



# KINGSTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

**BUDGET ISSUE**

**2025**

# VOTE!

**Tuesday, May 20 • 7 AM - 8 PM**

**CHECK YOUR POLLING PLACES! (See page 5)**

## KCSD ANNOUNCES TOP STUDENTS FOR CLASS OF 2025



Salutatorian Luke Cooper Valedictorian Meghan Cooper

The Kingston City School District (KCSD) is proud to announce that Meghan Cooper is the valedictorian and Luke Cooper is the salutatorian of the Class of 2025.

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## All Student Programs Maintained Under Proposed 2025-2026 Budget While Staying Below NYS Tax Cap

Kingston City School District (KCSD) voters will head to the polls on Tuesday, May 20, to vote on the proposed \$249,522,500 budget for the 2025-2026 school year. The proposal includes a 6.97% tax levy increase, which remains under New York State’s allowable tax cap. Since the tax levy limit was introduced in 2012, the district has consistently proposed budgets at or below the cap.

### Challenges Behind This Year’s Budget

School funding comes from two main revenue sources: State Aid and the tax levy. The largest portion of State Aid comes from Foundation Aid—a formula-based funding source that takes into account factors such as student enrollment.

Due to changes enacted in the foundation formula, KCSD is projected to receive only a 2% increase in Foundation Aid—about \$1.35 million—for the 2025-2026 school year. This is based on figures from the governor’s proposed budget. A finalized budget from the governor has not been adopted at the time this newsletter was printed. The 2% increase is the lowest allowable amount by New York State and represents the smallest year-over-year increase the district has received in recent years. The average increase in Foundation Aid

over the past three years was 9.7%, making this a 7.7% decrease in projected revenue.

Not only did the district’s Foundation Aid decrease, other revenue sources also declined—including Expense-Based Aid for transportation, special education, and BOCES services.

“State Aid is a key funding source for the district,” said Superintendent Dr. Paul J. Padalino. “Unfortunately, the proposed increase in State Aid does not keep pace with rising costs.”

These revenue decreases, combined with rising operational costs, have created a budget gap. The district is facing higher expenses due to contractual obligations—such as salaries, health insurance premiums, and retirement benefits—as well as increased costs in transportation, special education, and State mandates.

### Kingston Remains Committed to a Strong Education

“Despite the challenges, this year’s budget maintains all student programs, classes, and extracurricular activities,” said Dr. Padalino. “This was a priority for us, because it supports our mission to inspire, educate, and graduate all students.”

The proposed budget maintains strong support for the district’s new curricular initiatives, including i-Ready and Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), which align with New York State’s Science of Reading requirements, and strengthens math and literacy instruction. This budget also supports ongoing professional development opportunities for all faculty and staff.

Kingston’s share of funding for the future Ulster BOCES Career Pathways Academies at iPark 87—a state-of-the-art, 105,000-square-foot leased facility at the former IBM site on Enterprise Drive in Kingston—is also included in this year’s budget. This location will offer Kingston High School students advanced training in more than two dozen career and technical education fields.

### This Budget Supports:

- All current academic offerings
- Advanced Placement classes
- College credit courses
- STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) programs

### Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Paul J. Padalino

### Board of Education

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## A Feast Fit for Kings and Queens



Students in Andrea McGovern’s Kindergarten class at George Washington Elementary School recently held a Royal Ball at the culmination of their “Kings and Queens” unit as part of the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) program! Students learned about real and fictional kings, queens, and kingdoms, before experiencing the royal life firsthand!

The CKLA program, a cornerstone of the district’s elementary curriculum, combines rigorous literacy instruction with rich content knowledge in history, science, and the arts. Unlike traditional reading programs, CKLA builds both skills and knowledge simultaneously, ensuring students develop strong reading fundamentals while acquiring the foundational knowledge they need for future academic success. This strategic investment in our curriculum allows teachers like McGovern to create immersive learning experiences that transform abstract concepts into tangible memories, making education both effective and joyful for our youngest learners.

Students dressed up as royalty, and the teachers (dressed in part) prepared a variety of foods, snacks, and tea for the royal feast. After the meal, students were invited to dance to music from bygone eras, when monarchs were the norm. Dr. Sarah Holbrook, KCSD’s Director of Humanities K-12 and the driving force behind implementing the CKLA program across the district, joined the royal celebration as a special guest.

## Students Enjoy Local Veggies

Every month, students across all seven elementary schools learn about a different harvest and get the opportunity to try a new vegetable. This is made possible thanks to Cornell Cooperative Extension’s and Live Well Kingston’s “Harvest of the Month” initiative, and the Land to Learn “Veggie of the Month” program.

