

The Panther Post

“All the reasons why #MonticelloRocks”

MONTICELLO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT // BUDGET 2021-22 // VOLUME 6

Proposed budget reduces tax levy by 2.06%

Residents to vote on May 18, 2021

Residents of the Monticello Central School District will vote on a \$91,266,606 proposed school budget for the 2021-22 school year and elect three members to the Board of Education (see page 10). The \$91,266,606 spending plan is a decrease of \$1,420,266 from the rollover budget initially proposed earlier this year, and decreases the property tax levy by 2.06% from the current year.

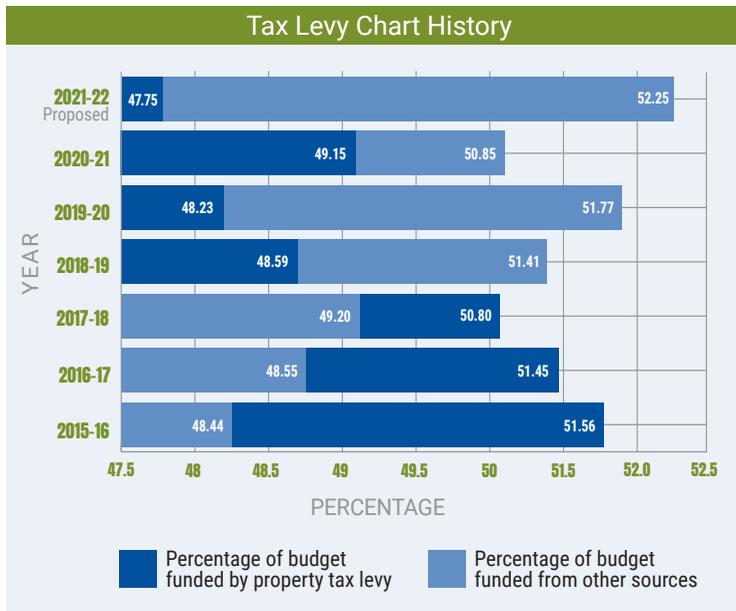
Budget overview

Given the unusual circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, administrators created a budget and expenditure list based upon a three-year average of data, rather than relying solely on data from the unprecedented last year and a half.

The proposed budget preserves all existing positions, adds new custodial equipment and a truck, increases professional development, and adds additional positions to support student and district success, including a teacher aide, school district accountant, three teaching assistants, a security attendant and social worker.

Less than half of proposed budget is funded by property taxes

The proposed budget is an increase of \$733,581 from the adopted 2020-21 budget, however, an 8.39% increase in state aid enabled the district to reduce the property tax levy, or the portion of the budget that is funded by property taxes by 2.06%



“We have worked diligently since 2015 to progressively shrink the portion of the budget funded by the tax levy, while increasing funding from other sources,” Assistant Superintendent for Business Lisa Failla said. “Less than half of the district’s expenses have been funded by our taxpayers since the 2018-19 school year and we were pleased to be able to continue that trend in this upcoming year.”

Budget At-A-Glance

Proposed budget:

\$91,266,606

Proposed budget change:

\$733,581

0.81%

Proposed School

Tax Levy:

\$43,576,655

Tax Levy Change:

-\$916,317

-2.06%

Also on the ballot:

Election of Board of Education Members (see page 10)

VOTE:

May 18

12 p.m. to 8 p.m.

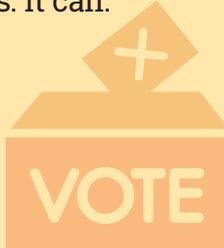
VOTING LOCATIONS:
(See page 10)

BUDGET GLOSSARY

Q What happens if voters reject the proposed 2021-22 school budget on May 18?

Under New York State Education Law, if voters defeat their school district budget in May, a district has three options. It can:

- ✓ Resubmit the same proposal for a revote;
- ✓ Submit a revised proposal for a revote; or
- ✓ Adopt a contingent budget.



– continued on page 3 & page 11

Superintendent’s Message

A year ago in March 2020, I had a discussion with my former boss on my pursuit of this position, and the ongoing updates we were receiving regarding COVID-19. We made some tentative plans for what we hoped would be a short-term school closure, with the belief that once the spread of COVID-19 was mitigated—late March or April 2020, at the latest—we could resume school as we had known it.



I didn’t think that an

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Community

CALENDAR

ALL OF THE WORKSHOPS LISTED BELOW ARE VIRTUAL. LINKS WILL BE PROVIDED AS THE WORKSHOP APPROACHES. VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION.

MAY

- 11** – 5:30 p.m. – ENL– EPIC Spanish Workshop-Listening and Responding to Children/Escuchando Y Respondiendo a Los Niños
- 13** – 7 p.m. – MHS – EPIC Workshop - Parent Café – Self Care Workshop – Children's Yoga with Doreen Foxwell
- 18** – 7:30 p.m. – Board of Education meeting

JUNE

- 3** – 7 p.m. – MCSD/EPIC Workshop: Parent Café – Self Care Workshop – Tai Chi, Relaxation
- 3** – 7:30 p.m. – Board of Education meeting
- 8** – 5:30 p.m. – ENL – EPIC Spanish Workshop – Love Is A Powerful Vitamin/El Amor Es Una Vitamina Poderosa
- 10** – 6:15 p.m. – EPIC Workshop: Make the Most of Summer with Practical Strategies

- 14** – 7 p.m. – MCSD/EPIC Workshop: Parent Café- Self Care Workshop – How Art Therapy Is Used to Help People Heal
- 15** – 5:30 p.m. – ENL - EPIC Spanish Workshop – Character, Awareness and Values/Caracter, Conciencia Y Valores
- 17** – 7 p.m. – RULER Workshop – An evidence-based approach to social and emotional learning.
- 24** – 7:30 p.m. – Board of Education meeting

