

## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Community Members,

We have worked hard over the past several months to create a school budget for 2020-2021 that will continue to support our students through the academic excellence and personalized environment that is the hallmark of a Wheatland-Chili education in a fiscally responsible fashion. Our small schools provide students with an environment where many caring adults are committed to their success. Whether it is through academic classes, extra-class activities, art and music experiences, interscholastic opportunities, or intramurals, the adults at Wheatland-Chili know the students' strengths and interests because they interact with them through these varied experiences. Our students graduate with the self-confidence that grows from participating in and experiencing success in a wide variety of activities. We have created the 2020-2021 budget without eliminating these programs for our students to support their future success and with a 2.02% increase in the tax levy.

This has been an unusual budget season with financial uncertainty in our State and Country and changes to the timing and process for the budget vote and election of Board of Education members due to the health emergency resulting from COVID-19. While our school buildings were closed, learning continued in our schools as our teachers and students quickly moved from the classroom to remote instruction. Our food distribution continued during this time through the support of our food service staff, who provided families with breakfasts and lunches. Transportation staff assisted with food deliveries, facilities staff cleaned and disinfected our buildings and maintained our grounds, and our administrative staff worked remotely and in their offices to keep the work of the District moving forward. The Wheatland-Chili staff stepped up with a moment's notice to reimagine learning and all that goes into operating a school district during a global pandemic. We have an amazing team of people in the District that are truly to be commended for their efforts!

Strong schools are in everyone's interest. At Wheatland-Chili, we have a very strong school. When schools are successful, students are successful, and our community will continue to be successful.

Please use the information in this newsletter to make an informed vote on the school budget and election of Board of Education members. Our budget vote this year will be held by absentee ballots mailed to your homes. Please be sure to return your ballot materials in the pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope so they arrive by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9, 2020.

*Deborah Leh, Ed.D.*  
*Superintendent*

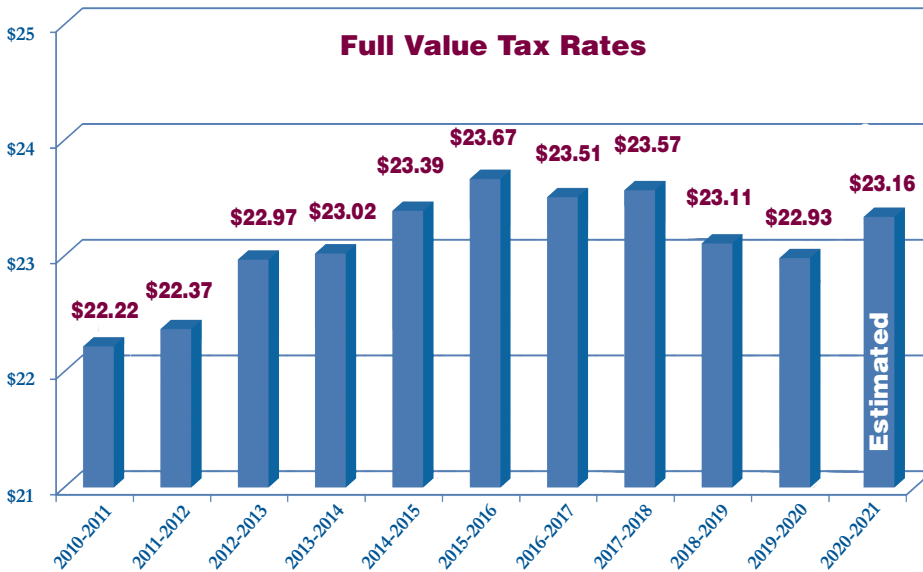
The Board of Education and I are committed to continuing to provide an education built on excellence for our students. In the 2020-2021 budget, we will continue to offer:

- Career and technical classes at WEMOCO;
- K-12 Science/Technology/Engineering/Math (STEM) opportunities through Project Lead The Way elementary modules, and middle and high school course offerings;
- Dual credit courses that lead to college credit through Monroe Community College, Rochester Institute of Technology, and Genesee Community College;
- Online courses;
- Advanced Placement courses;
- Electives in Art, Business, Technology, Band, and Chorus with appropriate enrollment;
- Enhanced academic supports and special education services as needed;
- All sports opportunities with appropriate enrollment at Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Modified levels;
- Intramural options;
- Extra-classroom clubs with appropriate enrollment;
- High school summer school opportunities;
- Drivers' education;
- Professional development for our teachers and staff;
- Resources to support social and emotional learning of our students; and
- Resources to support culturally responsive-sustaining practices within our classrooms.