These events give students access to healthy, local foods as well as a wealth of educational opportunities. Recently, students at John F. Kennedy Elementary School enjoyed locally grown beets from Tributary Farms in High Falls. The KCSD Food Services Department used the donations to cook up samples for the students who chose to try the dish—and for most, this was their first time eating beets.

After the tasting, students were asked, “How did it taste?” Depending on their answers, they placed a sticker in one of the following boxes: “loved it,” “liked it,” or “didn’t like it.” Students learned that beets can be eaten raw or cooked and that they have a sweet and earthy flavor.

These experiences encourage curiosity and excitement around fresh foods while fostering a deeper connection between students and local agriculture. Thank you to Tributary Farms, the Rondout Valley Growers Association, Land to Learn, and Cornell Cooperative Extension for making this possible.



## The Magic of Words at Chambers Elementary School

# The Wandering Word Wizard

At Chambers Elementary School, Principal Kate Berardi has a magical way of making vocabulary fun. Known to many students as the Word Wizard, she brings excitement to the students’ efforts to learn new words each week.

The Word Wizard initiative begins with the selection of a word category—for example, “things that are green.” Each class then spins a virtual wheel to determine a letter. Using that letter, students work together to choose a word that fits within the category.

On Wednesdays, Berardi—donning her Word Wizard persona—visits each classroom to collect their

chosen words, carefully storing them in her special hat. These words are then displayed on the school’s “Word Wall,” complete with corresponding images to help students visualize their meanings.

Through this engaging activity, students expand their vocabulary in an interactive and memorable way. This initiative not only enhances literacy skills but also fosters a sense of excitement and community in the school.

With each word added to the Word Wall, students gain confidence in their language abilities and an appreciation for the power of words.



## Pre-Kindergarten Program Continues to Inspire Creativity

The Kingston City School District sponsors nine Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) programs, including the Meagher Pre-K program. The programs operate five days a week, with full- and half-day options for eligible students. This valuable offering will continue under the proposed 2025-2026 budget, ensuring that young learners have access to enriching early childhood experiences that lay the foundation for future academic success.

Each program is designed to be appropriate to the age level and individual needs of students and promotes cognitive, linguistic, physical, cultural, emotional, and social development. Activities are learner-centered and are designed and provided in a way that promotes the child’s total growth and development in all areas, including emergent English literacy. Children are encouraged to be self-assured and independent.

At Meagher, the classroom extends beyond four walls—nature itself becomes a teacher. Educators harness the power of the great outdoors to spark curiosity, promote physical activity, and build a sense of community among students. This was made possible through the community partnerships the district has with the Acorn Waldorf School and its Neighboring Tree Project initiative, which is enabling children to spend time in the wooded lot adjacent to the school, where they can run, climb, and engage with their natural surroundings. From soaring on a zipline to creating imaginary meals in an outdoor kitchen, every moment is an opportunity for learning. These experiences not only enhance motor skills and social development but also foster a deep appreciation for the environment, encouraging young learners to become thoughtful, engaged citizens of the world.





## Science Comes Alive at Harry L. Edson Elementary School!

Students in Susanna Elting's Grade 3 class became junior wildlife biologists when KC Keegan-Twombly from Kingston's Parks & Recreation Department visited for a special lesson on owl ecology. Students explored the owl food web by dissecting owl pellets. Owl pellets are regurgitated bundles of bones, fur, and feathers that owls can't digest. Students found all sorts of tiny skeletons inside and matched them to an anatomical diagram.

This hands-on learning experience exemplifies our district's commitment to providing engaging STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education that goes beyond textbooks. The owl pellet dissection activity aligns with the curriculum for third-grade Life Science, specifically focusing on food chains, predator-prey relationships, and animal adaptations.

The collaboration with Kingston's Parks & Recreation Department represents one of many community partnerships that enhance our curriculum without significant additional costs. These partnerships allow us to maximize our educational resources and provide specialized learning opportunities across all district schools.