JULY

- 8** – 6 p.m. – Board of Education Reorganization Meeting, followed by regular meeting
- 22** – 7:30 p.m. – Board of Education meeting

FIRST DAY OF 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR:
SEPTEMBER 8

Monticello awarded Best Communities for Music Education - yet again

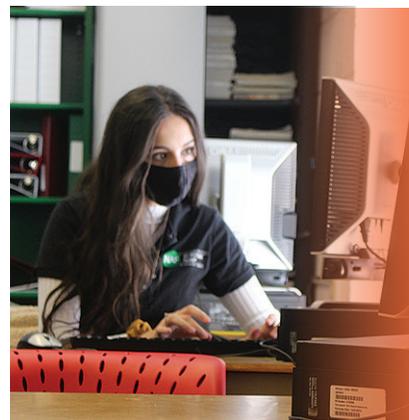
The Monticello Central School District has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from the NAMM Foundation for the 11th year. The designation honors a commitment by our Board of Education and administration, coupled with the dedication of our highly qualified music teachers, to provide a deep and meaningful music education to all students of our district. This award honors the district's outstanding commitment to music education. Monticello provides access to music to all students.



"Music is all around us, in the background of our lives, and in the foreground for touching our emotions," Monticello's K-12 Performing Arts Instructional Lead Nancy Wegrzyn said. "We are not complete humans without engagement in the arts. It is important for all schools to realize that teaching the arts is as vital to the education of the whole child, as is teaching any other subject."

Paint the town blue for the class of 2021

Last year, we asked our community to paint the town blue for our class of 2020 and the response was tremendous. All June long, our entire district was awash in a sea of blue ribbons, lights and other graduation-themed decorations thanks to our creative residents. Our graduating seniors appreciated the show of community support so much, that we hope to make this a new annual Monticello tradition. Please join us! To participate, simply decorate your home or business in blue during the month of June – it can be as simple as tying a blue ribbon to your mailbox, as elaborate as creating a blue laser light display or anything in between. Help us show our graduates that our entire community is cheering them on.

Although this year's **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** program looked much different than any other, our Academy of Finance students still managed to help members of the Monticello community save more than \$37,000 in tax preparation fees. **Read more on p. 6**

Hall of Distinction

The Monticello Central School District Hall of Distinction honors highly successful alumni, former Board of Education members and former employees who have achieved distinction, outstanding accomplishments or made significant contributions within their school, family, career, community and/or personal lives.

The Hall of Distinction Committee is accepting nominations for the 2021 Hall of Distinction. Please consider nominating someone deserving of this honor. More information and a nomination packet are available at the Hall of Distinction webpage located on Monticelloschools.net, About Us. Nominations are due by June 30, 2021.

Dr. Evans, Superintendent *continued from page 1*

impromptu 30-minute chat that day would serve as a high-level overview of the next year of my professional career. Nor do I believe, now, that any educator in New York could have forecasted what we've all experienced since March 2020.

While we reflect in amazement about the struggles and challenges presented in this pandemic, I hope we reserve some of that amazement for the adjustments so many students, parents, staff members and educators have made to persevere and continue meaningful learning opportunities, and to ensure that our school district was able to function within the extensive guidelines and limits set forth by NYS.

While the pandemic is certainly in the forefront in many minds as the most jarring adjustment, the truth is that the past two years have been filled with changes at the MCSD: a capital improvement project, realignment of grades in two elementary schools, and a new superintendent to name just a few. While the cumulation of these changes may seem stressful and disorienting at times, they also present a tremendous opportunity for growth and improvement for our families, and for our community as a whole.

Fiscal responsibility

We are hyper-aware of the financial implications the pandemic has had on families throughout the country, compounded by the socioeconomic challenges faced by many of our residents locally. We are committed to balancing fiscal restraint with our responsibility to ensure that each learner is future-ready by providing empowering educational experiences and I believe that the proposed spending plan does just that. Our administrative team has worked carefully to preserve all existing programs and add necessary staff members, while decreasing the percentage of the budget that is funded by our taxpayers.

Becoming a "district of choice"

In 2019, the Board of Education adopted new mission, vision, and goals for the district (see pages 4-7). Its vision included its aspiration to "build a world-class community of schools and be a district of choice.

We are presently laser-focused on creating a restoration plan, with broad stakeholder input, that identifies how our students and other stakeholders have been impacted by the pandemic and determines the priorities of the district as it restores education, while aligning the Board's vision, mission and goals with the programs developed through this restoration plan.

An essential piece of this work is ensuring that each and every student has the precise tools that he or she needs to succeed. To that end, we have partnered with the Bank Street Education Center to facilitate a series of "equity snapshot" exercises in workgroups comprised of community members, educators, and administrators. The goal of these workshops is to create an action plan addressing educational needs, and helping teachers develop the intervention and coaching skills necessary to effectively educate all students.

We are at a unique moment in time, where historical aid packages from federal and state sources (see page 8) have been earmarked to fund one-time programs and initiatives that ensure an equitable education for all students and structural improvements to our buildings. We are charting these

We are charting these roadmaps with the goal of having the vast majority, if not all, of the action items funded by the aid packages being released by the state and federal government rather than funded by the district's general budget – an opportunity to dramatically improve the Monticello community for years to come, with little to no impact on our taxpayers' wallets.

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As always, we will post all updates on our website and through our social media channels. I invite you to become involved as we embark on this journey to building a world-class community of schools and becoming a district of choice.

