interfund Transfers	\$185,000
<b>Program Component Total:</b>	<b>\$70,985,748</b>

Teaching - Regular Day School	\$28,150,871
Special Education	\$14,801,841
Occupational Education	\$704,528
Teaching - Special School	\$248,140
School Library & Audiovisual	\$445,580
Computer Assisted Instruction	\$3,064,381
Guidance & Counseling	\$1,013,300
Health Services	\$681,650
Psychological & Social Work Services	\$750,050
Co-Curricular Activities	\$333,827
Interscholastic Athletics	\$670,458
Transportation	\$4,454,061
Employee Benefits	\$17,127,860
Interfund Transfers	\$185,000
<b>Program Component Total:</b>	<b>\$72,998,263</b>

77.60%

77.14%

## **Capital Component:**

Operation of Plant	\$3,669,638
Maintenance of Plant	\$1,803,132
Employee Benefits	\$2,161,759
Debt Service	\$5,011,069
Transfer to Capital Fund	\$0
<b>Capital Component Total:</b>	<b>\$12,645,598</b>

Operation of Plant	\$3,680,348
Maintenance of Plant	\$2,064,000
Employee Benefits	\$2,220,100
Debt Service	\$5,403,102
Transfer to Capital Fund	\$23,161
<b>Capital Component Total:</b>	<b>\$13,390,711</b>

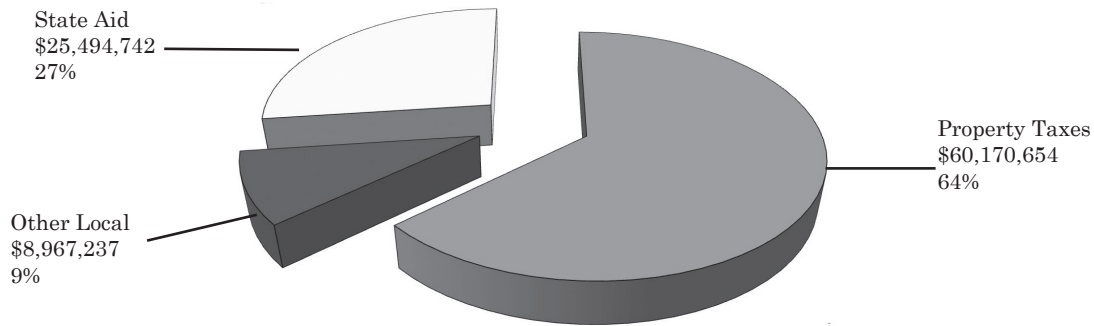
13.82%

14.15%

4 **GENERAL FUND TOTAL: \$91,474,440**

**\$94,632,633**

# 2016-17 Anticipated General Fund Revenues



## SOURCE OF REVENUE

	2015-16 Budget	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 Budget	Tax Levy Increase
Property Tax Levy	\$53,176,463	\$52,819,538	\$53,970,654	\$994,191
STAR	\$6,000,000	\$6,387,362	\$6,000,000	
<b>Total Property Tax:</b>	<b>\$59,176,463</b>	<b>\$59,206,900</b>	<b>\$60,170,654</b>	<b>1.68%</b>

