

CLARENCE SCHOOL NEWS

Volume 73 • Annual Report to the Community • May 2025

2025 ANNUAL REPORT to the Community



Focused on What Matters Most



Public Hearing on 2025-26 Proposed School Budget

6:30 PM Monday, May 12, 2025
Clarence Middle School Auditorium
10150 Greiner Road



Date, Time, and Location of Public Vote

Tuesday, May 20, 2025
7:00 AM - 9:00 PM
Clarence High School Gymnasium
9625 Main Street



Voter Eligibility

To be eligible to vote, you must be:

- at least 18 years of age;
- a United States citizen;
- a resident of the District for at least 30 days immediately prior to the vote.



On the Ballot

- Proposition 1 - Proposed 2025-26 School Budget
- Proposition 2 - Bus and Vehicle Purchase
- Election of two (2) School Board Members

**ANNUAL BUDGET VOTE
TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025 • 7 AM - 9 PM**

A Message from the Board of Education



James Boglioli
President



Michael Fuchs
Vice-President



Tricia Andrews



Adrienne
Costello-Sulik



Cindy Magera



Dennis Priore



Dawn Snyder

On May 20, residents will have the opportunity to vote on a proposed spending plan for the upcoming school year. Shaped through collaboration, the budget strikes a balance between maintaining excellence, meeting student needs, and ensuring fiscal responsibility.

The proposed budget preserves all existing programs and services, ensuring that academic offerings, extracurricular activities, and resources vital to student success remain intact. This is not a year of big expansions—it's a year of steady stewardship. The budget has been designed to balance fiscal responsibility with the needs of students, while at the same time, preserving the educational experiences valued most by our community.

Student well-being continues to be a central focus in the proposed budget. In recent years, we have made significant strides in addressing the mental health needs of our learners by adding essential positions such as mental health professionals and academic interventionists. These roles, initially funded through federal grants, have played a vital part in supporting the social and emotional development of our students. The proposed budget transitions these positions into the general fund, making them a permanent part of the District's staffing plan, and helping every child access the resources they need to thrive.

In addition to prioritizing student mental health, the spending plan places a strong emphasis on enhancing safety and security measures across all our buildings. Along with site enhancements involving crisis response buttons, security cameras, and door replacements, the budget allocates funds for a fourth School Resource Officer (SRO), an expert who will serve primarily at the elementary level. Provided in partnership with the Town of Clarence, the SRO will proactively assist as a positive role model, mentor, and trusted safety presence with a background in law enforcement.

To sustain these priorities, the budget focuses on cost efficiency, effective administrative oversight, and low per pupil expenditures. For the 15th consecutive year, the spending plan remains within the New York State Property Tax Cap, a calculation based on factors such as inflation, local growth, PILOT payments, and prior year exemptions. With a modest 1.8 percent budget-to-budget increase, the proposed 2.46 percent tax levy increase stays within the Property Tax Cap, requires only a simple majority vote, and preserves one of the lowest tax rates in Upstate New York.

Along with the budget, residents will also be asked to vote on a proposition involving the purchase of six vehicles that are part of the District's vehicle replacement schedule. By purchasing three passenger buses, two passenger vans, and one snow plow, the plan keeps expenses manageable while taking full advantage of State funding that covers close to 60 percent of the costs. The two vans will also provide fuel-efficient transportation for small groups of students attending a range of off-site activities.

While voting for the propositions, members of the community will also have the chance to elect two Board of Education Trustees. The unpaid members of the governance team will serve as stewards for both the District's children as well as its tax dollars by establishing organizational direction, approving policies, and adopting an annual spending plan.

Beyond this publication, residents are encouraged to learn more about the District by visiting its website (www.clarenceschools.org), social media accounts, or by attending the Public Budget Hearing which will be held at 6:30 PM on Monday, May 12 in the Middle School Auditorium.

Thank you for your continued partnership in shaping the future of our District. Your involvement helps guide our work and strengthens the connection between home and the classroom. Together, we remain committed to providing every student with a safe, enriching, and high-quality educational experience.



BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, May 20, 2025 • 7 AM - 9 PM

Budget Hearing - May 12, 2025 - for more information go to www.clarenceschools.org

Proposition #1 - Proposed Budget

RESOLVED that the 2025-26 School District budget for the Clarence Central School District, in the total amount of \$98,927,712 be adopted.

Expenditures			
Components	2024-25	2025-26	Change
Instruction	\$73,483,203	\$73,817,164	\$333,961
Capital	\$15,417,970	\$16,394,557	\$976,587
Administration	\$8,282,749	\$8,715,991	\$433,242
Total	\$97,183,922	\$98,927,712	\$1,743,790

A budget is a financial expression of an institution's mission:

“The mission of the Clarence Central School District is to produce independent, lifelong learners who are responsible contributing members of a diverse society.”