## 2020-2021 PROPOSED BUDGET FACTS

- Budget increase of 4.55% over the current year's budget.
- Full value tax rate is projected to increase approximately 1%.



### Where can I find budget information?

- Watch a live stream of the Public Hearing on the budget to be held on Tuesday, May 26, 2020 (adjourned from Monday, May 11, 2020). The meeting will be recorded for future viewing.
- Visit our website at [www.wheatland.k12.ny.us](http://www.wheatland.k12.ny.us) and click on the "Budget Information" Quick Link on the left-hand side.
- Contact the District Office at 585.889.6247 with questions.

### PROPOSITION 1: Budget Resolution

SHALL the Board of Education of the Wheatland-Chili Central School District be authorized to spend for school purposes during the 2020-2021 fiscal year \$20,411,470 and to levy the necessary tax therefor?



### PROPOSITION 2: School Transportation Purchases

SHALL the following proposition be adopted: RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the Wheatland-Chili Central School District be authorized to withdraw and expend from the District's existing "Capital Reserve Fund 2018 (Bus and Grounds Equipment)" a sum of money up to Two Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$210,000), less trade-in allowance, to be used for the purchase of two (2) replacement vehicles for the transportation of District students, those vehicles being one (1) 65-passenger bus and one (1) 29-passenger bus. Also being purchased is one (1) replacement cargo van to be used for courier services within the District.

### PROPOSITION 3: Classroom Furnishings Purchase

PROPOSITION NO. 3 SHALL the following proposition be adopted: RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the Wheatland-Chili Central School District be authorized to withdraw and expend from the District's existing "Capital Reserve Fund 2017 (School Equipment)" a sum of money up to One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to be used for the purchase and/or replacement of the Middle/High School classroom furnishings to support instruction.



## THE PROPERTY TAX CAP

Although New York State has what is commonly called a “two percent property tax cap,” the law does not restrict the proposed tax levy increases to two percent. The law establishes a tax levy limit for each school district. The **tax levy limit** allows school districts to increase their property tax levy from one year to the next by two percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is less, based on a multi-step formula. School districts are then allowed to take certain exemptions that may increase their tax levy limits to more than two percent or the inflation rate.

If a school district’s proposed tax levy increase is within its limit, a simple majority of voters is needed for budget approval.

The tax levy limit with exclusions for Wheatland-Chili was calculated at 2.02% for 2020-2021. **The adopted budget for 2020-2021 is based on the tax levy increase of 2.02% as well.** Therefore, a simple majority of voters is needed for budget approval.

### *Does the tax levy indicate how much my taxes will rise?*

No. The tax levy is the amount of money the school district can raise through property taxes. The amount an individual will pay to contribute to the levied amount is the tax rate. Tax rates paid by individual taxpayers may differ greatly from one household to another based on such things as equalization rates and assessed property values. Based on current data, the anticipated increase to the projected 2020-2021 tax rate is 1%.

### *What happens if voters reject the proposed tax levy and the budget is defeated?*

If voters in the district reject the proposed budget, the school board may put up the same or a revised budget for a second vote, or adopt a contingency budget with a tax levy no greater than what was levied the previous year. If voters reject the spending plan twice, schools must adopt a budget with the same tax levy as the prior year – essentially a zero percent cap. For Wheatland-Chili, we have created a 2020-2021 budget with a 2.02% increase. The contingency budget was calculated under NYS Education Law. Certain equipment purchases and capital projects not necessary to maintain the health and safety of the students, and some raises for non-union employees, must be eliminated under the law. For Wheatland-Chili, that would mean a minimum \$240,123 reduction in a contingency budget.

## ANNUAL BUDGET VOTE

### **Tuesday, June 9, 2020 – Rescheduled Vote Date**

All qualified voters will vote by absentee ballot. Two absentee ballots will be mailed to each household with a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope for return of materials. Please contact the District Clerk at 585.889.6247 if there are other members of the household who are qualified voters and entitled to an absentee ballot. In all cases, the ballots must be returned to the District Clerk no later than **5 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9, 2020.**

### **Voter Qualifications**

A person shall be entitled to vote at any school meeting for the election of school district officers and upon all other matters which may be brought before such meeting, who is:

- A citizen of the United States;
- At least eighteen years of age; and
- A legal resident within the District for a period of thirty (30) days next preceding the meeting at which he/she offers to vote.

