



# Your Public Schools

Niagara Falls, NY



Empire State Advantage Gold Level Awardee

May 2016

Community Newsletter

Volume 1 Issue 9

## Budget Vote May 17

### Noon to 9 p.m. General Election Polling Sites

While almost three-quarters of the school district's budget revenue comes from State aid, and the proposed budget has NO INCREASE to the local tax levy, it is nonetheless important that residents take the time to cast a vote on the proposed budget.

Bear in mind that residents vote on what the school district can spend; that is to say, the amount voters approve for spending is all the District can spend. Like all school districts and many not-for-profits, the bulk of the expenditures are spent for salaries and benefits. That makes sense, since the "product" the District produces is the transfer of knowledge from teachers to students.

Following are the highlights of the proposed 2016-2017 school district budget, on which residents will vote between noon and 9 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17.

Please note: voting sites are the same as general election polling sites.

- Total State Aid revenue estimates show a net increase of \$3,548,992, broken down as follows:

The GAP elimination adjustment (GEA) in State Aid is projected to be eliminated. This would increase District aid by \$27,562.

- An increase of \$1,905,000 in Building Aid is the largest portion of the projected increase. This money is to be used for our recently completed capital projects: Inventing Tomorrow. District expense-based aids also show a net increase for 2016 – 2017.

- Foundation Aid: This is the largest portion of State Aid received by school districts and has just recently begun to rise. It is projected to increase by \$1,323,470.

---The Governor has added a new category called Community Schools Aid for high needs schools, such as ours.

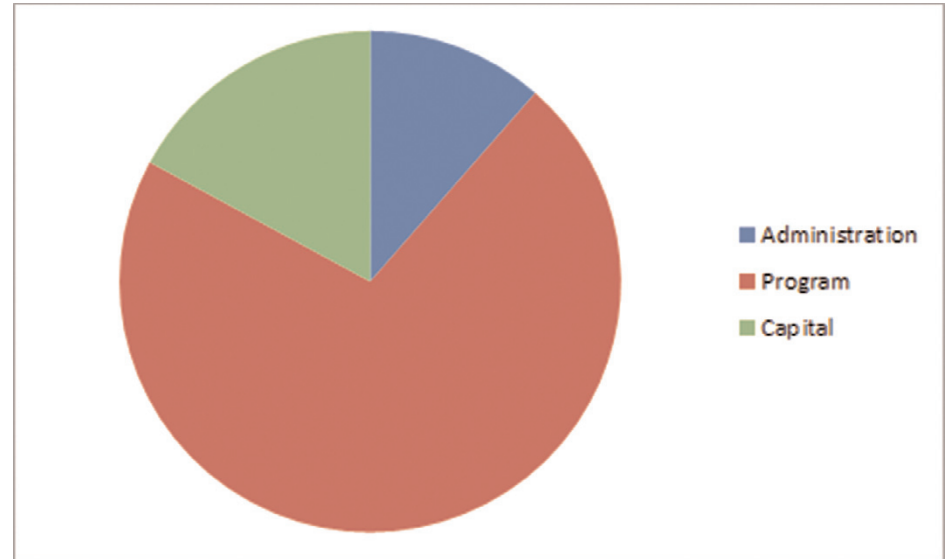
--- The proposed District budget includes the limited use of appropriated fund balance. Any surplus

generation in 2015-2016 will be saved as unreserved fund balance. The proposed budget calls for an exit from the Teachers' Retirement System Balancing Plan, included as a reduction of expenditures. It includes NO increase to the tax levy.

The total amount of the proposed budget on which residents will vote is \$137,055,127, or 2.58% greater than the current year budget. The tax levy remains unchanged at \$25,828,989.

Administrative Component \$ 15,689,476  
Program Component \$ 97,929,205  
Capital Component \$ 23,436,446

Please note that residents must be registered in order to vote on that day. If you are uncertain of your status, call our District Clerk at 286-4204. Thank you for supporting our schools...and your children!



Niagara Falls Board of Education  
630 66th Street  
Niagara Falls, NY 14304

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### Learning For All...Whatever It Takes

www.nfschools.net

### 2015-2016 Board of Education

Cynthia A. Bianco <i>Superintendent</i>	286-4205 (w)
Nick Vilardo <i>President</i>	283-3206 (h)
Carmelette Rotella <i>Vice-President</i>	282-2647 (h)
Ron Barstys	299-8233 (c)
Vincent "Jimmy" Cancemi	284-2688 (w)
Kevin Dobbs	282-5152 (h)
Art Jocoy Jr.	283-9329 (h)
Anthony Paretto	283-0372 (h)
Russell Petrozzi	297-8663 (h)
Robert Restaino	285-8185 (h)

### Board of Education Meetings

The Niagara Falls Board of Education meets the fourth Thursday of each month with presentations to the Board at 5:30pm and a regular meeting including a public comment session at 7:00pm. Agenda Review sessions are held on the second Thursday at 5:30pm. Board meetings are held in Central Administration Offices.

THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME.

A publication of the Niagara Falls City School District

*From the Superintendent*

## Budget Vote: Stand and be Counted

In preparing the recommended budget for the upcoming school year, I was conscious of the fact that this is my last time guiding the budget process, and I was sure of one thing: it is one of the few aspects of my job I won't miss!

In the years since I became an employee of the Niagara Falls City School District, many needs have changed in the community, and so in the school district. Today's students

often come to us from a variety of families and homes. Too many are poor. Some have not a single book at home. Others never hear that school is important or that learning is a gift as well as a responsibility. Still others need enriched and enhanced learning to meet academic growth.