## Other Local

Other Payments In Lieu Of	\$655,522	\$661,373	\$696,397	
Interest & Penalties On	\$4,000	\$6,385	\$4,000	
Non-Property Tax Distribution	\$4,700,000	\$5,500,000	\$5,000,000	
Community Education Tuition	\$150,000	\$160,000	\$150,000	
Textbook Charges	\$1,000	\$1,110	\$1,000	
Admissions	\$15,000	\$12,356	\$10,000	
Other Charges for Services	\$35,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	
Day School Tuition	\$100,000	\$125,000	\$110,000	
Health Services - Other Districts	\$40,000	\$85,115	\$50,000	
Transport for Other Districts	\$1,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	
Interest and Earnings	\$45,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	
Rental of Property- Individual	\$0	\$8,684	\$0	
Rental of Property - (BOCES)	\$55,000	\$34,000	\$34,000	
Rental of Equipment - Individual	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	
Commissions	\$0	\$407	\$0	
Sale of Real Property	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Sale of Equipment	\$0	\$20,758	\$0	
Insurance Recoveries	\$0	\$1,723	\$0	
Refunds - Prior Year Expenses	\$0	\$69,194	\$0	
Refunds - Prior Year BOCES	\$275,000	\$305,135	\$300,000	
Premium on Bonds	\$0	\$231,370	\$0	
Unclassified	\$4,000	\$1,566	\$1,000	
Turf Project Reserve	\$35,200	\$0	\$35,200	
Playground Reserve	\$10,640	\$0	\$10,640	
From Reserves	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	
\$24 Million Project Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$2,500,000	\$0	\$2,000,000	
<b>Total Other Local Share:</b>	<b>\$9,136,362</b>	<b>\$7,297,368</b>	<b>\$8,967,237</b>	

## State Aid

Foundation Aid	\$15,158,606	\$15,145,555	\$15,158,606	
Excess Cost / Private & High Cost	\$1,803,241	\$1,674,236	\$1,756,808	
BOCES	\$1,852,856	\$1,994,729	\$2,063,050	
Building Aid (w/EXCEL Aid)	\$2,467,311	\$2,422,492	\$2,543,988	
Transportation	\$3,402,087	\$3,187,349	\$3,418,127	
Textbook/Soft/Hard/Library/AV	\$534,800	\$526,858	\$514,163	
(Gap Elimination Adjustment)	\$(3,322,090)	\$(2,117,286)	\$(2,117,286)	
Gap Elimination Restoration	\$1,204,804	\$0	\$1,239,787	
Final GEA Payment	\$0	\$0	\$877,499	
Other State Aid (Other & Homeless Aid)	\$0	\$50,331	\$0	

## Federal Aid

ARRA (Deficit Reduction Assessment)	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Federal Jobs Fund Restoration	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$60,000	\$33,754	\$40,000	
<b>Total State &amp; Federal Aid:</b>	<b>\$23,161,615</b>	<b>\$22,918,018</b>	<b>\$25,494,742</b>	

<b>TOTAL ANTICIPATED REVENUE</b>	<b>\$91,474,440</b>	<b>\$89,422,286</b>	<b>\$94,632,633</b>	
			<b>\$3,158,193</b>	<b>3.45%</b>





# Superintendent's Column

*By Matthew McGarrity, Superintendent of Schools*

I'm pleased to announce the Board of Education adopted the recommended 2016-2017 budget unanimously at the Board meeting held on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Public voting on the 2016-2017 school budget, bus proposition and school board member election will be held on Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> from 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. at the Orchard Park High School, located at 4040 Baker Road. Please use the Freeman Road entrance for your convenience

Drafting a budget that balances the needs of our students, improves the educational experience and stays within the parameters of the tax cap is no easy task. It requires long range planning, sound financial practices, research and many meetings by the administrative team. We have worked very hard over the last few months to present the Board a budget that meets the priorities of the district and maintains the integrity of the comprehensive K-12 program.

In December of 2015 our Board of Education and the administrative team developed goals and priorities for the 2016-17 school budget. These priorities included: increased safety and security, maintaining and growing our teacher coaching models in Math, Literacy and Technology, implementing a new 8 + lunch schedule in our High School and supporting our technology needs and initiatives. This budget accomplishes all of these goals.

As we move forward, we will continue to make our students our first priority. I am very thankful that Orchard Park has extraordinary teachers, support staff and administrators, and that we are supported by a community that values exceptional public education. We will continue to advocate for adequate state aid, high standards for our students and support for the local control of public education by our community. Please remember to come out and vote on Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> any time from 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

I thank you for your continued support.