With Monti Pride,

Matthew T. Evans, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

 Follow Dr Evans on Twitter @mevansmonti



Budget FAQ:

continued from page 1

Under a contingent budget, a school district can not increase the amount of taxes levied during the previous school year. Since the MCSD's proposed 2021-22 budget already reflects a decrease in the tax levy from the previous year, **a contingent budget would not further decrease the tax levy from the proposed levy.**

A contingent budget prevents the district from spending any money in certain areas, including community use of school facilities (unless all costs are reimbursed to the district); new equipment purchases; nonessential maintenance; capital expenditures (except in emergencies); and certain field trips and student supplies. Therefore, **the district would need to remove \$661,500 worth of equipment, replacement school buses, supplies and training from the budget under a contingent budget.**

If the district resubmits the same budget, or a revised budget, for voter approval and the proposal is defeated twice, it is required to adopt a contingent budget.

OUR GOALS:

OUR VISION

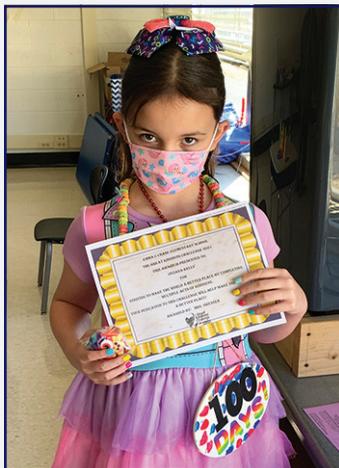
This Board aspires to build a world-class community of schools, and be a district of choice.

OUR MISSION

This Board's mission is to ensure that each learner is future-ready by providing empowering educational experiences.



This Board will provide a holistic education comprised of extensive curricular and extra-curricular experiences that empower each individual student to conquer challenges, develop talents, and discover passions, while sustaining rigor and achieving evidence-based academic growth.



Success in the classroom is a big part of the mission at Chase Elementary School. Encouraging kindness in our children is another part of that mission. Each year, students at Chase participate in the Great Kindness Challenge, a nation-wide challenge with the purpose of spreading kindness around the world. They complete as many acts of kindness as they can in one week – such as saying hello to students they don't know, helping others in need and giving compliments. They also had to be kind to themselves by eating healthy foods and exercising. The kindness was abundant, and it continues way past the challenge week! More than 100 students participated this year and won awards for spreading kindness.



Mr. Oefelein, a seventh-grade technology teacher at RJK, has been giving students a real-life foray into the manufacturing process using the Makers Empire computer program. The program teaches students 3-dimensional design using a series of challenges that allow their skills to progress – and the program is accessible on the students' devices, so they're able to design wherever they're learning. Once the student has finished their design, they send it to Mr. Oefelein, who uses the computer program Catalyst to send the design to the school's 3D printer. The printer then brings the student's design to life. Once printed, the models are put in a bath to cool and cure and then Mr. Oefelein sorts and packages them to be delivered to the students learning in-person, or to prepare them for pick-up by students learning remotely.



The students in Don Waddell's classes at Monticello High School do many hands-on projects. One of the most exciting is when they build and launch rockets! Mr. Waddell explained that the rockets are powered by Estes motors, the same concept as the rocket boosters on the space shuttles. The students' rockets are made of cardboard tubes and paper. This year, it had special meaning. As Mr. Waddell explained, students have spent so much time in front of devices this year, they haven't had the opportunity to get out of their seats, move around much or get to work together. This project brought the students together outside, safely. There was learning and laughter and spontaneous conversation.

"The students had the opportunity to make something with their hands and have the superior interaction of a positive face-to-face contact with other students and teachers," said Mr. Waddell. "The most important thing that the students learned is that school can be a positive experience that is enjoyable." Now that truly is student success.

Fourth graders at KLR studied different types of poetry during April, which is poetry month: Haiku, lyric and acrostic poems. For this project, they combined art and poetry. The students learned that acrostic verse is a poem in which the first letter of each line spells out a word – in this case the word spring! The students painted their rainbows and wrote one line of their poem on each arc of the rainbow. A true success in both art and poetry.



Just prior to the beginning of the school year, the George L. Cooke Elementary School team held a drive-through "welcome to school" event. Students and their families had the opportunity to meet their teachers in-person before school started and to pick up baskets filled with all the supplies they would need for a successful school year.

Fire Prevention Week goes virtual



It's been a long-standing tradition at the Monticello Central School District to welcome local firefighters into the schools each fall for Fire Prevention Week. Students typically get to get up close and personal with the trucks and equipment as they learn how they can prevent fires. However, 2020 has been anything but typical, so administrators needed to get creative to make sure that students still had the opportunity to learn this important, potentially life-saving information.

— continued on page 5

COMMUNITY engagement



The RJK community reaches far into the greater Monticello community for many events and causes. One example is Scott Cooper's health classes. Part of Mr. Cooper's curriculum is goal setting and planning to help successfully meet those goals. They spend time learning the skill of being an advocate, supporting people and giving back to their communities. What a perfect recipe for the annual Celebrate Life Half Marathon! The event celebrates those who are fighting against cancer. Mr. Cooper, who also coaches cross country, participates in the race held here in Sullivan County and invited his students and cross country athletes to run the 13.1-mile course with him or join together as a relay team. "Many people are impacted by cancer," said Mr. Cooper. This was the second year his classes and athletes participated. Some students came back as eighth graders to run again. This year there were about a dozen students from both RJK and the high school and six teachers running to raise money for the cause, all of which goes to local patients in treatment.

This Board will strive to build authentic relationships rooted in trust, transparency and two-way communication with all constituents. We will actively seek avenues to partner with local organizations and agencies to increase our network of resources to improve and support life-long learning opportunities for our community.



After a unit on government and exploring the essential question, "How do people make government work?", Ms. Andersen and Ms. Oakley at the Emma C. Chase Elementary School invited a member of the government to (virtually) join the class to help answer the question.