Money won't remediate all of these challenges, but make no mistake, it does help. Greater funding would for more resources, not only in our District, but nation-wide; things like more afterschool programs, counselors, more teachers and support personnel. Add to that list the maintenance of 13 campuses or work sites. All of these needs must be met while still maintaining our fiduciary responsibilities to you, the taxpayers.

But for this year, while I cannot report that the District is fully funded, I am happy that the District did receive a net increase enabled me to recommend to in State Aid of \$2,100,000. That the Board, and the Board to



Cynthia A. Bianco

adopt, a budget with no increase to the tax levy to present to you. That is certainly good news. Please vote on the budget so that we can continue our work with children.

In addition to casting a vote on the budget, the other major thing you can do if you are a parent or legal guardian of a student in the District, is to be sure at the beginning of each school year to fill out and turn in the Free and Reduced Meal Application that the schools will provide to you. The financial information gathered on this form allows the District to apply for grants, which are very helpful. It also allows us to qualify for the Community Eligibility Option (CEO), based on the relative poverty of the community as a whole. Through CEO, we can provide free breakfast and lunch to all our students. That is a money- and time-saving option for parents, and ensures every student can enter the classroom having eaten a satisfying and nutritious meal, and, therefore, better able to pay attention and learn.

Our financial journey has always been a challenging one, but our priority has always been the same: Learning For All ... Whatever It Takes. Please continue to partner with the school district as we travel this road together...on behalf of all of our children. Please cast your vote May 17 between noon and 9 p.m. at general election polling sites.

While it is true that those who can physically be present in our schools or working with students provide a great benefit, it is also true that every parent or grandparent, guardian or older sibling who sits with a student to assist with homework, offer opinions of a project or help prepare for a

*From the Board of Education*

## Recognizing Partners in Education

Each May, as the school year winds down, the District and the Board of Education host the Parents & Partners Dinner Celebration to publicly

thank all the parents, guardians, community volunteers, business, organizational, and collegiate partners whose efforts benefit our students all year long. There are many individuals and Adopt-A-School Partners who take an active role in children's education by working in the classrooms, providing internships opportunities to young women and men, sponsoring awards, providing professional development to benefit teachers, and offering a host of other supportive activities and opportunities. These partnerships make the education students acquire richer and convey to them that the community cares about its youth.

While it is true that those who can physically be present in our schools or working with students provide a great benefit, it is also true that every parent or grandparent, guardian or older sibling who sits with a student to assist with homework, offer opinions of a project or help prepare for a

test are also benefiting students in a real and impactful way.

While many parents and guardians are not available during the day because of work or other obligations, we are especially fortunate in our community to have a business community that is highly supportive of youth, and many organizations which make supporting youth part of their missions.



Art Jocoy Jr.

With summer coming, it is a good time to consider that learning should take place all year, and even when school is not in session, there are plenty of fun and inexpensive ways to keep children engaged. Our library, parks, Oakwood Cemetery, the Niagara Arts and Cultural Center, the Aquarium of Niagara, and the summer programming many organizations offer (including our own District Summer Camp) are just a few convenient options right here in our own City. Of course, there are a few instructional weeks left between now and summer.

So enjoy the rest of the academic year and accept the thanks of the Board of Education, District staff and students for all you do to help students succeed.

## Zonta International



Founded in 1919, Zonta International is a leading global organization of professionals empowering women worldwide through service and advocacy. Zontians all over the world volunteer their time, talents and support to local and international service projects, as well as scholarship programs aimed at fulfilling Zonta's mission and objects. At their March meeting a local author, Ms. Linda Dynel was presented with Zonta's "Woman of Distinction" Award.

On behalf of the District, NFHS, and the Community Schools Grant Initiative, on March 9th, Ebone Bradberry Rose (School Counselor, NFHS) and Andrea Fortin-Nossavage (Social Studies, NFHS) were invited to attend a Zonta meeting at the Niagara Falls Country Club to accept two

signed copies of the book *Leaving Dorian*, by Linda Dynel.

The book will be made available to staff and/or students that may benefit from reading Linda's memoir on her experiences as a survivor Domestic Violence. Recent District survey data indicates an increased need for staff awareness and interventions in addressing traumas that may impact our students' socio-emotional well-being, and therefore their academic performance.

We are grateful to Zonta for their generous donation, and look forward to a continuing partnership that will best benefit the students of the Niagara Falls City School District.

Above, Janice Lewis from Zonta Club, Linda Dynel, and her husband Ron.

Above, Janice Lewis from Zonta Club, Linda Dynel, and her husband Ron.

## Buffalo Bandits at 79th Street School

Professional Buffalo Bandits Box Lacrosse players David Brock, Ryan Benesch and Adam Will, came to 79th Street Elementary School to share their love of lacrosse with the children. The players put on interactive lacrosse demonstrations and fun contests to get the students involved. The Bandits players taught lacrosse to students in the school's physical education classes for the day. In addition to the presentations, the Bandits players gave out prizes, which included autographs, and tickets to a 2016 Bandits home game.

## Albright Knox Names Artists for Future Curators

Congratulations to Niagara Falls High School students Kyle Baillargeon, Erin Malaney, Emily Wilson, Calista Legault and Barbara Hall! These five great young art students have had their work selected for the Albright-Knox Art Gallery's Future Curators show, arguably the most prestigious local show for high school artists. With more than 600 submissions from as far away as Toronto, only about 40 pieces are chosen. For NFHS to have five students selected is remarkable.