### **RESIDENTS UNABLE TO VOTE BECAUSE OF MILITARY SERVICE**

Residents unable to vote because of military service (as defined under the Commissioner’s Emergency Regulation Part 122, and by reason of such military service, is absent from the school district in which he or she is qualified to vote on the day of registration or election; or a spouse, parent, child or dependent of a voter as described above, accompanying or being with such voter, if a qualified voter of the State of New York and a resident of the District) may request a military ballot via email to the District Clerk at [diane\\_stocking@wheatland.k12.ny.us](mailto:diane_stocking@wheatland.k12.ny.us). In all cases, the ballots must be returned to the District Clerk no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9, 2020.

### **BUDGET INFORMATION**

Copies of the budget documents will be available on the District website at [www.wheatland.k12.ny.us](http://www.wheatland.k12.ny.us).

The proposed budget will be discussed at a public hearing via video conference on **Tuesday, May 26, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.**, as part of the Board of Education meeting. Additional questions may be addressed to Deborah Leh, Superintendent, at 585.889.6246 or email at: [deborah\\_leh@wheatland.k12.ny.us](mailto:deborah_leh@wheatland.k12.ny.us).

School Board members are also eager to help constituents understand the spending plan and revenue picture and will be pleased to talk with community members.

## ✧ 2020-2021 PROPOSED BUDGET ✧

| Administrative Budget                   | 2019-2020        | 2020-2021        | \$ Change      | % Change     |
|---|------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Board of Education                      | 31,360           | 31,710           | 350            |              |
| Central Administration                  | 266,058          | 228,470          | -37,588        |              |
| Finance                                 | 310,148          | 309,503          | -645           |              |
| Legal, Personnel, and Information       | 258,138          | 263,097          | 4,959          |              |
| Central Data Processing                 | 125,131          | 126,127          | 996            |              |
| Insurance, BOCES Administrative/Capital | 270,114          | 287,800          | 17,686         |              |
| Instruction, Administrative             | 450,468          | 466,056          | 15,588         |              |
| Curriculum                              | 334,902          | 340,485          | 5,583          |              |
| Employee Benefits <sup>1</sup>          | 427,420          | 647,276          | 219,856        |              |
| <b>Total Administrative</b>             | <b>2,473,739</b> | <b>2,700,524</b> | <b>226,785</b> | <b>9.17%</b> |

The **ADMINISTRATIVE** component provides for overall general support and management of the operations of the District and includes:

- Board of Education costs;
- Central and school administration;
- Finance (including tax collection, purchasing, legal and auditing expenses);
- Curriculum development; and
- BOCES administrative expenses.

| Program Budget                           | 2019-2020         | 2020-2021         | \$ Change     | % Change     |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------|
| In-Service Training                      | 75,428            | 76,798            | 1,370         |              |
| Instruction, Other than Administrative   | 7,206,684         | 7,335,575         | 128,891       |              |
| Library and Computer Instruction         | 1,018,752         | 1,028,692         | 9,940         |              |
| Counseling, Support, and Health Services | 600,252           | 618,369           | 18,117        |              |
| Co-Curricular and Athletics              | 385,363           | 394,890           | 9,527         |              |
| Pupil Transportation                     | 952,128           | 995,062           | 42,934        |              |
| Employee Benefits <sup>1</sup>           | 3,975,886         | 3,862,929         | -112,957      |              |
| Special Aid and Food Service Transfer    | 46,527            | 46,527            | 0             |              |
| <b>Total Program</b>                     | <b>14,261,020</b> | <b>14,358,842</b> | <b>97,822</b> | <b>0.69%</b> |

The **PROGRAM** component is the largest portion of all planned expenditures for instruction and support services and includes:

- Instructional, co-curricular, and athletic programs;
- Counseling and health services; and
- Pupil transportation.

<sup>1</sup> The method of calculating the percentage of benefits attributable to the Program and Administrative parts of the budget was revised in 2020-2021 to align with the percentage of salaries in each category. A higher amount of benefits is included in Administrative than in past years.