Former Senator Jen Metzger joined nearly 40 third-grade students on a Zoom call. After introducing herself, she gave the students an overview of a senator's responsibilities, the process of making a law and the importance of voting. Students then took turns asking the senator questions ranging from her favorite part of the job to the pathway to becoming a senator.



During Agriculture Literacy Week, volunteers throughout the state visit classrooms to read a story about agriculture and engage elementary students in a hands-on activity. This year's book was *Chuck's Ice Cream Wish (Tales of the Dairy Godmother)*, written by Viola Butler and illustrated by Ward Jenkins. The book gives students insights into the dairy industry, following a humorous storyline ultimately connecting a favorite summer treat to the farmer and process that produced it.

Cornell Cooperative Extension donated the book, as well as 10 ice cream kits to bring the program to Monticello. EPIC Family Engagement Program Manager Jane Sorensen visited second-grade classrooms in the George L. Cooke Elementary School to read the book and lead students in making their own ice cream.



Students at KLR Elementary School will soon have the opportunity to get their hands dirty in their edible garden. The garden has been in existence for a while, funded through Sullivan Renaissance, but it's been difficult working in it because the grounds are so wet, especially this time of year! Enter Ken Bowdren from Sullivan Structures. He graciously donated a truckload of stone for the Healthier Generation project in which the district is participating. His donation will help greatly with the garden facelift.

The entire district is participating in the Healthier Generation Project, a grant-funded initiative through Sullivan 180. Each building has different projects and KLR's is the garden. The project's goal is to bring a healthier life perspective to students, staff and the greater community. It is relationships with groups like Sullivan Renaissance, Sullivan 180 and Sullivan Structures that contribute to the betterment of our schools. Our students reap the benefits.



Monticello High School has tight connections with the community, even during a pandemic! The annual food drive went on, albeit with a smaller committee and much consideration given to the health of the volunteers and the families in the community. There is more than one way to run a food drive and some outside-of-the-box thinking prevailed. This year, faculty and staff from the high school as well as employees from Central Office and the Monticello Teachers Association came through, donating \$2,275.42 to provide food for families in the community. The student volunteers created 40 baskets to distribute to families. Our partners at Monticello's ShopRite arranged for the basket pick up. Our student volunteers learned firsthand that service to others is enjoyable and gratifying, even under different circumstances.

Fire Prevention Week *continued from page 4*

The district ultimately teamed up with the Monticello Fire Department to make the annual presentation a virtual one. On Oct. 14, a group of administrators headed over to the firehouse to film a video of firefighter and Monticello alum, Justin Mapes explaining how to check smoke detectors, how to make

an emergency meeting plan, how to call 911 and other tips to prevent fires. Principal Chris Palmer, Assistant Principal Doug Murphy and Assistant Principal Melanie Hector demonstrated how to stop, drop and roll and Fireman Wayne VanderMeulen showed how the firefighter's uniform and equipment keep them safe in a fire. Fireman Mapes finished out the presentation

by answering a set of pre-recorded questions from students and inviting the children to ask their teachers to relay any additional questions to the firehouse. The finished video was then shared to the district's Facebook, YouTube account and website so that students in Monticello and beyond can learn information that might help save their lives one day.

SCHOOL culture



This Board will foster an inclusive culture that sparks community pride, emphasizes kindness and respect and ensures that all students, staff and visitors are valued and supported in safe, secure, orderly and clean appropriately effective facilities.



Students at Robert J. Kaiser Middle School have a new way to release stress, connect with nature and encourage a deeper state of mindfulness – all without leaving the property. A “Wellness Walk” has been hewn out of the woods behind the school by health and physical education teachers Scott Cooper and Rich Sternkopf.

Just to be outside seems to have a transformative effect on the students. Mr. Cooper noted how students who barely utter a word in class jabber away with their peers once they leave the walls of the building. Students who are prone to fidgeting and restlessness are able to focus and calm themselves.

In the future, Mr. Cooper and Mr. Sternkopf hope to see the trail continue to grow and possibly even add fitness stations and open it up to the community.

“Nature heals,” Mr. Cooper said. “And we need it.”



To celebrate the 100th day of school, students and teachers in the George L. Cooke Elementary School dressed up as centenarians.



The show must go on! Although the COVID-19 pandemic limited our ability to put on a traditional production, Monticello High School’s performing arts educators were determined to find a way for students to participate in the annual musical. Instead of a live audience, audience members were able to stream the performance of The Theory of Relativity and cheer from afar. It was a great way for our students to perform in the musical and for our community to enjoy their talents.



For at least the past seven years, Emma C. Chase Elementary School Art Teacher Laurie Kilgore has had her students participate in the “Valentines for Vets” program. In class, students learn all about veterans and the sacrifices veterans make in service of their country, and then create valentines to thank our local heroes. The valentines are sent to the Sullivan County Veteran’s Association, which delivers them to local veterans.



Social Emotional Wellness Facilitator Sarah Mootz led Kenneth L. Rutherford Elementary School students through an activity to learn how to turn negative self-talk into positive and encouraging thoughts, turning your inner critic into an inner coach – a great skill to have no matter what your age!

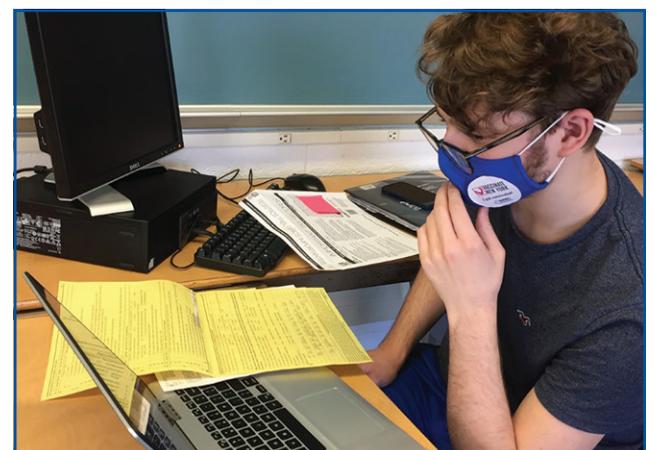
Academy of Finance students complete 160 tax returns free for the community

The Monticello High School Academy of Finance (AOF) has come through for our community again. This tax season, the group of 18 IRS-certified students provided tax preparation free of charge to 160 community members, all during a pandemic.