The Community Memorial Day committee is hosting an essay contest on the theme "What Memorial Day Means to Me." The contest is open to Niagara Falls High School and Niagara Catholic students in grades 9-12. Students are invited to describe in 250 words why Memorial Day is important to them. All entries must be typed with the student's name, grade, and school at the top. See school offices for more official details. The winning entry will be read at the Niagara Falls Veterans' Memorial ceremony following the parade. A \$100 prize will be awarded to that entry's author. The deadline for entry submissions is May 14. Please email entries to [Kenny.Tompkins@yahoo.com](mailto:Kenny.Tompkins@yahoo.com).



## Opt-In to District Text Messaging!

We are adding text messaging capability to SchoolMessenger, the system we use now for automated phone calls and emails. The system will be configured to send text messages to cell phone numbers whose recipients have agreed to receive them. Over the next weeks, we will be encouraging stakeholders to confirm we have accurate phone numbers and encourage them to participate.

There are only two requirements for a recipient to receive messages from you via SMS text: the recipient's wireless number imported into SchoolMessenger and "Opt-In Confirmation" from the recipient's wireless device. These requirements address any concerns related to the accuracy of the database and costs associated with receiving text messages.

Recipients can easily opt-in by simply sending "Y" (or "Yes"), via text message, to our SchoolMessenger Short Code number 67587. We will be inviting recipients to do this over the next several weeks and continue throughout the year.

The wireless number(s) must be in the SchoolMessenger database associated with a student or staff ID number; these numbers are updated regularly.

If a recipient's number SMS Text number is changed, or a new number added, in our student information system database, the new number will automatically be sent an Opt-In message.

### FAQs

#### How do recipients "Opt-In" to receive text messages?

1. Confirm the text device number(s) is on file with the District.
2. Text "Y" to 67587 from each wireless device you wish to

receive texts on. Note: Depending on the data synchronization configuration, it may take 24 hours or more for numbers to be updated from the District's database.

#### How do recipients opt-out of receiving text messages?

Recipients not wishing to receive text messages to a particular number can simply do one of the following:

1. Don't opt-in and don't reply to the opt-in invitation message.
2. Text "STOP" to 67587 at any time.
3. Request that your organizations SchoolMessenger Communicate system administrator add the number to the account's phone number block list.

#### Can the text messages come from a district phone number, instead of the short code?

No. Short codes are the industry standard, and the only fast and reliable way to deliver mass text notifications.

#### I received a text message that says it's from SchoolMessenger? What does it mean?

If it was from 67587, that was most likely the Opt-In Invitation message sent by SchoolMessenger. To continue receiving informational text messages from the school(s) reply with "Y".

If you do not reply, you won't receive any future texts from our schools.

#### I "Opted-In", but I'm not receiving texts?

Ensure that the District has your correct device number in the database (Student Information System or HR System), and that it is located in the SMS phone field(s) that are synchronized with SchoolMessenger. It may take 24 hours for a number to become active after being changed or added to

the District's system. Send a text with "Y", from that specific device, to 67587. You should receive an opt-in confirmation message from the service. If you want to receive texts on multiple devices, each device number must complete the Opt-In process.

#### How do I know if it worked?

After you text one of the key words to the short code the system will ALWAYS respond back with one of three messages:

**Opt-in Response:** You're registered for SchoolMessenger notifications. Reply STOP to cancel, HELP for help. Msg&data rates may apply. msg freq varies.

**Opt-out Response:** You're unsubscribed from SchoolMessenger. No more msgs will be sent. Reply Y to re-subscribe, HELP for help. Msg&data rates may apply.

**schoolmessenger.com/txt**  
**Help or Unknown Key Word Response:** SchoolMessenger notification service: Reply Y to subscribe or STOP to cancel. Msg&data rates may apply. Msg freq varies. Visit [schoolmessenger.com/txt](http://schoolmessenger.com/txt) for info  
 Any other response – or no response: indicates the recipient should contact their wireless device provider to have SMS messaging/premium content enabled (see below for more details).

What does it mean if I texted "Y" or "yes" and I received some sort of error message back?

If you receive what appears to be an error message, similar to one of the following, it most likely means that short code text messaging is not enabled on your wireless subscription plan:

- Service access denied
- Message failed
- Shortcode may have expired or shortcode texting may be blocked on your account
- Does not participate



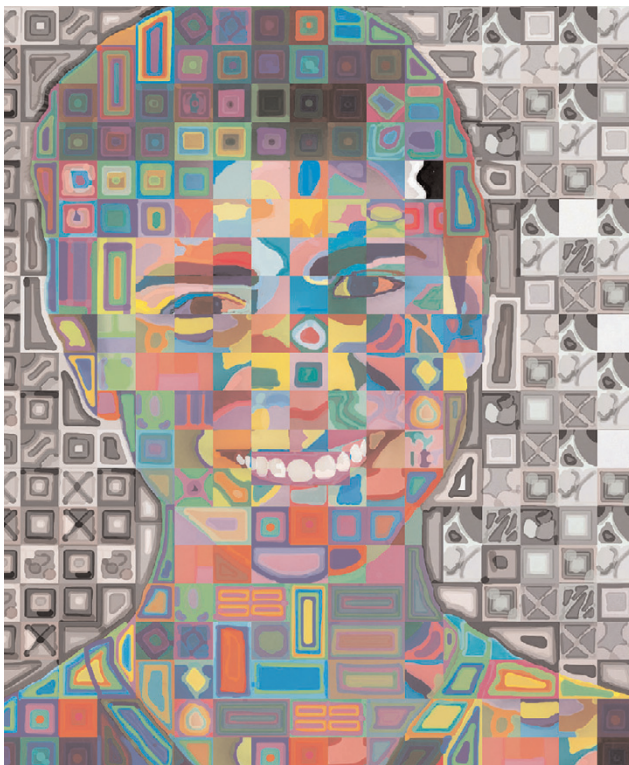
These replies DO NOT indicate that the wireless provider can't receive messages from SchoolMessenger. Rather, they are an indication that the specific mobile device does not have short code SMS texting enabled for that number (this is sometimes disabled by default on company provided cell phones).