The Orchard Park Central School District's proposed operating budget for the 2016-17 school year will:

- ◆ Improve school building access and control;
- ◆ Focus on a sustainable comprehensive K-12 program;
- ◆ Keep class sizes with current board guidelines; and
- ◆ Keep the tax levy increase within the tax cap requirements (which will result in a "Tax Freeze Rebate" for homeowners)

## *Cost Saving Initiatives*

*\*Almost \$4 million in annual savings\**

- ◆ School Municipal Energy Consortium Program (SMEC), Energy Performance Contract & Cenergistic Program
- ◆ Telephone Service (Switch to BOCES in 2013)
- ◆ Self-Funded Health Insurance Program
- ◆ 2012 Retirement Incentive
- ◆ 2014 RFP for Worker's Comp & Liability Insurance Program

The safety of our students, staff and community members is always a top priority for the district. This budget allows us to improve safety while minimizing any negative impact on instruction.

- ◆ Focused Emergency Drills
- ◆ Single point of entry before during and after school hours
- ◆ Visitor ID software and hardware
- ◆ Upgrading our phone system
- ◆ Implement Transportation GPS software

## Proposition 2 - Purchase and Financing of Vehicles

Voters will decide on the purchase of four (4) seventy - seven (77) passenger school buses at a maximum estimated cost of \$120,500 each, and four (4) universal wheelchair van-type buses at a maximum cost of \$75,500 each. The purchase, part of the District's long-range bus replacement schedule, will not add to the tax burden.

These eight buses, at a cost of no more than \$784,000, will be funded through state education reimbursements and contractual agreements. This proposition is similar to propositions passed over the last eleven years; and, if approved, will have no new tax impact on local taxpayers.

## News In Athletics



*Pictured is Orchard Park High School senior, Joe Losardo, signing his national letter of intent to play football at Buffalo State College next year. He is pictured with Varsity football coach, Gene Tundo and Joe's mother Elizabeth Losardo. Joe signed his letter of intent at a signing ceremony held at the Orchard Park High School on April 12, 2016. Joe enjoys how football is really a team game. He likes the complexity of the game and the amount of preparation that is needed to get ready for game day. Joe is looking forward to playing on the team at Buffalo State. He plans to major in business and aspires to own a successful business one day.*



*Pictured above are a handful of the 26 Scholar Athletes recently announced from the Winter Season. In order to be a Scholar Athlete, a student must be a senior in high school, have a Grade Point Average of a 90 or above and be a starter or an important reserve on a Varsity level team.*

## June Elementary Calendar Reminders

- Elementary students will now be in attendance for a full-day on Monday, June 20, 2016.
- The last elementary day will be Tuesday, June 21, 2016 and it will be a half-day with dismissal at 11:30 a.m.

## ArtSplash 2016

The Orchard Park Central School District is pleased to announce the 28<sup>th</sup> year of ArtSplash, the two-week, district-wide student art show held each spring. Opening night will be held on Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. This year the district is pleased to announce that the Orchard Park Public Library will be hosting ArtSplash. The Orchard Park Library, located at 4570 South Buffalo Street in Orchard Park, will provide an ideal venue for the amazing pieces of student artwork to be displayed and enjoyed. The student artwork will remain on display in the Orchard Park Public Library until May 27<sup>th</sup>.

## Kindergarten Registration Information:

For information on registering your child for Kindergarten for the 2016-2017 school year, please visit  
[www.opschools.org/kindergarten](http://www.opschools.org/kindergarten).

Registration is done by appointment only.

# Board of Education Candidates - Elect Two

Below are the candidates running for the Orchard Park Board of Education. They are listed in the order they will appear on the ballot. District residents will elect two candidates to the Board.

The information was provided by the candidates. The District does not provide further candidate information.

The Board of Education is elected by District voters to govern schools and determine education policy. Board members are state officials operating within guidelines set forth by New York State Education Law, the State Board of Regents, judicial decisions and other regulatory agencies.

## Dwight D. Eagan (1A On the Ballot)

**Address:** 86 Cranwood Lane, Orchard Park, NY 14127

**Family Information:** I live with my family of 7, of which I am the eldest of 5 children.

**Education:** Regents Diploma with Honors - Orchard Park High School Class of 2014.

**Career:** Part-time Lab Technician at Niacet Corporation. Currently a 2<sup>nd</sup> year, full time student at the University at Buffalo. Pursuing a Legal studies/Pre-law undergraduate degree.