Mission Statement from the
Clarence Central School District's Strategic Plan

Proposition #2 - Bus and Vehicle Purchase

The Board of Education is asking for authorization to purchase buses, transportation vans, and one snow plow not to exceed \$910,241.



The purchase is part of an ongoing school bus replacement program that provides our students more efficient and safer buses, while reducing the cost of maintenance.

The District will borrow funds for bus and transportation vehicle purchases using a five-year bond anticipation note and will receive reimbursement from New York State, which is distributed over the life of the loan.

Clarence Central School District buses log about one million miles per year while transporting over 4,900 students across the District and to 57 private and parochial schools.

It is the goal of our transportation department to provide safe transportation to all our riders. This bus replacement schedule along with our well-trained staff, and outstanding maintenance department work together toward this goal.

2025-26 Budget At a Glance

Total Budget	\$98,927,712
Budget \$ Increase	\$1,743,790
Budget % Increase	1.8%
Tax Levy Increase	2.46%
Estimated Tax Rate	\$10.32
Student Enrollment	4,082

The 2025-26 Proposed Budget needs a simple majority approval of voters to pass.

Points of Pride

- Ranked #2 Best School District in the Buffalo Area by Niche.
- Clarence High School is ranked #6 for Athletics in NYS and #1 in Erie County by Niche.
- Recognized by NAMM Foundation as a “Best Community for Music Education”.
- 117 students were selected for county-wide honor ensembles.
- The High School Wind Ensemble was selected to perform in concert with the Fredonia University Wind Ensemble.
- Named a 2023-2024 NYSPHSAA School of Distinction for Academic Excellence as a result of every varsity team earning the scholar athlete designation.
- 12 teams and 1 individual won Sectional Championships in 2023-2024.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact
Dr. Matthew Frahm
Superintendent of Schools
716-407-9102
mfrahm@clarenceschools.org

or
Dr. Patricia Grupka
Assistant Superintendent for
Finance & Operations
716-407-9013
pgrupka@clarenceschools.org

You can also visit the budget section of our website at:
www.clarenceschools.org

Follow this path:
Home > District Info >
Budget Process 2025-26



Clarence High School 2023-24 School Year

Enrollment	1,245
Faculty Members	121
Courses	125

2024 AP Program

AP Courses	20
AP Candidates	458
AP Exams	788
Grade 3 or Higher .....	.83%

2024 SAT Results

ERW Average	590
State Average	522
Math	600
State Average	513

2024 Graduation Class

Graduates	313
Regents Advanced with Honors. ....	.62
Regents Advanced	148
Regents .....	.96
Career & Tech Certificates .....	.26
Honor Roll All 4 Yrs	105
Military Enlistments	3
Project Lead the Way Certificates ...	.38
National Honor Society .....	.88
National Art Honor Society .....	.13
National Technical Honor Society .....	.7
Seal of Biliteracy .....	.71
Seal of Civic Readiness	104
Academy of Business & Finance .....	.45
Academy of Visual & Performing Arts .	.13

Voter Verification System

Voting inspectors will confirm a voter's eligibility by checking Erie County voter registration records. If you are eligible to vote in a school election but are not a registered voter, you may sign an affidavit attesting to your eligibility to vote.



Proposed Budget/Instructional Component

The instructional component includes accounts for instruction and educational support services for the district's 4,082 students. Transportation (for 4,900 students), instructional computers, supplies, textbooks, special education services, and salaries and benefits for employees assigned to this category are reported here.

Instructional Expenses			
Account	2024-2025	2025-2026	CHANGE
Regular Education	\$37,944,744	\$37,616,079	-\$328,665
Special Programs	\$12,580,702	\$12,708,636	\$127,934
Transportation	\$5,202,489	\$5,477,512	\$275,023
Benefits	\$17,755,268	\$18,014,937	\$259,669
Total	\$73,483,203	\$73,817,164	\$333,961

Proposed Budget/Administrative Component

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

Administrative Expenses			
Account	2024-2025	2025-2026	CHANGE
District Office	\$2,432,354	\$2,813,510	\$381,156
Curriculum & Supervision	\$3,075,862	\$3,095,835	\$19,973
Liability & Property Ins.	\$1,181,397	\$1,130,808	-\$50,589
Benefits	\$1,593,136	\$1,675,838	\$82,702
Total	\$8,282,749	\$8,715,991	\$433,242

Proposed Budget/Capital Component

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

Capital Expenses			
Account	2024-2025	2025-2026	CHANGE
Operations & Maintenance	\$6,359,818	\$6,768,943	\$409,125
Debt Service	\$7,013,023	\$7,258,051	\$245,028
Benefits	\$2,045,129	\$2,367,563	\$322,434
Total	\$15,417,970	\$16,394,557	\$976,587

Estimated Revenue for 2025-26

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

Estimated Revenue		
Source	2024-2025	2025-2026
Property Tax Levy	\$57,685,702	\$59,102,900
PILOTS	\$323,063	\$290,325
NYS, Federal, BOCES Aid	\$28,853,821	\$29,007,417
Other Revenues	\$7,821,336	\$8,027,070
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000
Total	\$97,183,922	\$98,927,712

History of Fiscal Conservatism

The chart below shows the last ten years of budget data for Clarence.