To address this, contact your wireless provider. Note: Providers sometimes use various names for this type of texting service (e.g. short code, SMS, premium, etc.). If you simply ask about text messaging, your carrier may assume you are referring to person-to-person. Therefore be very clear to refer to "short code" text messages. Most TV programs which have a voting component use short code SMS messaging (e.g. American Idol, Dancing with the Stars). Using an example such as this can be helpful in clarifying the type of texting service you want to enable.

#### Will I be charged for the text messages that I receive from SchoolMessenger?

SchoolMessenger does not charge recipients for the text messages that they receive or send to the short code; however, wireless providers may charge for individual text messages, depending on the plan associated with the wireless device. Please consult your carrier if you are uncertain.

## Photo File



*Student artist: Tyler Ehde.  
 Art teacher: Frank Scibilia*



*Amanda Vail and Michele DiGregorio sort donated coats. Niagara Falls Teachers collected gently used coats, which Capital Cleaners will clean pro bono and donate to those in need.*



## Board of Education Candidates

### Earl Bass



Earl F. Bass is a 28 year old born and raised in Niagara Falls and a 2006 graduate of Niagara Falls High School. Earl is DEEPLY rooted in the Niagara Falls community. As a Niagara Falls Fire Fighter where he is active in the Annual Toy Fund serving as co-chair for the Annual 5K/10K Run/Walk and co-host for the Annual Telethon he has a heart for the people. Earl is the 2nd Vice-Chairperson for the Niagara Falls

Democratic Committee and the youngest Trustee at his church St. John AME here in the Falls.

Earl is a single guardian to his 8 year old cousin DaSon who currently attends Hyde Park Elementary School. He knows the challenges students face on a daily basis and understand the importance of Parent-Teacher relationships. DaSon is blessed to have Mr. Glahe as a teacher, one of the MANY dedicated personnel in the school district who efforts are sometimes overlooked. The educational future of DaSon and all students in Niagara Falls are of the utmost importance to Earl, as they are the leaders of tomorrow and the role models of his future children. Earl invests his time in these future leaders by having conversations when given the opportunity including presenting workshops at both The Male Summit and Let's Talk Conferences sponsored by the Niagara Falls Housing Authority. Earl believes that his duty to give back to the community that has invested so much in him.

Earl came from a low income background like many of our students allowing him to relate to these future leaders in a unique way and meet them at their needs. Earl is proof that if you utilize the tools given to you by the school district, work hard, network, and market yourself well you can overcome ANY obstacle placed before you. You do not have to be a victim of circumstance.

Earl Bass "A Voice of today, with vision for tomorrow"

### Johnny Destino



Over the past several years, no one in Niagara Falls has fought harder to promote and protect public education and provide alternative pathways to graduation than Johnny Destino.

As a candidate for New York State Senate, Destino championed fixing the disastrous implementation of the Common Core curriculum and restoring vital funding for programs necessary to educate the whole child and reduce your property taxes. As a result of his efforts, our state government has responded by eliminating the Gap Elimination Adjustment – restoring funding cuts to our local district - and has reformed high-stakes testing thereby easing the stresses our children are forced to endure.

Serving as your Orleans-Niagara BOCES representative, Destino has been instrumental in promoting vocational education and adult-education programs for Niagara Falls residents. Destino is actively involved in the fight to bring the BOCES nursing program to downtown Niagara Falls and has been working together with City officials to make sure that the methadone clinic is relocated to a more suitable location.

Destino wants the voters of Niagara Falls to share in his vision of restoring Vocational Education to Niagara Falls students – placing an emphasis on promoting Career and Technical education programs as an alternative to post-secondary schooling. Further, he believes we need bring back meaningful physical education programs, including time for recess, so that our children can burn off their seemingly-endless energy reserves so they can focus on in-class instruction.

Destino, a father of three young sons, is invested in the future of Niagara Falls and is further dedicating his time and effort to serving the public interest diligently by continuing his educational pursuits. An attorney by trade, Destino is also pursuing his Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration as a School District Business Leader at SUNY Brockport. This expert understanding of school finance will place him at the forefront of leadership on the School Board.

During his first term on the Niagara Falls School Board, Destino points to his highest achievement as the successful completion of the \$66.7 million capital improvement plan – carried out at no-cost to local taxpayers – called "Inventing Tomorrow." This project increased security in our schools, improved energy efficiency, built STEM labs in every school, and created amazing turf athletic fields at Niagara Falls High School and LaSalle Preparatory School. More importantly, through his advocacy, he leveraged state funding to directly benefit the local skilled-tradesmen and companies doing business in Niagara County.

Johnny Destino is asking for your support on Tuesday, May 17th to represent you on the Niagara Falls School Board. Together, he knows we can give our children a brighter future.

Destino is a 2014 Leadership Niagara graduate and a recipient of the NYS School Board Association's Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of the extensive time and effort he has spent as a school board member striving to expand his knowledge and skills for better board governance.

### Robert Restaino



A lifelong resident of Niagara Falls, Robert Restaino is an attorney in private practice who has been serving the community for more than 30 years.

A graduate of Niagara University and the State University of New York at Buffalo Law School, he spent the greater part of 12 years presiding over four separate Courts throughout Western New York. He has

worked as a Special Assistant within the County of Niagara identifying more than \$3 million in Medicaid Provider Fraud.