**Describe your reasons for running, any experiences you have that support your candidacy and why you are asking community members to support you:** I am seeking election to the school board so that I may take the opportunity to give back to our community. As the eldest of 5 siblings who currently attend school at each level of the district, I intend to have a positive impact on their education. I am a homegrown product of the Orchard Park school system. I graduated from OPHS in 2014, having attended school in the district from 1<sup>st</sup> grade to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. I am currently applying the education I received in pursuit of a Legal studies degree at the University at Buffalo. I am not your average college student, I commute to school and keep one foot on my campus and the other in Orchard Park. I work part time as a Lab Technician at Niacet Corporation. I also volunteer through the English Language Institute at UB to work with ESL students every week of the semester. I am asking community members to support me so that I may serve the community that has provided me with so much opportunity. Perspective leads the way to guidance. I believe my perspective as a recent product of the Orchard Park school system who's now using that education would be of great service to the school board.

**What do you feel the District's most important priority should be:** I believe the top priority should be to uphold the integrity of the Orchard Park education system by maintaining comprehensive programs throughout the district. We must make sure that our students continue to have access to a variety of opportunities despite increased pressure to cut programs to relieve rising costs in the budget. The extracurricular programs I participated in were essential to the complete education of myself and my fellow peers. These programs give real-world experience to students and allow them to flourish by following their passions or by sharpening their skills.

**Community Service:** Assistant Soccer Coach (OP Soccer club), Volunteer Referee (OP Soccer club), Volunteer ESL Native-speaking Partner (English Language Institute, University at Buffalo)

## Robert J. Mahany (2A On the Ballot)

**Address:** 7 Green Lake Drive, Orchard Park, NY 14127

**Family Information:** Wife: Kathi, Children: Bobby, Tim and Danny

**Education:** MS in Educational Administrative Supervision - Canisius College - 1992; BA Hartwick College - 1981

**Career:** Teacher: Sept. 1987 to present - Lake Shore High School

**Describe your reasons for running, any experiences you have that support your candidacy and why you are asking community members to support you:** As a candidate for the Orchard Park School Board I feel I bring a wealth of knowledge, experience, and passion to the educational landscape. My twenty-nine years of teaching in a public school district provide a tremendous variety of insight to the teaching and learning environment. I am also the parent of three children who have been educated in the Orchard Park School District. My son Daniel is currently a student in the Orchard Park Middle School, and my son Timothy will be graduating in June of this year from the Orchard Park High School. My wife is also a teacher in a local school district.

**What do you feel the District's most important priority should be:** Our top priority should be to provide a 21<sup>st</sup> century education for all students within the district. This needs to occur by managing our district's resources efficiently.

**Community Service:** Director of Coaching; Orchard Park Soccer Club - 2004 - 2007

## Saverio F. Marrazzo "Sam" (3A On the Ballot)

**Address:** 11 Kathryn Drive, Orchard Park, NY 14127

**Family Information:** Married, Carla - former BOE Trustee 2010-2013; 2 children: Mario, class of 2014; Sabrina class of 2016

**Education:** MBA - University of Buffalo; BS in Accounting - Daemen College; U.S. Navy

**Career:** 25 years of IT innovation and business process optimization. Director Praxair 2002 - 2015, CIO Superior Group 2015 - current

**Describe your reasons for running, any experiences you have that support your candidacy and why you are asking community members to support you:** I feel my professional experience can benefit the district in areas of technology, cost savings and innovation. Having 2 children raised and schooled in OP schools we have experienced the challenges of the past 15 years and have the ability to know what companies are expecting in careers in the future.