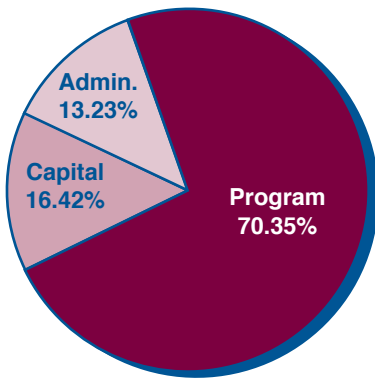
## 2020-2021 PROPOSED BUDGET (CONT.)

| Capital Budget                               | 2019-2020        | 2020-2021        | \$ Change      | % Change      |
|--|------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Central Services, Maintenance and Operations | 1,060,210        | 1,191,552        | 131,342        |               |
| Employee Benefits                            | 281,062          | 274,002          | -7060          |               |
| Debt Service, Energy Performance Contract    | 1,446,388        | 1,886,550        | 440,162        |               |
| <b>Total Capital</b>                         | <b>2,787,660</b> | <b>3,352,104</b> | <b>564,444</b> | <b>20.25%</b> |

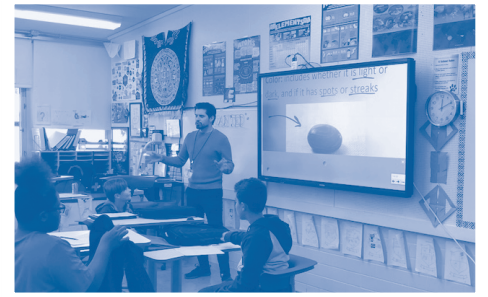
The **CAPITAL** component includes costs associated with maintaining facilities and grounds:

- Building and equipment repairs;
- Custodial and maintenance supplies;
- Utilities; and
- Debt service.

|                     |                     |                     |                  |              |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------|
| <b>Total Budget</b> | <b>\$19,522,419</b> | <b>\$20,411,470</b> | <b>\$889,051</b> | <b>4.55%</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------|



The Program component is the largest portion of the 2020-2021 budget, reflecting 70.35% of the total expenses. The Capital expenses represent 16.42% of the budget, with Administrative costs representing the smallest portion of the budget at 13.23%.



### PROJECTED TAX BILL CHANGES

**Hypothetical home with \$100,000 assessed value.**

| How will this affect my tax bill?                        | Per Year       | Per Month     |
|--|----------------|---------------|
| Increase on tax bill (full value on \$100,000)           | <b>\$23.00</b> | <b>\$1.92</b> |
| Increase on tax bill (full value with STAR on \$100,000) | <b>\$16.10</b> | <b>\$1.34</b> |

**Actual tax rates are finalized in August. The following assumptions were used for current tax rate estimates:**

- State aid revenues as of April 1, 2020.
- Assessed valuations and STAR exemptions estimates as of April 1, 2020.
- Equalization rates are currently estimated at 100% for the town of Brighton, 96% for the town of Chili, 98% for the town of Caledonia, and 94% for the town of Wheatland, and will be finalized by August 2020.
- The budgeted levy as projected above.
- STAR Basic exemptions calculated at \$30,000 (may vary by towns).

*NOTE: Property assessments and equalization rates in the four municipalities will affect actual tax bill.*

## 2020-2021 PROJECTED REVENUE

**State and Federal Sources – \$9,132,668  
(8.19% increase from 2019-2020)**

Projected state and federal aid, including foundation aid, lottery, BOCES, building, transportation, high cost, and other aids, plus Medicaid reimbursements.

**Appropriated Reserves – \$370,000**

The District will use reserves to the extent needed.

- Retirement Contribution Reserve – up to \$310,000
- Unemployment Reserve – up to \$15,000
- Workers’ Compensation Reserve – up to \$45,000

**Appropriated Fund Balance – \$270,000**

Projected unexpended funds plus unanticipated revenues used to offset the levy.