He has been involved with numerous human service agencies and community based organizations throughout the area, including, among others, the Niagara Falls Boys & Girls Club, the Health Association of Niagara County (HANCI), the Music School of Niagara, Community Missions, the Echo Club, the Polish Heritage Museum, the Pine Avenue Business Association and the Niagara Falls Public Library.

He is also a member/participant of the Cristoforo Colombo Society, the Knights of Columbus, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, the March of Dimes and the American Heart Association. The efforts of Mr. Restaino have been recognized in our community as a recipient of the National Family Advocacy Award, Business Association Leadership Award and the Niagara Falls School District Golden Apple Award.

Mr. Restaino believes in providing the best in academic and vocational educational opportunities to students. As a Board member, Mr. Restaino helped to oversee the Inventing Tomorrow capital projects, which provided advanced Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math classrooms to every student; he has supported budgets that do not increase the tax levy; and he has supported teachers and students.

### Carmelette Rotella



Carmelette Rotella retired after more than 30 years of service as a teacher and guidance counselor in the Niagara Falls School District. Born and raised in Niagara Falls, Mrs. Rotella earned a BA in History from the University at Buffalo and a Master's in Education from Niagara University. She also is a graduate of Leadership Niagara. In 2001, Mrs. Rotella was the recipient of the Western New York Leadership Award from the NYS

United Teachers and the Niagara Falls Teachers Distinguished Service Award.

She is married to Richard, a local attorney. Their two daughters, Rachel and Marisa, are graduates of the Niagara Falls public school system.

She was an active participant in the Teachers Union serving as president, vice-president and as an executive council member. She also served on the Teacher Center Resource Board including a year as chairperson helping set policy and staff development programs for District employees. Mrs. Rotella served as the Orleans-Niagara BOCES representative, where her experience as a school counselor at Trott Vocational High School, gave her firsthand knowledge of vocational education. She has worked hard to assure that students have the opportunity to pursue career and technical training so that, to date, more than 321 school district students attend such programming at the Orleans-Niagara Technical Training Center. She participated in community service on behalf of organizations including the Niagara Falls Housing Authority where she served as commissioner and chairperson. In these capacities, she has lobbied local, State, and federal officials on issues of concern and funding. Mrs. Rotella has been a lifelong advocate for children and their families as can be seen in her work.

During her tenure on the Niagara Falls Board of Education, student test scores have improved, graduation rates have increased, a \$116.7 million capital project improvement plan was created that enabled the building of Niagara Street School, improved technology and science labs(STEM), infrastructure improvements in all our schools, and the building of new athletic complexes - AT NO COST TO THE TAXPAYERS. This was accomplished using local labor and businesses. Personally, Mrs. Rotella has participated in Board planning concerning construction, financing, program, personnel, and technology. She believes she has been a conscientious, committed member of the Board of Education and is prepared to ask for your support to continue to serve our students, staff, and community. Please vote on Tuesday, May 17, 2016.



## Board of Education Election Information

All candidate biographical information found at left was supplied by the candidate.

**All candidates who had picked up petitions by print time were offered the opportunity to submit biographical information. As the deadline to file petitions occurred after our printing deadline, it is possible that individual(s) may appear on the ballot who do not appear here.**

### Vote at General Election Polling Sites

**Noon to 9 p.m.**

**The candidates highest two numbers of votes will be seated July 1, 2016.**

School District (SD)	General Election (GE)	Name	Address
1	3: 1,11	District Admin.	630 66th St.
2	3: 2, 3	St. John DeLaSalle	8469 Buffalo Ave.
3	3:4,8,13	Grace Lutheran	736 Cayuga
4	3:5	Lasalle Senior Ctr.	9501 Colvin
5	3:6,7	GJ Mann School	133095th St.
6	3:9, 10	79th St. School	551 79th St.
7	3:12	Comm. Ed. Ctr.	6040 Linbergh St.
8	4:1	St. John AME	917 Garden
9	4:2,4	VFW Post 917	2435 Seneca
10	4:3	Wrobel Towers	800 Niagara Ave.
11	4:5,6	NF Library	1425 Main St.
12	4:7,8	NACC	1201 Pine Ave,
13	5:1,2,3	St. Raphael Parish Ctr.	1018 College
14	5:4	Spallino Towers	720 Tenth
15	5:5,6	Duke Sr. Ctr.	1201 Hyde Park
16	6:1	Hyde Park School	1620 Hyde Park
17	6:2	Gaskill Prep	910 Hyde Park
18	6:3,4,8	C. Columbo Society	2223 Pine Ave.
19	6:5	City Hall	745 Main St.
20	6:6,7	Niagara St. School	2513 Niagara St.
21	6:9	Packard Ct. Comm. Ctr.	4300 Pine Ave.
22	6:10	LaSalle Prep	7436 Buffalo Ave.

## Pre-Kindergarten

### Age 4

The District offers Universal Pre-Kindergarten for all residents who will be 4-years-of-age on or before December 1, 2016.

In Pre-Kindergarten, expect your child to have a curriculum and lessons just like every other grade. While fun is on the agenda, there is plenty of learning, too.

Early literacy skills, following directions, basic math, social skills and so much more are taught to our youngest scholars. Students are also given a healthy lunch each day.

New York State Pre-Kindergarten Standards

Communication, Language, and Literacy

- Students will be able to demonstrate that he/she understands what he/she observes.
- With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about details in a text.
- With prompting and support, actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.
- With prompting and support, use a combination of drawing, dictating, or writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and apply some information about the topic.