Budget Year	Spending Increase	Tax Levy Increase	Tax Cap
2016-17	3.6%	2.7%	Below Cap
2017-18	2.7%	1.7%	At Cap
2018-19	3.6%	3.9%	Below Cap
2019-20	3.2%	3.2%	Below Cap
2020-21	2.9%	2.9%	At Cap
2021-22	1.5%	2.9%	At Cap
2022-23	-3.6%	2.9%	At Cap
2023-24	4.4%	3.2%	At Cap
2024-25	4.3%	3.7%	At Cap
2025-26 Est.	1.8%	2.5%	At Cap
10 YR. AVERAGES	2.76%	2.96%	



Follow the Clarence Central School District on social media!

<https://linktr.ee/clarencescd>

Revenue Facts

- The property tax cap limits the annual increase in the tax levies of local governments and school districts.
- The average tax levy for the past ten years is 2.96%.
- The average spending increase for the past ten years is 2.76%.

Budget Development

School officials provided multiple opportunities for public involvement during this budget process.

All budget meetings were open to the public:

- January 13
- February 10
- March 17
- April 22

Time was set aside for public comment on the budget at all regular monthly meetings.

All budget information is available on the website (www.clarenceschools.org).

Absentee & Early Mail Ballots

Eligible voters who cannot get to the polls on the day of the vote due to illness, or travel outside the county or individuals who would like to vote early by mail, in advance of election day may request an absentee or early mail ballot. Applications are available online or may be picked up at the District Office, 9625 Main Street, during normal business hours. Call 716-407-9102 for more information.

Directions to Polling Place

Enter the High School back parking lot from Gunnville Road near the tennis courts. Proceed to the far end of the lot and park in the designated area near the football field. Attendants will direct you to the appropriate building entrance. School officials caution that traffic may be particularly heavy from 3:30 PM when high school students are dismissed up to 8:00 PM.



BUDGET VOTE
Tuesday, May 20, 2025 • 7 AM - 9 PM

CHS Gymnasium • 9625 Main Street

Budget Hearing - May 12, 2025 - for more information go to www.clarenceschools.org



Tax Impact

- Clarence has one of the lowest tax rates among Erie County suburban school districts.
- It is likely that the tax rate will be lower than projected if the total assessed value of the Town increases.

Average Tax Rate/\$1,000 AV

2021-22.....	\$12.92
2022-23.....	\$12.98
2023-24.....	\$12.93
2024-25.....	\$10.06
*2025-26.....	\$10.32
*Estimated	

- Tax Levy Limit for Clarence as Calculated by NYS: 2.46%
- Actual Tax Levy for Clarence in 2025-26 Budget: 2.46%
- Estimated Tax Rate: **\$10.32 per thousand of assessed value**



Board of Education Candidates



James Boglioli

As a nine-year member of the Clarence School Board, and President since 2023, I have been involved in hiring a new superintendent, creating the SRO program, consistently proposing budgets at or below the tax cap, and undertaking Capital Projects to increase safety, upgrade facilities and create the Family Support Center.

I am seeking a fourth term to continue serving our community and build on the many successes of our district. As an attorney practicing land use, environmental, and municipal law, I bring a unique and valuable skill set to the Board, presenting projects to municipal boards, meeting with the public to negotiate projects, and working with consultants to prepare studies and present complicated information.

My wife and I moved here sixteen years ago, choosing Clarence for its excellent schools. Both our son and daughter are graduates of Clarence High School. I believe our district provides an excellent education for all students.

I value the Clarence community and have served our community by volunteering as a Board Member for the Academy of Business and Finance, Destination Imagination Team Manager, Clarence Soccer Club coach, and Clarence Center Elementary School 5th grade camping trip chaperone.

A strong, highly rated school district serves the entire community by providing children with the foundation they need to succeed, maintaining strong property values throughout the Town, and attracting new residents to Clarence.