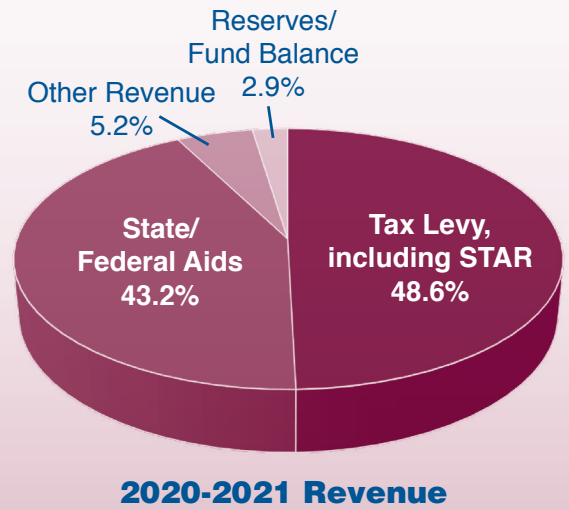
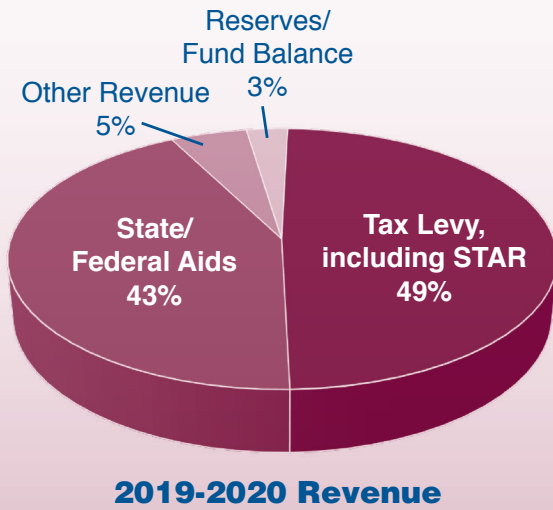
**Other Sources – \$955,442**

Other earnings, tuition from other schools and individuals, payments in lieu of taxes, rental of property and equipment, refunds from prior years, gifts, etc.

**Property Tax Levy – \$9,683,360**

Amount needed after all other revenue sources are projected. The estimated STAR portion is about \$1,239,209 of this total.

**Total Budget - \$20,411,470  
(4.55% increase from 2019-2020)**



### MINI-RENOVATION PROJECT

Wheatland-Chili CSD seeks to maximize state aid in order to make the most of the district's tax dollars. Continuing a strategy from last year, a mini-renovation project is again being proposed this year that will include flooring upgrades at the Middle/High School. This mini-renovation project takes advantage of capital project aid from the state. If this work was not performed as part of a capital project, the district would incur the full cost of the work. By including the \$100,000 budget for this work in a mini-capital project within the proposed annual budget, the district will receive approximately \$74,500 in additional aid during the 2021-2022 school year. This is part of a long-range strategy in which the building aid returned in the following year will continue to fund additional mini-renovation projects as a regular part of the district's budget.



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## ☪ BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES ☪

Three candidates will seek election to three seats on the Board of Education for three-year terms. The candidates are identified in the order they will appear on the ballot.

The candidates were each asked to respond to questions to help voters understand their positions.



**SHANNA FRASER**

117 Heather Lane  
Scottsville, NY 14546

My husband, Andy and I moved to Scottsville 10 years ago to raise our children. We have a daughter in 6th grade and a son in 2nd grade within the WCCSD. I am also the Recreation Coordinator for the Town of Wheatland. I am currently finishing my sixth year as a member of the Wheatland-Chili Board of Education. I have also been an active member of the WC PTA for the last 7 years. It is my pleasure to serve our community in all of these different roles.

I am running for re-election to the WC BOE because I am a strong advocate for our students. Every decision that I make as a BOE member starts with one question – “What is best for our students?” I research the topics and collaborate with other stakeholders, including my fellow BOE members to be certain we are making well informed decisions.

Some of the major challenges facing public education in NYS include the outdated tax cap and state aid formulas. In addition to our financial challenges we are currently facing unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have several challenges – some of which are still unknown – to face before our staff and students can safely return to our school buildings.

In addition to my professional expertise, I have participated in many learning experiences as a BOE trustee and officer. I have attended several NYSSBA and MCSBA trainings and functions related to all areas of public education, including collaborating with local lawmakers. My colleagues would describe me as an effective communicator, a community participant, decision maker, information processor, leader and a team player – these characteristics make me an effective BOE member and advocate for our students.



**BETH NOLAN**

2310 Scottsville Road  
Scottsville, NY 14546

I am running for re-election to the Wheatland-Chili Board of Education. I have sat on the Board of Education for three years and enjoyed this opportunity to serve the community. My husband, Andy, and I have lived in this community for twenty-five years. We have five children, three of whom graduated from Wheatland-Chili. Our two younger boys are currently in the Middle and High school. We have thoroughly enjoyed seeing our children grow up in this district. We have attended countless soccer games, musicals, concerts, and award ceremonies with pride.

I graduated from Niagara University with a Bachelor's degree. Currently, my husband and I run our business Snow Metal Products, which we have built together over the past 17 years.