Mathematics

- Demonstrate an understanding of addition and subtraction by using objects, fingers, and responding to practical situations (e.g., if we have 3 apples and we add 2 more, how many do we have?).
- Duplicate and extend (e.g., what comes next?) simple patterns using concrete objects.
- Identify measurable attributes of objects, such as length, and weight. Describe them using correct vocabulary. (E.g. small, big, short, tall, empty, full, heavy, and light.)

Science

- Describe and compare the effects of common forces (pushes and pulls) on objects, such as those caused by gravity, magnetism, and mechanical forces.

Social Studies

- Recognize the roles/contributions of community workers as they produce goods/services that people need.

Social and Emotional Development

- Develop positive relationships with their peers.
- Demonstrate pro-social problem solving skills in social interactions.

UPK is held at every elementary school and at the Doris W. Jones Family Resource Building, the LaSalle Early Education Center at St. John de LaSalle, and the HANCI -administered site at Cataract Elementary School.

### Age 3

Thanks to a State grant, it also offers a limited number of 3-year-old students placements in Pre-Kindergarten 3 (PK3). The District is one of only 26 Districts to have secured this grant. Students who qualify for free meals based on the Free & Reduced Meal application will receive priority placement; a lottery will be held. Once slots are filled, a waiting list will be created.

Basic Facts About Pre-kindergarten 3 (PK3)

The program will address early school readiness skills in an effort to better prepare children for the District's Universal Pre-K/4year old program.

Children who have turned 3 years of age, on or before the enrolling year are eligible to apply to attend.

The program will be held at Harry F. Abate Elementary School.

Days and hours for the program are as follows:

- Monday - 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM
- Tuesday – 9:30 AM – 1:30 PM
- Wednesday – 9:30 AM – 2: 30 PM
- Thursday – 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM
- Friday – 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM

The Pre-K 3 school day STARTS AFTER and ENDS BEFORE the school day for students in grades Kindergarten through 6, so they enter and leave in the calmest of environments. The school day unfolds entirely in the Pre-K 3 classroom.

The program will include family events and informational workshops; students enrolled in PreK3 will automatically have a spot reserved at the home school for Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK)\* at age 4!

**ALL students attending the public schools in the Niagara Falls City School District are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast AND lunch at school at NO CHARGE.**

**There is NO TRANSPORTATION to UPK or PK3 classes. Parents or guardians are responsible to transport students to and from school.**

**Applications to either program are available at [www.nfschools.net](http://www.nfschools.net), at the Administration Building, 630 66 Street, or any District elementary School.**

## Dear Trottarian,

Dear Trott Alumni,

Trott Vocational High School Class of '86' will be hosting their 30th Reunion July 15-16, 2016. Over the years our class, as well as others have drifted apart and are spread out all over the United States. In 2011, we created a Facebook page, invited all classes from Trott to join the page and held the first ALL Class Reunion. We hosted an adult event on Friday with various raffle items, and light food. Saturday was our family potluck picnic with everyone pitching in. Both events went well and a good time was had by all.

Since 2011, Trott reunions have become "all class reunions." In 2014 we raised over \$700 which was donated to Niagara PAL. For 2015, we donated to a classmate who was seriously injured in an accident. We again will be hosting an adult Friday All Class night out (At Foley's) with raffle items and a family potluck picnic on Saturday at Oppenheim. All monies raised through our raffles (and auctions) will be donated to a youth group within the Niagara Falls community in memory of those Classmates from all Trott classes who have passed away.

If you are a Trott Alumni and would like to be a part of our celebration, please find us on Facebook and join the group at Trott Vocational '86. Details on the event and auction will be posted. If you would like to be involved in the planning, please contact me at (302) 423-6516 or email me at [toering-expressions@gmail.com](mailto:toering-expressions@gmail.com).

Thank you,  
*Valerie Brown*

## District Spring Concerts

May 9 NSS: "St. Francis Center Kindness Program" 5:00pm at Divine Mercy Church (Niagara St)	May 26 NSS Chorus: "Make a Difference" Musical: 9:30am, 1:40pm & 5:00pm
May 18 NFHS Band, 7:00pm, NFHS PAC	June 2 LaSalle Prep Band & Chorus: 7:00pm
May 19 Abate Enrichment Concert - 1:00pm NFHS Concert Choir, in combination with Sweet Home High School Concert Choir & Harmonia A Capella	June 3 Maple Ave Band & Chorus: 9:30am  Abate Spring Concert - 9:30am, 12:00pm and 1:30 (Parents are invited to the 1:30pm concert.)
May 20 7:00 pm Historic Holy Trinity Church 1419 Falls St. \$5 admission	June 6 NSS 5/6th grade chorus, Band & Kindergarten classes: 9:30am & 1:40pm
May 21 7:00 pm St. Joseph Cathedral, Buffalo	June 8 GJ Mann Band & Chorus: 9:30am and 1:30pm Cataract Band & Chorus: 9:30am & 1:30pm 79th St., 9:30am & 1:30pm
May 24 Gaskill Prep Band & Chorus: 7:00pm	
May 25 NFHS Choral Music: 7:00 pm NFHS Performing Arts Center	

## Post Prom Party

### Post Prom Party Planning/ Senior Celebration Meetings

Keeping our Seniors  
**SAFE, SUPERVISED AND SECURE**  
on prom night - Friday, June 17th

**ALL ARE WELCOME; WE NEED YOUR HELP!**  
(especially Junior/Senior parents and guardians)

Watch this space for meeting dates!

Wednesday, May 4th

Wednesday, May 11th

Wednesday, May 18th

Wednesday, May 25th

**6 p.m. Red/Green cafeteria**

The Post Prom Party is a wildly popular addition to or replacement for prom night attendance!