Because of the pandemic, there was no meeting in person so the preparers never got to meet their clients. Instead, community members dropped their tax documents off at the high school where the safety staff verified their identity. If the students had any questions, they called for the answers.

This year, though, there were no appointments. People just dropped off their documents and the students worked on them a few days during the week after school hours and on some Saturdays. “Some days we were really hopping,” said AOF advisor Susan Bahrenburg. “We are so grateful to the board of education for allowing us to do it this year. I’m so happy we were able to provide this service.”

By the time the tax service was complete – the 14th for Monticello’s AOF service – clients saved more than \$37,000 total in tax prep fees and the students gained some marketable experience.



The Monticello High School Academy of Finance prepared 160 tax returns this year, free of charge for community members making up to \$58,000. They saved their clients a total of \$37,000 in tax prep fees.

FISCAL responsibility



This Board will fortify its financial assets through long-term, strategic planning that aims to consistently maximize district improvements while minimizing taxpayer impact.

Task 2 of the Classroom 2020 capital improvement project is progressing

Travelers passing by Monticello High School and the district's bus garage on Forestburgh Road have undoubtedly noticed a flurry of construction underway since June. It's all part of the major renovations included in Task 2 of the Classroom 2020 project which broke ground during the summer of 2020. By the time it is completed, the drive down Forestburgh Road will look decidedly different and the 100/200 wing of the high school, unrecognizable.

The crumbling bus garage will be completely replaced with a new transportation center that contains energy-efficient appliances, and ample space for staff and bus maintenance. At the high school, aging HVAC systems will be replaced with rooftop air conditioning units. An increase in natural lighting will transform dark and cramped classrooms and hallways into brighter, open spaces. The classrooms, originally built in the 1960s, will be transformed into collaborative, flexible, spaces suitable for educating students in the 2020s and beyond. The science classrooms will lead to an outdoor learning space, complete with amphitheater seating. The project will maximize the amount of instructional space and replace aged boilers, lighting and control systems with energy-efficient models – cost-savings strategies that increase state building aid eligibility, while decreasing energy costs.

These renovations do not impact the tax levy

Residents authorized the Classroom 2020 capital improvement project in November of 2018 to address some of the necessary structural repairs at all five school buildings. Capital improvement projects enable school districts to utilize capital bonds and state aid to finance facilities work outside the scope of general maintenance. These projects are subject to a complex set of state laws and regulations. Once a proposed capital improvement project is approved by voters, the funds can only be used for the capital work outlined in the proposal and cannot be used for any other purpose. Because the district was able to replace an expiring bond with the Classroom 2020 bond, these current projects are being completed with no impact to the tax levy.

Unforeseeable challenges will delay construction completion date at high school

As the construction advanced at the high school over the past few months, the team discovered obstacles in the original structure of the building that require changes to the specifications of the project. For example, a cafeteria wall was expected to receive light renovation and the installation of new panels. However, once work actually began on that particular wall, it was quickly discovered that there was no rebar, making it necessary to replace, rather than repair the wall. Similar challenges have appeared as the team delves deeper into the project.

"As each issue arises, the construction management and architect team work

diligently to rectify it," Superintendent of Schools Dr. Matthew Evans said. "These are all obstacles that could not have been anticipated until the actual construction began. While the delays can be frustrating in the short term, there's definitely solace in the fact that these challenges are being addressed appropriately, at the structural level and the final results will serve our high school for years to come."

Planning for next year

Due to these complications, the anticipated completion date for the high school, which was originally projected to be in September of 2021, has now been delayed until at least late October of 2021. With the social distancing guidelines making space a premium commodity, and with 34 classrooms at the high school currently under construction, the district is exploring options to expand the amount of space available for in-person instruction.

The district is tentatively planning to temporarily house all sixth-grade students in the St. John Street building while the construction project is ongoing at the high school. This move would free ample space at the middle school/high school campus to support in-person instruction for grades 7-12.

In order to facilitate the move, the district plans to use a combination of funding from the American Rescue Plan (ARP), a SAM grant, and/or capital reserve monies earmarked for St. John Street renovations.

"If we move forward with this plan, we will be bringing stakeholders together to make sure we're building an environment in the St. John Street building that is conducive to learning," Dr. Evans said.

The district will continue to update residents as these plans continue. Please check our website frequently for updates.



When the façade of this side of the high school building was removed, what was revealed concerned the architects and builders. The block used to create the structure was stacked, one on top of the other, a process that is not best practice. There were also spaces between blocks that were simply empty. All of that block will now be replaced correctly.



Roofing panels are added to the new transportation center in April 2021.



District administrators are in constant contact with the architect and construction management teams.



The district is exploring housing sixth-grade students at the St. John Street building while construction is ongoing.



When completed, interior windows will allow light from outside the classroom windows to spill into collaborative areas at the high school.

Snapshots From Our Path Forward:

A Pandemic School Year

American Rescue Plan will help school districts recover; but is not included in annual budget

Flanked by a number of officials, and a familiar stuffed black panther, U.S. Senate Majority Leader Charles “Chuck” E. Schumer visited the Emma C. Chase Elementary School on March 31 to announce details of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) that he led to passage in the U.S. Senate. In addition to the funding for broadband in rural municipalities such as Sullivan County, the ARP also includes aid to school districts that can be used for one-time expenditures to help recover from the pandemic.