## Grade 4 Students Meet the Mayor and Explore Kingston City Hall

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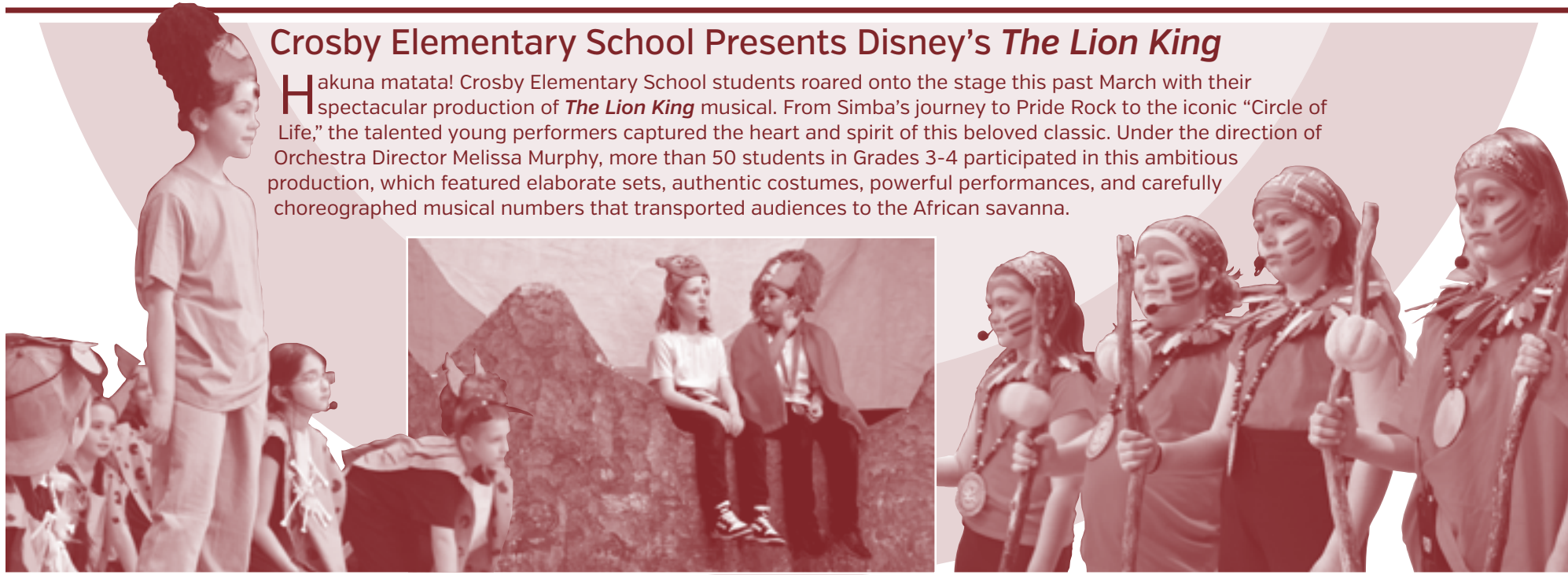
Grade 4 students in the Kingston Accelerated Learning Program (KALP) enjoyed a special tour of Kingston City Hall with Mayor Steve Noble! The visit, which concluded their literature study on city government, gave students insight into Kingston's rich history as well as a firsthand look at local government operations. Students explored the historic City Hall building while witnessing the day-to-day activities that keep our city running. Students were fascinated by the various art installations and sculptures depicting local historical figures, including a recently created sculpture of the renowned abolitionist and women's rights activist Sojourner Truth.

This hands-on experience brought their classroom studies to life, fostering a deeper understanding of civic responsibility and local heritage. Mayor Noble commented on how impressed he was with the students' thoughtful questions and genuine interest in city governance.



## Crosby Elementary School Presents Disney's *The Lion King*

Hakuna matata! Crosby Elementary School students roared onto the stage this past March with their spectacular production of *The Lion King* musical. From Simba's journey to Pride Rock to the iconic "Circle of Life," the talented young performers captured the heart and spirit of this beloved classic. Under the direction of Orchestra Director Melissa Murphy, more than 50 students in Grades 3-4 participated in this ambitious production, which featured elaborate sets, authentic costumes, powerful performances, and carefully choreographed musical numbers that transported audiences to the African savanna.



## Myer Elementary School Students Give Back to their Community

This year, the Ernest C. Myer Elementary School Grade 4 Student Government came up with an innovative project: they put together special "Birthday Boxes" for families in need. The festive packages contained everything required for a joyful celebration, including cake mix, frosting, candles, and handmade cards. To ensure accessibility for all, the students even included special microwave mug cake options for families without ovens.

Taking initiative and demonstrating their leadership skills, the young government representatives carefully designed and assembled each box themselves. Their hard work and dedication were fueled by a shared mission—to make sure that everyone has the chance to experience the magic of a birthday celebration. Once the boxes were completed, the students proudly handed them off to Christine Hein, Director of People's Place, who has been distributing them to appreciative families. This project has not only brought joy to those receiving the boxes but also taught the students valuable lessons about generosity, empathy, and community service. Through their efforts, these young leaders are proving that small acts of kindness can make a big difference.