Adrienne Costello-Sulik

I have been a Clarence resident for most of my life, and I'm a 1994 graduate of Clarence High School. With experience in education and business, I hold a Ph.D. in English Education from the University at Buffalo. As an Associate Professor in the SUNY Buffalo State English Department from 2006-2018, I supervised teachers across Western New York, published peer-reviewed research, and served in multiple leadership positions. I now work with my family business,

Xtreme Discount Mattress, which has given me insights into all aspects of business administration. I am a Clarence homeowner and taxpayer.

I've volunteered within the District for many years, including as a member of the Clarence Schools Enrichment Foundation Board of Directors. My son, Michael, is a student at Clarence High School. In the same ways I was shaped and inspired by our music and drama programs, he is now benefiting from Clarence's top-notch athletic programs. From our Broadway-caliber musicals to Friday night football games, from our stellar academic and special education programs to our Family Support Center, our schools connect our town, increase our property values, and enrich all our lives.

My commitment as a Board member is to ensure that our schools provide exceptional academic and extra-curricular opportunities for students, while continuing to prioritize the fiscal responsibility that makes us the envy of districts across upstate New York.

PUBLIC HEARING for 2025-26 Proposed School Budget

Monday, May 12, 2025 • 6:30 PM

Clarence Middle School Auditorium • 10150 Greiner Road

Student-Made Playsets Inspire Creativity

The hard work of students at Clarence High School and Clarence Middle School brought new opportunities for kindergarteners at the Clarence Central School District to play and build key skills.

Students built a total of 19 wooden playsets, which gave the opportunity for students to play in a variety of business settings, as well as set up the playsets as a stage.

"This was truly about students giving back to students," said Dr. Kristin Overholt, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. "Every student who walks through the halls of our elementary schools will have the opportunity to work with these play structures."

The work began with an initial playset built by Middle School students in spring 2024, with High School students building the rest in the fall. After completing the work, the student-made playsets were delivered to the District's elementary schools on December 19, 2024.

"It wasn't a normal assignment," said High School technology teacher Thomas Maroney. "Figuring out how to do the production challenged the students and challenged the teachers."

For many of the student builders, the project allowed them to support their former kindergarten classrooms. A list of names of students who participated in the project was taped onto each of the delivered playsets.

"I'm pretty hyped for it, for them to have something that allows for them to use their creativity," said Moulay "Adam" Elbousti, a High School senior who previously attended Harris Hill Elementary School. "It can go from being a lemonade stand to a shop to a theater play."

For teacher Kate Callahan at Sheridan Hill Elementary, the playset was a springboard for student creativity. At one point, the playset served as a companion to an imagined ice rink on the floor, with space to buy tickets and sell food and drinks.

"What I've seen is a lot of cooperation and turn taking, problem solving and ingenuity," Callahan said.

Technology teachers credited for their work on the project were Jason Urbanek, Daniel Tarnowski, Thomas Maroney, Sean Murray, Zachary Meal, Joshua Arnold, Pamela Urbanek and Bradley Wright. The project was made possible with financial support from the Clarence Schools Enrichment Foundation and Buffalo Construction Consultants, Inc.



Scan the QR Code to watch a video about the completion of the playset project!



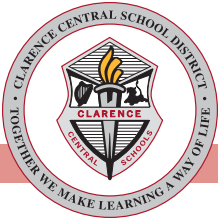
BUDGET VOTE

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For more information go to www.clarenceschools.org





ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

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Annual Report to the Community

May 2025 - Volume 73

Superintendent

Matthew Frahm, Ed.D.
716.407.9102

Clarence School District Budget Notice

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL	Budget Adopted for the 2024-25 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2025-26 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2025-26 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$97,183,922	\$98,927,712	\$97,510,514
Increase/Decrease for the 2025-26 School Year		\$1,743,790	\$326,592
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		1.8%	.4%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.95%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$57,685,702	\$59,102,900	
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)	\$57,685,702	\$59,102,900	\$57,685,702
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$2,615,378	\$2,616,380	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$55,070,324	\$56,486,520	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$55,070,324	\$56,486,520	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval) - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)**	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$8,282,749	\$8,715,991	\$8,536,595
Program Component	\$73,483,203	\$73,817,164	\$72,728,862
Capital Component	\$15,417,970	\$16,394,557	\$16,245,057

*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. All equipment will be taken out of the budget, travel will be cut, contractual items will be cut across programs, positions will be eliminated, technology supplies will be cut.

Description	Amount
Purchase of Buses, vans, and snow removal vehicle	\$910,241

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2025-26 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings	\$338

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2025-26 by the qualified voters of the Clarence Central School District, Erie County, New York, will be held at the Clarence High School Gymnasium(s) in said district on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at between the hours of 7:00 AM and 9:00 PM, prevailing time in the Clarence High school, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

1. The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.