**CONTACT MR. RICO SLAIMAN**

email ([rslaiman@nfschools.net](mailto:rslaiman@nfschools.net)) or cell phone (716-510-5908).

## A Visit to PK3 Classrooms

Thanks to the District securing one of only 26 NYS grants State-wide, it now offers Pre-Kindergarten 3 to 40 three-year-old students. Two classrooms, each containing a teacher and two assistants at Abate School, welcome 20 students each 24 hours a week. Preference is given to students from low-income households; the District hopes to expand the program next year. Those students who are placed in PK3 (selected by lottery) are guaranteed a placement in Universal Pre-Kindergarten for four-year-olds at their home schools.

"Purposeful play" is the mantra in these classrooms, where the school day STARTS AFTER and ENDS BEFORE the school day for students in grades Kindergarten through 6, so the youngest students enter and leave in the calmest of environments. The school day unfolds entirely within the Pre-K 3 classroom. The program also includes family events and workshops.

Teachers Trish Hennegan and Angela Martin are enjoying circle time, dance, and singing while teaching socialization and the fundamentals of the alphabet and numbers.

There are Five Early Childhood Domains that serve as the umbrella for the early childhood curriculum. These domains make-up the NYS Early Learning Guidelines.

These domains are:

Domain I - Physical Well-Being, Health, and Motor Development  
Domain II - Social and Emotional Development

Domain III - Approaches to Learning

Domain IV - Cognition and General Knowledge

Domain V - Language, Communication, and Literacy

Each PreK3 student will benefit from screenings that will take place before their classroom experience begins and again at the end of the school year. This will measure individual student growth in all five domains, so you can see your child's progress!

Fun is the order of every day, though, as children learn and make friends in a classroom just right for them.

For information on applying to PK3, visit [www.nfschools.net](http://www.nfschools.net) and search under the Academics tab. Children must turn three-years-of-age on or before December 1, 2016 for the 2016-2017 school year, and must be up to date on all their immunizations.



## NFEF Awards Scholarships

At the recent Scholarship and Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner, the Niagara Falls Education Foundation (NFEF) awarded \$14,000 in scholarship money to Niagara Falls High School students.

Accepting the following awards were:  
 \$1,500- Joseph R. Argy Memorial Scholarship Award for Entrepreneurship-Brittany Hutchinson  
 \$1,000- Aldene & Sam "Coach" Rotella Memorial Scholarship Award for athletics-Nicholas Brown  
 \$1,500-Phyllis E. Jahn Community Service Scholarship Award-Rebecca Sliwowski  
 \$2000 Mark Cerrone, Inc. Diesel Mechanics Scholarship-Robert Krebs  
 \$2000 Mark Cerrone, Inc. Engineering Scholarship-David Rich Walder  
 \$1000 Joel Teaman Golf

Scholarship-Robert Merino  
 \$1,000-NFEF Scholarship Awards : academic, arts, sciences, athletics- Paul Barker  
 \$1,000-NFEF Scholarship Awards academic, arts, sciences, athletics-Taylor Donoughe  
 \$1,000-NFEF Scholarship Awards academic, arts, sciences, athletics-Hunter P. Fitzgerald  
 \$1,000-NFEF Scholarship Awards academic, arts, sciences, athletics-Jacquelyn Petrishin  
 \$1,000-NFEF Scholarship Awards academic, arts, sciences, athletics-Kayshawnti Taylor

The NFEF is an independent entity whose mission is to provide resources to recognize the current accomplishments and promote the future success of the students in the Niagara Falls City School District.

## James Murphy Jr Nominated for The Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders in Boston, MA

James Murphy Jr, a Senior at Niagara Falls Senior High School of Niagara Falls is a Delegate of the Congress of Future Science and

Technology Leaders in Lowell, MA on June 29th - July 1st, 2016.

The Congress is an honors-only program for high school students who are passionate about science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM). The purpose of this event is to honor, inspire, motivate and direct the top students in the country who aspire to be scientists and technologists, to stay true to their dream and, after the event, to provide a path, plan and resources to help them reach their goal.

James Murphy Jr was nominated by the winner of the first Google Science Fair, Shree Bose – Academic Director of the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists – to represent New York based on his academic achievement, leadership potential and passion for science and technology.

During the three-day Congress, James will join students from across the country and hear Nobel Laureates and National Medal of Science Winners talk about leading scientific research; be given advice from deans of the world's top tech universities; and learn about cutting-edge advances and the future of science and technology.

"This is a crucial time in America when we need more nimble-minded and creative scientists and technologists who are even better prepared for a future that is changing exponentially," said Richard Rossi, Executive Director,

National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists.

"Focused, bright and determined students like James Murphy Jr are our future and he deserves all the mentoring and guidance we can give him."

The Academy offers free services and programs to students who have the desire to learn more about their future in science or technology. Some of the services and programs the Academy offers include online social networks through which future scientists and technologists can communicate; opportunities for students to be guided and mentored by tech and science leaders; and communications for parents and students on college acceptance and finances, skills acquisition, internships, career guidance and much more.

The Academy was founded on the belief that science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education plays a critical role in enabling the United States to remain the economic and technological leader of the global marketplace of the 21st century and that we must identify prospective talent at the earliest possible age and help these students acquire the necessary experience and skills.

Based in Washington, DC and with an office in Boston, MA, the Academy was chartered as a non-partisan, taxpaying institution to help address this crisis by working to identify, encourage and mentor students who wish to devote their lives to advances in society as scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians.