The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2025-2026 by the qualified voters of the Kingston City School District, Ulster County, New York, will be held at Edson Elementary, George Washington Elementary, J.F. Kennedy Elementary, Myer Elementary, Robert Graves Elementary, Chambers Elementary, and Crosby Elementary Schools in said district on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 between the hours of 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

## School District Budget Notice

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL	Budget Adopted for the 2024-2025 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2025-2026 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2025-2026 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 231,562,000	\$249,522,500	\$241,326,100
Increase/Decrease for the 2025-2026 School Year		\$17,960,500	\$9,764,100
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		7.76%	4.22%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.95%	
A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$117,595,198	\$125,791,600	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$117,595,198	\$125,791,600	\$117,595,198
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$3,929,005	\$8,322,399	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$113,666,193	\$117,825,009	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$113,666,193	\$117,469,201	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$355,808	
Administrative Component	\$17,957,583	\$21,156,664	\$20,464,453
Program Component	\$189,248,728	\$203,066,750	\$195,562,561
Capital Component	\$24,355,689	\$25,299,086	\$25,299,086

\*Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2025-26 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law: The Contingency Budget would require the reduction or elimination of extracurricular activities, athletic activities, and elective classes, such as Art, Music and accelerated classes. Transportation would be reduced to the walking distances prescribed by NYS Education Law (0.5 miles for Elementary; 1.5 miles Secondary). Additionally, to reach the Contingency Budget, it would be necessary to eliminate staff positions and increase class sizes. UPK programming would be reduced to the levels funded by the UPK grants.

\*\* Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)

Description	Amount
There are no additional propositions for the 2025-26 Budget Vote	\$0

### Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Under the Budget Proposed for 2025-2026 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings<sup>1</sup>

**\$504**

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

## Ballot

### Proposition 1: 2025-2026 Budget

Shall the Board of Education of the Kingston City School District, Ulster County, New York, be authorized to expend the sums of money which will be required for school district purposes for the 2025-2026 School Year, in the total amount of \$249,522,500.00 (the Budget), and to levy the necessary sum against the taxable real property in the School District.

YES  NO

### Election of Board of Education Trustees:

Vote for any three (3) candidates. Three (3) members for 3-year terms, from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028.

Candidate names are listed in the order they will appear on the ballot.

- Steven Spicer
- Marie Anderson
- Erika Bernabei Middleton
- Robyn Tiano
- Stephanie Kearns

Write-In Candidates are permitted.

### Proposed School Budget Continued from page 1

- All extracurricular activities (sports, clubs, performing and visual arts)
- Social-emotional learning supports
- Mental health services
- Expanded services for homeless students
- Increased security funding
- District-wide technology initiatives
- Fully funded custodial and maintenance services
- Universal Pre-K for more than 300 three and four year olds
- Robust internship programming
- Small class sizes at the elementary level

#### Building for the Future

The budget also supports the operations and maintenance of the voter-approved 2023 Capital Project, which addresses essential infrastructure and facility upgrades throughout the district. Additionally, it funds operations at the newly renovated Dietz Stadium, in partnership with the City of Kingston.

#### Closing the Gap

After projecting expenses and applying State Aid, a gap remained between revenues and expenditures. The district closed this gap through operational efficiencies and cost-saving measures in areas such as healthcare, energy, and sports transportation. The district also applied \$12.25 million in existing reserves to help fund the 2025-2026 budget. Additional savings were realized through staff attrition and retirements.

#### School Board Elections

Three seats on the KCSD Board of Education, currently held by Marie Anderson, Steven Spicer, and Suzanne Jordan, are open for election this year. Voters will be asked to elect three candidates. Details on the candidates are posted on the district website at [www.kingstoncityschools.org/budget](http://www.kingstoncityschools.org/budget).

#### Absentee and Early Mail Voting Options

To obtain an Absentee or Early Mail Ballot, an eligible voter must first fill out an application, which can be printed from the district's website, picked up from the District Clerk, or requested by mailing a letter to the District Clerk. Please note, the "Application for Absentee Ballot" requires an applicant to provide a qualifying reason.

Completed applications may be returned to the District Clerk in person or by mail. Upon receipt of a completed application, a ballot will be issued. If the voter is requesting to have a ballot sent to them by mail, applications must reach the District Clerk by May 13. If the voter is collecting their ballot in person, applications must be received by May 20 at 5 PM.