Although the district expects to receive federal funding from the ARP, those funds are not included in the proposed budget. This one-time federal relief funding is intended to address specific challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and will not be an on-going source of revenue for American school districts. The stimulus money must be placed into a special aid fund that is separate from the general fund. In order to receive aid, school districts must submit a plan to the New York State Education Department for approval that details precisely how the district intends to utilize the funding in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the federal government. Funds can only be used for specific purposes, including addressing learning loss through targeted interventions such as summer school, mental health support, and upgrades to facilities that improve indoor air quality. At press time, the district has not received confirmation of the amount of aid it can expect to receive. However, once more information is received, the district will continue to update the public as the process continues.

“While we appreciate this relief, these monies are a one-time infusion of federal dollars that must be expended between now and 2023,” Superintendent of Schools Dr. Matthew Evans said. “There is a finite period for that expenditure and once that is over, that money is gone, so it would not be prudent to attempt to roll it into our annual budget. We will work diligently, with broad stakeholder input, to create a plan for these funds that best benefits our students and our community.”

When schools transitioned to remote instruction in the spring of 2020, the district performed a digital equity survey to determine which students and/or staff members did not have access to reliable internet and/or a device. IT staff worked diligently to configure devices for all students in the district and also worked to provide hotspots to families in need.



Many staff members volunteered to be vaccinated as soon as they became eligible to do so. With a large number of staff members vaccinated, there were fewer instances of schools needing to pivot to full remote instruction as a result of quarantines, since, according to the Sullivan County Public Health Services, vaccinated individuals who are not exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 are not subject to a quarantine period. We were also pleased to be able to offer our facilities at the Cornelius Duggan Community Center to the Sullivan County Public Health Services and the Sullivan County Task Force to host a vaccination clinic for residents wishing to receive vaccination without traveling far.



Our staff worked constantly to follow the detailed health and safety protocols outlined in “Our Path Forward.” The facilities and custodial teams worked to keep the buildings spotless, including a full deep cleaning each night with an electrostatic gun, as well as frequent spot cleaning of high-touch surfaces throughout the school day. Teachers worked diligently to teach students proper hand hygiene and every classroom had access to hand sanitizer. School nurses followed all isolation protocol and illness management. All in all, since the pandemic began in 2020, there were only two instances of potential in-school transmissions – a fact we attribute to our health and safety protocols.



Educators found creative ways to keep students connected and build relationships. From holding virtual “lunch bunch” or “weekly wellness” sessions with remote learners to allow the kids some unstructured time to socialize, to holding “brain breaks” where they led students in a series of movements at their desks, teachers continued to spark moments of joy and develop a love of learning in their students.



3-Part Budget Fiscal Year: 2022

State Function	Description	2021-22 Proposed Budget	2020-21 Adopted Budget
ADMINISTRATION			
1010	Board Of Education	\$39,000	\$39,000
1040	District Clerk	\$37,710	\$37,085
1060	District Meeting	\$30,140	\$20,000
1240	Chief School Administrator	\$291,908	\$278,723
1310	Business Administration	\$771,416	\$754,629
1320	Auditing	\$84,000	\$84,000
1330	Tax Collector	\$56,750	\$56,758
1380	Fiscal Agent Fee	\$20,000	\$24,000
1420	Legal	\$250,000	\$195,000
1430	Personnel	\$154,392	\$149,791
1480	Public Information and Services	\$107,248	\$105,840
1910	Unallocated Insurance	\$284,500	\$269,500
1920	School Association Dues	\$15,000	\$15,000
1950	Assessments on School Property	\$30,000	\$30,000
1981	BOCES Administrative Costs	\$1,366,450	\$1,291,000
2010	Curriculum Development and Supervision	\$664,151	\$682,033
2020	Supervision-Regular School	\$3,542,654	\$3,409,470
2070	Inservice Training-Instruction	\$40,000	\$20,000
2110	Teaching-Regular School	\$473,000	\$455,250
9000	Employee Benefits	\$3,139,932	\$3,113,183
Total Administration		\$11,398,251	\$11,030,262

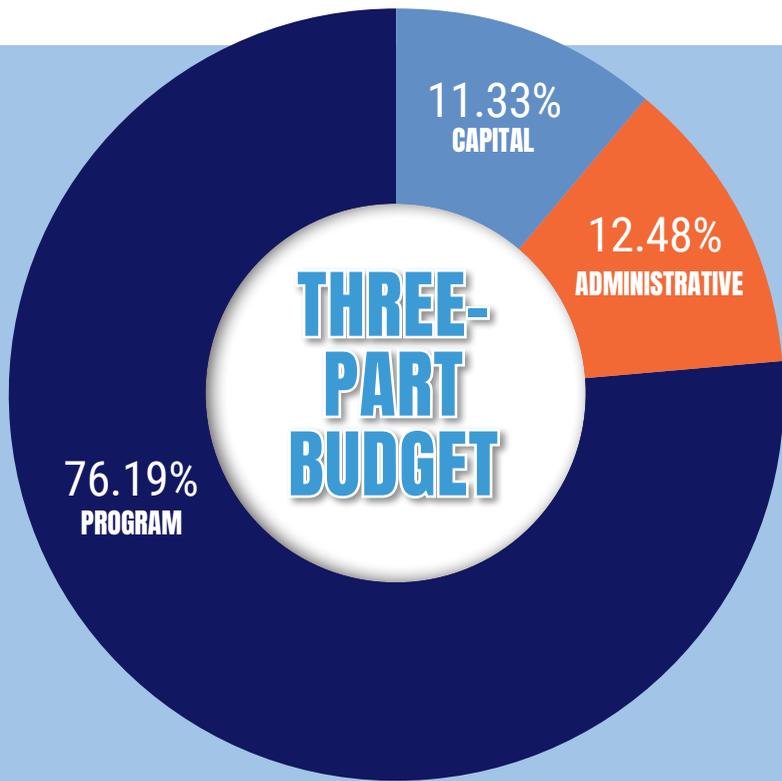
CAPITAL			
1620	Operation of Plant	\$3,610,405	\$3,730,384
1621	Maintenance of Plant	\$1,610,787	\$1,753,651
1930	Judgments and Claims	\$5,000	\$5,000
1964	Refund on Real Property Taxes	\$50,000	\$50,000
5510	District Transportation Services	\$475,000	\$475,000
9000	Employee Benefits	\$1,631,132	\$1,620,938
9711	Serial Bonds-School Construction	\$409,290	\$2,612,159
9731	Bond Antic Notes-School Construction	\$2,047,026	\$0
9732	Bond Antic Notes-Bus Purchases	\$0	\$0
9785	Install Purch Debt-State Aided Hardware	\$397,520	\$353,730
9950	Transfer to Capital Fund	\$100,000	\$100,000
Total Capital		\$10,336,160	\$10,700,862