## School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2016-16 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2016-17 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2016-17 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 133,605,602	\$ 137,056,127	\$ 136,795,202
Increase/Decrease for the 2016-17 School Year		\$ 3,449,525	\$ 3,189,600
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		2.58 %	2.38 %
Change in the Consumer Price Index		0.12 %	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount, Net of Reserve	25,828,989	25,828,989	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable			
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **			
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy			
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	25,828,989	25,828,989	25,828,989
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$ 2,326,658	\$ 2,716,553	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 23,152,432	\$ 23,487,949	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$ 23,502,331	\$ 23,112,436	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$ (349,899)	\$ 375,513	
Administrative Component	\$ 15,047,365	\$ 15,689,476	\$ 15,689,476
Program Component	\$ 93,433,316	\$ 97,929,205	\$ 97,869,205
Capital Component	\$ 25,124,921	\$ 23,436,446	\$ 23,236,521
* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2016-17 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.			
Contingent budget established pursuant to Section 2023 of Education Law. Board approved contingent budget will be developed based upon state law.			
** List 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	
NOTE: Please submit an electronic version (Word or PDF) of this completed form to: <a href="mailto:emscomgts@nysed.gov">emscomgts@nysed.gov</a>		Under the Budget Proposed for the 2016-17 School Year	
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup>		\$	538.00
The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2016-2017 by the qualified voters of the City School District of the City of Niagara Falls, Niagara County, New York, will be held at General City Election polling sites in said district on Tuesday, May 17, 2016 between the hours of 12:00 noon and 9:00pm, prevailing time at the school district polling sites, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.			
<sup>1</sup> The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 426 of the Real Property Tax Law.			

## Safety Corner: Bike Weather

Jen Regan, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Time to get out your bike and hit the trails! Just a few safety reminders:

- Always wear a helmet! Children under 14 MUST wear a helmet, however, it is recommended that everyone wear a helmet when riding a bike.
- Ride on the Right side of the street- WITH traffic.
- Obey traffic signs and lights when riding on City streets.
- Use hand signals to tell cars and fellow cyclists where you are going.
- Be visible to cars and pedestrians. If you bike at night, use safety lights and wear light colors or reflective clothing.
- Carry water with you on long trips! Stay hydrated in the heat!
- Off on a long adventure? Make an energy-filled snack like the following one:



Energy Snack Mix

3 cups of whole-grain cereal (Cheerios, Wheaties, Chex...)  
 1 cup dried fruit (raisins, banana, cranberries, mango, pineapple, apricots...)  
 ½ cup of nuts (peanuts, sunflower seeds, almonds...)  
 Mix together in bowl.  
 Serving size: ½ cup

Also...

The Centers for Disease Control reminds parents that a few serious sunburns can increase your child's risk of skin cancer later in life. It recommends planning outdoor activities before or after mid-day, or at least seeking shade under a tree, an umbrella, or a pop-up tent.

Also, keep children covered up with long-sleeved shirts and long pants from tightly woven fabric. Dry, dark colored clothes darker colors may offer more protection than lighter colors. Don't forget a hat.

Children should wear sunglasses to protect eyes from UV rays, which can lead to cataracts later in life.

Apply sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and UVA and UVB protection every time your child goes outside.

**STEM**

*Looking Ahead*

**June 9**  
Board of Education  
Review Session  
5:30pm/Tenure  
Reception/ Employees  
of the Year

**June 6**  
Grades 4 & 8 NYS  
Science Written  
Assessments

**June 14-22**  
Regents Testing

**June 22**  
Elementary Half  
Day/Last Day/ No  
School Prep

**June 17**  
NFHS Senior Prom

**June 23**  
Board of Education  
Regular Meeting 7pm

**June 24**  
Mandatory Graduation  
Practice 8:30 a.m.

**June 25**  
**Graduation**  
Noon Conference  
Center Niagara

At left, grade one students at Maple Avenue School act as consultants to a fictional toy company to test a new toy - Crash and Bash Car and Ramp Set - to make sure it is fun to use. They learn about how the height of the ramp and car's weight to impact the "crashing ability" of the car. They make recommendations to the toy company and then use what they have learned to solve a problem.



Students at LaSalle Prep School learn about different methods of inheriting traits across generations.

Elise Glahe from Harry F. Abate Elementary School designed a winning Mission Patch as part of the Student Spaceflights Experiments Program, an initiative for The Buffalo-Niagara Coalition of 10 Buffalo and Niagara Falls schools, organized by the WNY STEM Hub. Her mission patch will be sent into orbit on the International Space Station. Her patch is at left; above left, Elise, Abate art teacher Annmarie Lodick, and Louis Lodovico, whose entry received a Certificate of Achievement.



May 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 NYS ESL Achievement Test-Litening, Reading, Writing through May 13	3	4	5 BOE Review Session at NFHS Public Hearing on Budget 5:30 p.m. District-wide Art Show Reception 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at NFHS	6	7 SAT given at NFHS 8 a.m.
8 Mothers Day	9	10 79th Street PEG Meeting 6:30 p.m.	11 GPS Grade 8 Trip to Washington, D.C. through 5/13	12 Parents & Partners Dinner at NFHS,	13	14
15	16 NSS SQC Meeting 3:15 p.m. HJK PEG Meeting 6:30 p.m. GPS Parent Group Meeting 6:30 p.m.	17 District Budget Vote Noon to 9 p.m. General Election Polling Sites HJK Book Fair through 5/20	18 BOE Statutory Meeting at NFHS Public Hearing on Safety Plans 8 p.m. NFHS Band Concert 7 p.m. PAC	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 NFHS Chorus Spring Concert 7 p.m. PAC	26	27 No School	28
29	30 Memorial Day No School 	31	Grades 4 & 8 Science Performance Assessments Through June 3			