## Voter Qualification Requirements

Citizen of the United States

At least 18 years old

Resident of the school district for the past 30 days

Not otherwise ineligible to vote

### ELECTION DISTRICTS & VOTING PLACES

NO. 1	Ward 1 Districts 1, 2 & 3	EDSON ELEMENTARY 116 Merilina Ave. Kingston, NY
	Ward 2 Districts 1 & 2	
	Town of Ulster Districts 1, 6 & 13	
NO. 2	Ward 3 Districts 1, 2, 3	GEORGE WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY 67 Wall Street Kingston, NY
	Ward 4 Districts 1 & 2	
	Ward 5 Districts 1 & 2	
	Ward 9 District 1	
NO. 3	Ward 7 Districts 1, 2 & 3	J. F. KENNEDY ELEMENTARY 107 Gross Street Kingston, NY
	Ward 8 Districts 1, 2 & 3	
	Ward 9 Districts 2 & 3	
	Town of Ulster Districts 3 & 12	
NO. 4	Town of Hurley Districts 2, 4, 6 & 8	MYER ELEMENTARY 231 Millbrook Ave. Hurley, NY
	Town of Rosendale Districts 1, 4 & 5	
	Town of Ulster District 4	
	Town of Marbletown District 5	
NO. 5	Town of Esopus Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7	ROBERT GRAVES ELEMENTARY 345 Mountain View Ave. Port Ewen, NY
	Town of Rosendale Districts 2 & 3	
NO. 6	Ward 2 Districts 3 & 4	CHAMBERS ELEMENTARY 945 Morton Blvd. Kingston, NY
	Ward 5 District 3	
	Ward 6 Districts 1, 2 & 3	
	Town of Ulster Districts 5, 8 & 10	
NO. 7	Town of Kingston District 1	CROSBY ELEMENTARY 767 Neighborhood Road Lake Katrine, NY
	Town of Saugerties Districts 5, 10 & 12	
	Town of Ulster Districts 2, 7, 9, 11 & 14	
	Town of Woodstock Districts 3 & 6	

Visit New York State Board of Elections' polling place search at <https://vic.ntsdata.com/home/ulster> to confirm your election district based on your home address.



## Kindergarten and Pre-K Registration Now Open

Kindergarten registration has begun at Kingston City School District. To be eligible, a student must be turning 5 years old on or before December 1, 2025.

The district offers nine Universal Pre-Kindergarten programs. These programs operate five days a week with both full- and half-day options to accommodate family needs. To be eligible, children must reside within the Kingston district boundary, must be 3 or 4 years old on or

before December 1, 2025, and must be eligible to enter public school Kindergarten in the following school year. The initial lottery already took place, so additional seats will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Registration Office, located in the Meagher Administration Building at 21 Wynkoop Place, Kingston, is open from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Appointments are recommended [email registration@kingstoncityschools.org or call 845-943-3093]. Spanish language support is available on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM. For registration forms and required documents, visit: [www.kingstoncityschools.org/departments/registration](http://www.kingstoncityschools.org/departments/registration).

## Capital Project Update

The Kingston City School District's voter-approved 2023 Capital Project continues to move forward as planned.

The first phase focuses on replacing the original single-pane windows at Edson Elementary School and J. Watson Bailey Middle School with modern, energy-efficient alternatives. These upgrades will improve thermal insulation and help reduce heating and cooling costs. Work began on the Superintendent's Conference Day in March and continued through Spring Break. This phase also includes the installation of new HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) systems at both schools, ensuring a more comfortable learning environment.

Phase 2 of the project has been submitted to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) for approval.

Construction is expected to begin in Summer 2026, marking the completion of work at Edson and Bailey.

Phase 3, which includes improvements at George Washington and Chambers Elementary Schools, has also been submitted to NYSED. Meanwhile, planning for Phase 4—covering Ernest C. Myer, Robert R. Graves, and John F. Kennedy—is underway. The project team has begun meeting with school principals to develop design documents.



# VOTE!

Tuesday, May 20 • 7 AM - 8 PM

### For More Information:

**Voting, Absentee and Early Mail Ballot, and Board of Election Questions:**

Karen Seery, District Clerk

Phone: (845) 943-3003

Email: [kseery@kingstoncityschools.org](mailto:kseery@kingstoncityschools.org)

**District Budget Questions:**

Sharifa Carbon, Assistant Superintendent for Business

Phone: (845) 943-3040

Email: [scarbon@kingstoncityschools.org](mailto:scarbon@kingstoncityschools.org)

**Online Resources:**

Visit [www.kingstoncityschools.org/budget](http://www.kingstoncityschools.org/budget) for:

- Budget Presentations
- Board of Education candidate details
- Additional information about the budget and Board of Education vote

## Career Fair Connects Students to Opportunities



Kingston High School's 2nd Annual Career and Employment Fair turned the Kate Walton Field House into a hub of opportunity on Monday, April 28. Around 200 attendees connected with 60 different businesses, industries, and organizations offering job openings, internships, and career advice. From banks and corrections to telecommunications and a packaging company, and even the local plumbers and steamfitters union, there was something for everyone. Many businesses held on-the-spot interviews, helping job seekers take the first step toward their future—all in one evening.