State Function	Description	2021-22 Proposed Budget	2020-21 Adopted Budget
PROGRAM			
1420	Legal	\$2,000	\$3,000
1910	Unallocated Insurance	\$55,000	\$55,000
2070	Inservice Training-Instruction	\$153,000	\$153,000
2110	Teaching-Regular School	\$24,470,904	\$24,182,977
2250	Program For Students w/Disabilities-Med-Eligible	\$19,498,580	\$18,750,139
2330	Teaching-Special Schools	\$344,000	\$344,000
2610	School Library & AV	\$268,405	\$252,179
2630	Computer Assisted Instruction	\$1,161,233	\$1,167,790
2805	Attendance-Regular School	\$136,932	\$142,990
2810	Guidance-Regular School	\$940,700	\$978,839
2815	Health Services-Regular School	\$488,936	\$517,144
2820	Psychological Services-Regular School	\$248,714	\$235,184
2825	Social Work Services-Regular School	\$729,198	\$644,947
2830	Pupil Personnel Services-Special Schools	\$348,572	\$343,850
2850	Co-Curricular Activities-Regular School	\$239,150	\$242,250
2855	Interscholastic Athletics-Regular School	\$650,605	\$713,507
2870	School Store Fund	\$0	\$0
5510	District Transport Services-Med-Eligible	\$3,916,673	\$4,123,784
5530	Garage Building	\$100,288	\$100,858
7310	Youth Program	\$0	\$0
8070	Census	\$32,518	\$31,370
9000	Employee Benefits	\$15,571,787	\$15,644,093
9901	Transfer to Other Funds	\$0	\$0
9901	Transfer to School Food Service Fund	\$0	\$0
9901	Transfer to Special Aid Fund	\$175,000	\$175,000
Total Program		\$69,532,195	\$68,801,901

Report Totals

BUDGET COMPONENT SUMMARY				
	2021-22 Proposed Budget	% of Budget	2020-21 Adopted Budget	% of Budget
Administration	\$11,398,251	12.48	\$11,030,262	12.18
Capital	\$10,336,160	11.33	\$10,700,862	11.82
Program	\$69,532,195	76.19	\$68,801,901	76.00
	\$91,266,606	100.00	\$90,533,025	100.00

For more information about the 2021-22 proposed budget, please visit our website www.monticelloschools.net



By law, school districts must divide their proposed budgets into three portions – administrative, capital and program – and compare them to the current year’s amounts. Monticello’s three-part budget breaks down as follows:

	Proposed 2021-22	Budgeted 2020-21
ADMINISTRATIVE Amount:	\$11,398,251	\$11,030,262

The administrative component includes all administrative salaries, benefits and office and program costs for directing and supervising all instructional activities of the district.

	Proposed 2021-22	Budgeted 2020-21
PROGRAM Amount:	\$69,532,195	\$68,801,901

The program component includes salaries and benefits for classroom teaching personnel, instructional materials, supplies and services, interscholastic sports, extracurricular programs and transportation.

	Proposed 2021-22	Budgeted 2020-21
CAPITAL Amount:	\$10,336,160	\$10,700,862

The capital component includes all costs for facility maintenance operations, including salaries and benefits of plant operations staff, supplies, utilities, capital expenditures, debt service and purchase of transportation vehicles.

BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

VOTE FOR THREE:

Timothy Crumley
Lynka Rivera
Todd Grodin

View candidate statements online at www.monticelloschools.net

REVENUES ▶ Where the money comes from

REVENUE	Proposed 2021-22	Budgeted 2020-21
Charges for Services	\$213,000	\$203,500
Other	\$4,780,064	\$5,445,682
Interest Income	\$60,000	\$180,000
Medicaid	\$250,000	\$250,000
State Aid	\$40,386,887	\$37,260,818
Fund Balance	\$2,000,000	\$2,700,000
Property Taxes	\$43,576,655	\$44,493,025
TOTALS	\$91,266,606	\$90,533,025

EXPENSES ▶ Where the money goes

EXPENSES	Proposed 2021-22	Budgeted 2020-21
Employee Salaries	\$39,384,564	\$38,736,282
Benefits	\$20,342,851	\$20,378,214
BOCES	\$17,903,225	\$17,424,577
Program Support	\$7,535,007	\$7,758,368
Equipment	\$661,500	\$661,500
Materials and Supplies	\$2,310,623	\$2,285,043
Debt Service	\$3,128,836	\$3,289,041
TOTALS	\$91,266,606	\$90,533,025

Where to vote

Voting in 2021 for the School Budget and Board of Education Election will take place in person on Tuesday, May 18, 2021.