I have enjoyed my past three years serving on the Board of Education. It has allowed me the opportunity to learn more about

the district and all of the talent within. I recognize that this next school year will be challenging for all school districts. In the light of our current situation, we cannot expect an easy transition into the upcoming fall semester; however, I am more than ready to do what is necessary for our district to succeed. I am confident that the efforts of the Board of Education in conjunction with the administration and community will get us through these difficult times. In light of these times I remain fully committed to increasing community involvement in our district while simultaneously increasing district involvement in the community. I am proud of our school; although small, we maintain great opportunities for all students. However I recognize that all of these enrichment opportunities come at a price. As a board member it remains critical to balance responsibility to our students and children's learning needs and our fiscal responsibility to the taxpayer. I believe all this can be efficiently balanced.



**COURTNEY PANEK**

45 Chili Avenue  
Scottsville, NY 14546

I grew up in West Henrietta, New York, and graduated from Rush-Henrietta Senior High School. I graduated from Monroe Community College with a Business Administration degree and a Paralegal Studies Certificate and am currently working as the Administrative Assistant to an Assistant Superintendent at a local school district. I moved to Scottsville in 2009 because I wanted to raise my daughter in a small, close-knit community. Since moving here, my family has expanded and I am a proud mother of an 8th grader at Wheatland-Chili Middle School, a Kindergartner at T.J. Connor, and a 7 month old.

I am running for re-election to the Wheatland-Chili Board of Education because I have a passion for children and am committed to ensuring that all kids have access to a good education that will assist them in becoming successful citizens. My mother was a teacher and I fell in love with schools at a very young age. I feel that parent involvement is critical to the success of our children and I try to lead

by example. I enjoy volunteering and participating in community events whenever possible.

I believe that the greatest challenge facing public education is the decrease in school funding, while still providing a high quality education program. For the Wheatland-Chili School District, smaller student numbers can be challenging to ensure programs are offered in a financially responsible way. Maintaining small classroom sizes also proves difficult with financial constraints. A way to combat this challenge is consistent review of different solutions to ensure utilization of all resources available to the district.

My professional and past school experience has given me a unique perspective that I believe will continue to be an asset to the Board of Education. I am proud to be a part of this amazing community and am very grateful to have been able to serve on the board for the past 6 years. I am looking forward to another productive and exciting 3 years on the Board to continue to represent our children's future.

## Wheatland-Chili Central School District

13 Beckwith Avenue  
Scottsville, NY 14546  
585.889.6247

### Board of Education (2019-2020)

James Musshafen, President  
Shanna Fraser, Vice President  
Gregory Berl  
Cindy Dawson  
Beth Nolan  
Courtney Panek  
Kim Snyder

### Superintendent

Dr. Deborah Leh

Non-Profit Org.  
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Henrietta, N.Y.  
Permit No. 7

**BOXHOLDER**  
**SCOTTSVILLE NY 14546**

### How is an Equalization Rate Determined?

Equalization rates are determined by the Office of Real Property Tax Services. The rates per municipality are determined after the total assessments are submitted by the Town Assessor's Office. They are a measure of a municipality's level of assessment as follows:  $\text{Total Assessed Value} / \text{Total Market Value} = \text{Equalization Rate}$ .

#### Where the Equalization Rate equals 100

- 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)

#### Where the Equalization Rate is less than 100

- Overall property in the town is assessed at less than market value
- The lower the equalization rate, the longer it has probably been since the last reassessment
- For instance, an equalization rate of 43 means overall property in the town is assessed at 43% of market value

#### Where the Equalization Rate is more than 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

#### How Does the Equalization Rate Affect My Taxes?

- There are four municipalities within the Wheatland-Chili Central School District
  - ◆ Wheatland, Chili, Brighton, and Caledonia
- There are slightly different tax rates for each municipality
  - ◆ In order for a school district to fairly distribute its property tax levy (the total amount of school taxes to be collected), the levy is divided in proportion to the total market value of each municipality. This allows for an equitable distribution of taxes based upon the market value of each municipality.
  - ◆ If the assessed values of homes in a municipality are below market value as noted to the left, the municipality or NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services sets an equalization rate that increases the tax rate of properties to provide for the payment of their fair share of taxes within the District.
  - ◆ The estimated \$23.16 rate per \$1,000 of assessed value is the blended tax rate (of all four municipalities) for 2020-2021, and may be higher or lower for individual residents depending on property assessments and equalization rates in the four municipalities.



**A Top 100 High School  
New York State 2013, 2015**



*Middle States Association  
of Colleges and Schools  
Commissions of Elementary  
and Secondary Schools*

**Accredited Since 2016**