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## ¡Bienvenidos al mercado!

Students in Yesenia Cruz’s Spanish class at J. Watson Bailey Middle School transformed their classroom into a bustling marketplace, creating their own storefronts complete with handmade goods and price lists!

These budding entrepreneurs practiced authentic language skills by bargaining, greeting customers, and discussing prices and quantities—all completely in Spanish! This immersive “mercado” experience gave students real-world practice using conversational Spanish while having fun with their classmates.

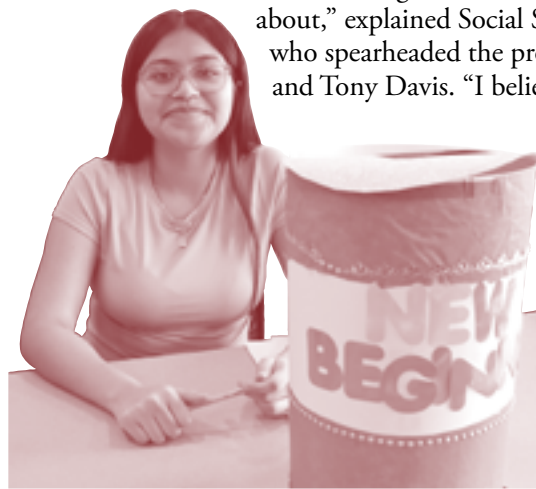


## Miller Middle School Students Propose a “New ‘New Deal’” to Local Officials

Grade 8 students at M. Clifford Miller Middle School demonstrated civic leadership by presenting innovative solutions to community challenges before local elected officials and district administrators on March 4.

The “New ‘New Deal’” project, now in its second year, was inspired by the original New Deal, which featured a range of social, economic, and political reforms enacted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the Great Depression. The current-day project challenges students to identify pressing issues within their own community and to develop practical solutions. Students presented proposals addressing issues ranging from the affordable housing shortage to childcare accessibility.

“By having students identify the hardships they see in their community, it led them to working on an issue they knew and were passionate about,” explained Social Studies teacher Christopher Thomas, who spearheaded the project alongside colleagues Max Gruner and Tony Davis. “I believe that the students’ ideas had a great impact because they were able to share them with our representatives, who have the power to make changes locally.”



The event featured strong representation from local government, including County legislators, Board of Education members, representatives from the District Attorney’s Office, and Kingston Mayor Steve Noble. Several officials noted that they were impressed by the students’ insights, with some acknowledging they had encountered perspectives on issues they hadn’t previously considered.

“This project does a great job of showing our students how important it is to have their voice heard and be involved in our government,” Thomas declared.

The “New ‘New Deal’” project serves as the middle school students’ Civic Readiness Capstone project, which they will continue developing throughout high school.

## False Threats, Real Consequences: Ulster County Sheriff on School Safety

Schools across the country are facing a two-pronged challenge: the threat of gun violence, and a surge in false school threats. These fake reports, often made by students, create fear and disruption—and they’re happening close to home. During the current school year, the Kingston City School District (KCS D) has experienced several incidents in which police responded to reported school threats that turned out to be unfounded.

Law enforcement must treat every threat as real, no matter the source. While it can be easy to place blame, it’s important to remember that students are sometimes prompted to make these statements by social pressure, stress, or a need for attention.

To address the legal ramifications, risks, and real-life impacts of bogus school threats, KCS D invited Ulster County Sheriff Juan Figueroa to share his expertise. His message to families is clear:

**Making a false report is no joke.**

**Everyone should take the problem of making false reports seriously.**

**Parents should speak with their children about the consequences of making false threats.**

**If you see something, say something.**

**Don’t repost or share threats—instead speak with a trusted adult.**

For the full interview, scan this QR code.



## Website Redesign Enhances Accessibility and Communication



To kick off the 2024-2025 school year, the Kingston City School District launched a redesigned website, which incorporates enhanced features to improve communication and accessibility for all members of the school community.

“This redesign prioritizes ease of use, accessibility, and language translation, supporting our goal of improved communication,” said Superintendent Dr. Paul J. Padalino. “It helps our community engage more fully with our district’s resources and opportunities.”

Developed in collaboration with Ulster BOCES, key features include a design that is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, advanced translation support in multiple languages, a responsive layout that adapts to mobile devices, and quick-access tools for students, families, and staff.

The website can be viewed at [kingstoncityschools.org](http://kingstoncityschools.org).

## Problem-Solving in Motion: KHS Engineering Students Tackle Hydraulics

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Kingston High School (KHS) students in Jacob Meyer's Engineering Design, Development, and Problem Solving class recently completed an impressive hydraulic arm project that combined research, design, and hands-on problem-solving.