Voters in Districts 1, 2 and 3 will vote in their regular polling locations. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions at the Rock Hill Fire Department and the Forestburgh Town Hall, voters in districts 4 and 5 will vote at Robert J. Kaiser Middle School.

♦ **Thompson/Monticello - District #1**
Robert J. Kaiser Middle School
45 Breakey Avenue • Monticello, NY 12701

♦ **Bethel - District #2**
Duggan Community Center
3460 Route 55 • White Lake, NY 12786

♦ **Mamakating - District #3**
Emma C. Chase School
28 Pennsylvania Avenue • Wurtsboro, NY 12790

♦ **Rock Hill - District #4**
Robert J. Kaiser Middle School
45 Breakey Avenue • Monticello, NY 12701

♦ **Forestburgh - District #5**
Robert J. Kaiser Middle School
45 Breakey Avenue • Monticello, NY 12701

If you have a question about where you should vote, call 845-794-7700, ext. 70523

Budget FAQ: continued from page 1

What are EQUALIZATION RATES and why are they used?

A tale of two houses, two towns, one school district, and two tax bills

Town A and Town B are different towns within the same school district. The house in Town A and the house in Town B recently sold for the same amount. So, the two houses have the same market value and should pay the same amount in school taxes.

However, Town A and Town B use different assessment practices, which means that the houses have different assessed values – and assessed values are used in the computation of property tax bills. Therefore, for the houses in Town A and Town B to pay the same in taxes, the tax rates (per \$1,000 of assessed value) must be different for each town.

The process of equalization is used to determine these tax rates. Essentially, full market value serves as a common denominator, or equalizer, in the process of setting tax rates.

Equalization rates indicate the ratio of the assessed value to market value in the municipality. They are used in an effort to fairly apportion the share of taxes when a taxing jurisdiction, such as a school district, contains multiple municipalities. They are designed to ensure that owners of properties with similar full market values pay an equivalent amount of taxes.

Full Market Value
\$250,000
Assessed at
\$185,000



TAX BILL – HOUSE IN TOWN A

Full Market Value:	\$250,000
Equalization Rate:	74.00
Assessed Value:	\$185,000
Town Tax Rate:	\$27.03 per \$1,000
Total Taxes Due:	\$5,000

Full Market Value
\$250,000
Assessed at
\$250,000



TAX BILL – HOUSE IN TOWN B

Full Market Value:	\$250,000
Equalization Rate:	100.00
Assessed Value:	\$250,000
Town Tax Rate:	\$20.00 per \$1,000
Total Taxes Due:	\$5,000

In this example, House A and House B pay an equivalent amount of taxes due to the different tax rates.

Remember: Assessed value × $\frac{\text{Tax Rate}}{1,000}$ = Total Tax Bill

In the example given, **properties in Town A are assessed at 74 percent of full market value** (an equalization rate of 74) and **Town B properties are assessed at full market value** – an equalization rate of 100.

School districts calculate the total full market value of all properties in each municipality. Equalization rates allow them to determine the share of the tax levy to be paid by each town, a necessary step to calculating tax rates for each town. The process is designed to:

- Fairly apportion the tax levy among the municipalities in a school district; and
- Ensure that the amount of taxes paid by owners of similar properties in the district is similar – regardless of the town and its assessment practices.

Board of Education

Lori Orestano-James, *President*
 Timothy Crumley, *Vice President*
 Cathleen Doherty
 Wendy Galligan-Weiner
 Todd Grodin
 Jennifer Holmes
 Helen Jersey
 Adrianna Mayson-Greco
 Stacey Sharoff

Student Board Members

Kayla Colon
 Dylan Price (alternate)

District Administration

Superintendent of Schools
 Matthew T. Evans, Ed.D.

Assistant Superintendent for Business

Lisa Failla

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Linda Oehler-Marx, Ph.D.

District Public Information Officer

Courtney Bonfante

*Produced in cooperation with the
 Capital Region BOCES Communications Service.*



**BUDGET
 EDITION
 2021**

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

60 Jefferson Street, Suite 3, Monticello, NY 12701

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 West Caldwell, NJ
 Permit #1047

Resident

**BUDGET EDITION 2021**

MONTICELLO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT // BUDGET 2021-22 // VOLUME 6 // PAGE 12

School District Budget Notice

VOTE!

**May 18
 12 p.m.
 to 8 p.m.**

**Voting Locations:
 See page 10**

For more information
 about the 2021-22
 proposed budget,
 please visit our website
www.monticelloschools.net

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2020-21 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2021-22 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2021-22 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$90,533,025	\$91,266,606	\$90,388,865
Increase/Decrease for the 2021-22 School Year		\$733,581	(\$144,160)
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		0.81%	(0.16%)
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.23%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$44,493,025	\$43,576,655	
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)	\$44,493,025	\$43,576,655	\$43,576,655
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$2,467,321	\$2,236,417	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$42,025,704	\$41,340,238	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$42,025,704	\$41,340,238	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$11,030,262	\$11,398,251	\$11,182,010
Program Component	\$68,801,901	\$69,532,195	\$69,425,695
Capital Component	\$10,700,862	\$10,336,160	\$9,781,160

* Should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. The contingent budget represents a reduction in equipment of \$661,500, \$475,000 are replacement school buses, reduction in supplies, and training. The tax levy will not change as it is already less than the 2020-2021 tax levy.

** Separate Propositions that are NOT included in the Total Budgeted Amount

Description	Amount

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2021-22 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$510
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The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2021-22 by the qualified voters of the Monticello Central School district, Sullivan County, New York, will be held at Emma Chase, Dr. Duggan and RJK Middle school(s) in said district on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 8:00pm, prevailing time in the Emma Chase Elementary School, Duggan Community Center and RJK Middle 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.