**What do you feel the District's most important priority should be:** Technology innovation for students & teachers and cost savings measurements for sustainability

**Community Service:** Past OP youth soccer coach 2000 - 2010; QMB Pit Parent 2010-2014; WNY Info Tech Board Member; volunteer various for different organizations throughout the year; Friends of the Night People; Ride for Roswell



# Orchard Park Central School District Estimated Tax/STAR Impact of Typical Home 2016-2017

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Home Value (Orchard Park) Rate per Thousand	\$100,000 33.4412	\$100,000 33.9354
<b>Impact before STAR Reduction</b>		
School Property Tax Bill	\$3,344	\$3,394
Increase		\$49
Percentage Increase		1.48%
<b>Impact after Basic STAR Reduction</b>		
School Tax Bill (before STAR)	\$3,344	\$3,394
STAR Reduction (2% Cap on Increase) (55% equalization rate)	\$554	\$565
<b>NET School Tax Bill:</b>	\$2,790	\$2,829
Increase		\$38
Percentage Increase		1.38%
<b>Impact after Enhanced STAR Reduction (for persons over 65, under \$84,550)</b>		
School Tax Bill (before STAR)	\$3,344	\$3,394
STAR Reduction (2% Cap on Increase) (57% equalization rate)	\$1,112	\$1,134
<b>NET School Tax Bill:</b>	\$2,232	\$2,260
Increase		\$27
Percentage Increase		1.23%

## *DECA Advisor Recognized for her Dedication*

Orchard Park High School business teacher Mrs. Kristen Casto was recently honored by receiving the DECA Honorary Life Award recognizing her contribution to DECA throughout the years.

This is not the first time Mrs. Casto has received an award for her service to DECA. In March of 2015 she received the DECA Outstanding Service award and in October of 2015 she received the Outstanding DECA advisor award from the New York State Business Teachers Association.

Mrs. Casto began her participation in DECA during her time as a student at Hamburg High School working with advisor and mentor Michael Karpie. Mrs. Casto's experiences as a DECA member in high school are among her best memories. Working in the school store, serving as a chapter officer, and attending numerous state and national conferences were some of the biggest influences on her career choices.

In the years that Mrs. Casto has been the co-advisor of Orchard Park DECA, the chapter has grown to

over 50 members, receiving the Chapter Up Membership Award four out of the last five years.

Mrs. Casto began teaching at the Orchard Park High School in 2000. She has served as the DECA Advisor since 2008. Mrs. Casto has served on the NYS DECA Board of Trustees for the past three years. She is currently the instructional leader of the business department; and in addition, she is the work based learning advisor.



*Pictured DECA students and co-advisors Mr. Jim Agnew & Mrs. Kristen Casto pose for a picture while several students display some of Mrs. Casto's recent awards.*



## *University at Buffalo's Visiting Teacher Program A Success in Orchard Park Schools*

*By: Lisa Krueger, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Pupil Services*

Our district leaders and staff are continually seeking innovative ways to enhance our students' educational experience while expanding students' cultural awareness to prepare them for our global society. To support these efforts, the Orchard Park Central School District has partnered with the Confucius Institute of the University of Buffalo. Through this partnership, Orchard Park is hosting two Chinese visiting teachers for the next 2-3 school years. The mission of the Confucius Institute is to encourage the study of Chinese language, promote a deeper understanding of contemporary China, and to develop an appreciation for Chinese history and culture.

In September we welcomed Haige Chang and Yanfang Xu to the Orchard Park Central School District. Ms. Chang and Ms. Xu spent the fall visiting each of our six schools becoming acclimated with American schools, Orchard Park, our staff, and our students. In November, Ms. Chang and Ms. Xu began visiting classrooms as guest speakers, presenting on a variety of topics. In third grade our students study World Communities, and Ms. Chang and Ms. Xu enhanced this learning experience tremendously for our students. Many third grade classrooms celebrated the Chinese New Year with lessons taught by our visiting teachers. Recently during Mr. Helfman's sixth grade social studies unit on early China, our visiting teachers taught rich lessons integrating Chinese language, culture, social studies content and character education. During one particular lesson, students learned the philosophies of Confucius and his message of harmony, "Do not do unto others what you would not have them do unto you." Students gained an understanding of the philosophies of Confucius and how Confucius influenced Chinese culture. Ms. Chang and Ms. Xu introduced students to Chinese words and phrases, which they found very interesting. At our high school, among other engagements, students have been given the opportunity to participate in a Chinese language immersion experience.