The challenge? Design a hydraulic arm capable of grabbing a foam ball, lifting it at least 3 inches, and rotating it over 180 degrees.

Students first researched fluid power, learning the fundamentals of hydraulic and pneumatic systems. Then they put their knowledge to work, designing their arms in AutoCAD with specific dimensional constraints. Each student submitted orthographic drawings and 3D models before their parts were individually 3D printed.

The real test came during assembly and functionality analysis. When challenges arose, students redesigned components and resubmitted them for printing—experiencing the real-world engineering process of design, test, and refine.

This class, offered by KHS's Technology Department, demonstrates how our high school's rich course offerings build marketable skills that prepare students for future success.

## Fall Sports Highlights Congrats to all of our students-athletes and coaches for their hard work this fall season!

### Girls Swimming and Diving

- The team was led by Gianna Vertullo, Rory Treloar, Natalie Cascio, and Sofia Grande.
- At the OCIAA Division 1 Championships, the team came in 5th place, with Rory placing 4th in the 50 and 100 Freestyle; Gianna placing 6th in the Breaststroke and 7th in the 50 Freestyle; Natalie placing 6th in the 100 Freestyle and 100 Backstroke; and Sofia placing 3rd in Diving.
- At the Section 9 Championships, Rory placed 5th in the 100 Freestyle and 7th in the 50 Freestyle; Gianna placed 14th in the 100 Breaststroke; Natalie placed 15th in the 100 Backstroke; and Sofia placed 7th in Diving.
- This is a young team that is building up; tryouts are open to High School and Middle School student-athletes.

### Girls Soccer

- Keeper Kallie Bennett had her 500th save this year as a sophomore.
- The team tied the Newburgh Free Academy, keeping them from the playoffs.
- The team was led by senior captains Abby McCord and Gabby Levine and Junior Eden Riley (top scorer).



### Boys Soccer

- The team hosted a Sectional game versus Newburgh.
- Keegan Oxford scored 15 goals.
- Fabian Penagos had 8 assists.
- Thierry Vassell, Fabian Penagos, and Keegan Oxford were All-Section 9 AAA.
- Keegan Oxford was also All-Section 9.

### Cheerleading

- Received the Superior award from the Universal Cheerleading Association (UCA).
- Seven cheerleaders earned the title of UCA All-American Cheerleaders: Adrianna Cancellaro, Isabella Clausi, Kiah Fells, Emma Gibson, Emily Jansen, Leslie Mera Illescas, and Aelan Niles.
- The team received the Scholar-Athlete team award for the fall and winter seasons.
- Event honorees for the Bike for Cancer Event 2024.



### Football

- The team was led by seniors John Jones, Joseph McDonald, Marshall Stokes, and Armando Medley.
- Six seniors will be going on to play college football.

### Girls Cross-Country

- Three runners qualified for States, the most in school history (Hazel Lewis, Charlotte McFarland, and Maeve Paul).
- The team nearly won the Section 9 Championships by placing three runners in the top seven (Hazel Lewis, Charlotte McFarland, and Maeve Paul).
- The team took 3rd place at the OCIAA Championships, the best finish in 20 years, placing three runners in the top 15 (Hazel Lewis, Charlotte McFarland, and Maeve Paul).
- The team posted a 5-1 dual meet record.

### Boys Cross-Country

- Andrew Lee earned 26th place at the New York State FED/Nike Regional, becoming Kingston's first medalist since 2017 (Robert Becker), and 12th place at the New York State Championships, becoming the first medalist since 2015 (Thorr Trowbridge).
- The team earned 4th place at the Section 9 Championships and 8th place at the OCIAA Championships, finishing the season with 5-1 dual meet record.



## Tiger Turf Takeover Marks Triumphant Return to Dietz Stadium



After many months of Kingston City School District sports being relocated to other fields, athletes, families, and supporters were excited to return home to Dietz Stadium, which had been closed for renovations. The district marked this milestone with a **Tiger Turf Takeover**, a special ceremony held prior to the Tigers' football game on October 10, 2024, bringing together students, staff, and alumni to celebrate the revitalized venue.

The event highlighted the completion of the \$22 million renovation of Dietz Stadium, a joint project between the City of Kingston and the Kingston City School District. Upgrades included a modernized grandstand, brand-new locker rooms, a resurfaced track, updated turf, improved lighting, and public Wi-Fi access. These improvements were designed to better serve both student-athletes and the broader public.

"We are incredibly thankful to our community for supporting the renovations of the new state-of-the-art Dietz Stadium," said Superintendent Dr. Paul J. Padalino. "Students have already been making great use of the stadium, and we look forward to creating many more memorable moments here."



## KCSD ANNOUNCES TOP STUDENTS

These academic achievers—and twins—have earned the top two honors through exceptional dedication both in and out of the classroom, their high school journeys marked by embracing Kingston High School's rich array of programs across academics, performing arts, athletics, and leadership opportunities.

Meghan leads her class with a weighted grade point average (GPA) of 101.6699, while Luke follows closely with a GPA of 101.6642. Both students, who are the children of Benjamin and Kelli Cooper of Hurley, have maintained a rigorous academic schedule throughout high school. Meghan has taken 14 advanced courses, including 10 Advanced Placement (AP) classes and four college-level courses. Luke has pursued an equally impressive course of study, taking 15 advanced courses, including 11 AP classes and four college-level courses.

KHS Principal Dr. Rachael Scorca commended both students, saying, "Never underestimate someone who appears soft-spoken; Meghan and Luke are

tirelessly working behind the scenes and working for the greater good. Their teachers rave about their kindness, attention to detail, and organization and follow-through."

Meghan and Luke have excelled academically while demonstrating leadership through their numerous extracurricular activities. Meghan serves as a drum major in the Band, where she plays clarinet, while Luke plays trumpet and serves as head section leader. For Luke, the annual final Band competition at Syracuse's JMA Wireless Dome stands out as one of his most memorable high school experiences. "It's the feeling you get as you walk in front of everyone and give them the show that you've put so much dedication and work into," he remarked.

Their musical talents extended beyond Band to the theater stage. Both students performed in school musicals throughout their high school careers, culminating with significant roles in this year's production of *Something Rotten*. Meghan shared: "When I'm on stage, I can forget all my school stress and just enjoy performing."

Meghan and Luke serve as co-presidents of the Math Team and Mock Trial club. Additionally, Meghan is

president of Girls Who Code and the National Honor Society, while Luke serves as co-president of the Computer Science Club. In athletics, Luke captains the Varsity Tennis team, and Meghan plays on the Varsity Soccer team. The siblings also contribute to their community through tutoring—Meghan at John F. Kennedy Elementary School and Luke at the high school, where he assists fellow students in subjects like AP Physics and Computer Science.

Each twin supports and appreciates the other. "I want to thank God, my family, my friends, all my teachers, and especially Luke," Meghan said. "I don't know what I would do without him. He's been my best friend my whole life. It's really special that we can share this moment together."

Both students are still considering options for college, though they hope to attend the same school if possible. Meghan plans to eventually attend law school, while Luke is interested in pursuing software engineering or computer science with plans to earn a master's degree.

The KCSD congratulates Meghan and Luke Cooper on their achievements and wishes them success in their future endeavors.

## KHS Student Takes a Bold Approach to Welding Through Ulster BOCES



Kingston High School student Emma Fredericks, who attends the Ulster BOCES Welding & Metal Fabrication program, dared to think outside the box—quite literally. Emma took a bold, non-traditional approach to her entry in the recent SkillsUSA Welding Competition by fusing craftsmanship with creativity.

Rather than crafting a conventional structural piece, Emma chose to follow her passion for art and create a metal masterpiece. Though her project didn't place in the competition, Emma's courage to take a different path is a victory worth celebrating. Her journey is especially inspiring, as she is a young woman in a traditionally male-dominated trade. Her willingness to break the mold and redefine what welding can be is a testament to her perseverance, innovation, and self-expression.

"I'm very grateful that I have the privilege to go to Ulster BOCES and take the welding program," Emma said. "I know it's a very popular program, and I couldn't be more thankful to be part of it. Not only is the teacher amazing, but the skills I'm learning here are setting me up for a successful welding career after graduation."

## Kingston High School's *Something Rotten* Wasn't So Rotten At All

Kingston High School's Musical Theatrics program dazzled audiences in March with their spectacular production of *Something Rotten*. The Tony Award-nominated Broadway musical, which humorously depicts two brothers' attempt to create the world's first musical in Shakespeare's time, drew large attendances during its four performances.

Under the direction of Band Director Jacqueline Geraci, more than 100 student performers, musicians, and crew members collaborated to bring this ambitious production to life. The show featured elaborate period costumes, outstanding singing, and wonderful choreography. Kingston High School also features one of the only all-student pit orchestras in the area.

Cast members also had a special opportunity when they received first-hand knowledge from Broadway actress Heidi Blickenstaff, who performed in the role of "Bea Bottom" in the original Broadway production. During her February 27 visit, Blickenstaff shared insights about her professional journey, offered performance tips, and worked directly with student actors.



### VOTE!

Tuesday, May 20

7 AM - 8 PM

CHECK YOUR POLLING PLACES! [See page 5]