*Joanna Liu, 4<sup>th</sup> grader at South Davis speaks Chinese with the visiting teachers at South Davis Elementary.*

Ms. Chang and Ms. Xu are conducting rotations to all of our schools, and have been graciously welcomed into our classrooms as guest speakers. We are fortunate to have this partnership with the Confucius Institute, the University of Buffalo, and our visiting teachers: Ms. Chang and Ms. Xu. Together, we are expanding students' opportunities to develop appreciation of cultural differences and a global awareness to prepare them for our interconnected global society.





# *A Word From the President*

*By: Natalie Schaffer,  
Board of Education President*

On April 19<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Education unanimously adopted the 2016-2017 budget proposed by Superintendent McGarrity. The budget adheres to the criteria established by the Board at a budget work session in late January. It focuses on District safety and security, the newly-implemented coaching teaching model, and literacy. 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. The Board is hopeful that the community will support the budget on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

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 11 years. The yearly purchasing of several buses permits the District to keep it's fleet in top condition, to keep bus maintenance costs low, and to maximize state aid for the purchase. The Board is hopeful that the community will approve the bus proposition as it has in the past.

Finally, the community will also elect two school board trustees on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

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. There are widespread misconceptions about school board service, most of them based upon the notion that school board members are involved in the day-to-day operations of the district. We are not. Instead, 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; adopt-

ing 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. Yes, much of what school boards do may seem to the public like "rubber-stamping." However, recommendations to the Board should be approved if they align with the Board's policies, priorities and goals, and a good Superintendent will ensure that all recommendations are so aligned.

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 make time on May 17<sup>th</sup> to vote. It's your duty and your privilege.

## *Contingent Budget Information*

If the school budget is not approved by voters, the Board of Education has two options: put the budget up for a second vote in June or adopt a contingent budget. If a second vote is defeated a contingent budget would be adopted in the amount of \$93,638,442, and there would be no change to the tax levy. Further budget reductions would be required in the amount of \$994,191, which is the equivalent of approximately 13 full-time employees. Other area of reductions to close the gap could include, increased class sizes and reductions or elimination of non-mandated programs such as Kindergarten, athletics, co-curricular clubs and activities, and other non-mandated programs.



## Resident

### Annual School Budget Vote & Board Election

#### Date, Time and Location of Public Vote

Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> 2016  
7 a.m. - 9 p.m.  
Orchard Park High School  
4040 Baker Road  
Orchard Park, NY 14127  
(Use Freeman Road Entrance)

#### 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.
- You do not have to be a registered voter to vote in school district elections, but you will be asked to show proof of residency at the polls (i.e. driver's license, rent/mortgage receipt).

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#### On the Ballot

##### Proposition I: Operating Budget (\$94,632,633)

- Expenditure Increase is 3.45% & Tax Levy increase is 1.68% (Within Tax Levy Cap)
- The 2016-2017 Budget keeps the Tax Levy Increase Within the Tax Cap Requirements which will result in a "tax freeze rebate" issued to homeowners with the STAR Exemption

##### Proposition II: Bus Purchase (8 Buses – Up to \$784,000)

- Continues the 10 Year Bus Replacement Program (no new tax impact)

##### Election of 2 Board Members:

- 1A) Dwight D. Eagan
- 2A) Robert J. Mahany
- 3A) Saverio F. Marrazzo "Sam"

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#### Absentee Ballots

Applications for absentee ballots for the 2016 - 2017 Annual School Vote may be obtained at the District Clerk's Office, 2240 Southwestern Blvd., West Seneca. Completed applications must be received by the District Clerk no later than seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or no later than the day before the vote if the ballot is to be personally delivered by the voter. Absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 5 p.m. prevailing time on May 17, 2016. Absentee Ballot applications are also available on our District website: [www.opschools.org](http://www.opschools.org). For more information on absentee ballots, please contact the District Clerk at 209-6280.