



## < BUDGET VOTE >

Tuesday, May 21, 2019  
9 a.m. – 9 p.m.  
MED Elementary School

### What Will I be Voting on May 21?

#### A \$31,583,390 BUDGET FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

- This budget is \$352,915 (1.11%) less than the 2018-2019 budget.
- This budget carries a projected 1.24% tax levy increase, which is at the NYS property tax cap.

#### STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PROPOSITION #2:

Allows for a Chatham High School student to be appointed to the Board of Education to serve as a non-voting member.

#### SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION:

Selection of candidates to fill five seats on the Board of Education, who will appear on the ballot in the following order:

1. Matthew Fisch
2. Craig Simmons
3. Graham Button
4. Meghan Charron
5. Muriel Faxon

## 2019 – 2020 BUDGET: Providing Balance and Stability

Residents of the Chatham Central School District will head to the polls on May 21 to decide on a \$31,583,390 budget for the 2019-2020 school year. The school budget carries a projected tax levy increase of 1.24 percent, which matches the District’s allowable tax levy limit set by the NYS property tax cap.

Spending is down a total of \$352,915, a 1.11 percent decrease from the current year’s budget. The budget decrease is due to the retirement of debt from an earlier capital project, and because the District completed a computer network upgrade project in 2018 that is therefore no longer in the budget. However, both projects received funding from the state, which the District will no longer receive. Overall, projected revenues from state aid and other sources are down \$628,276, which is why the budget proposal carries a tax levy increase.

The District used reserves and fund balance to reduce the impact of revenue shortfalls on the budget and help hold the tax levy increase at the tax cap. Because the budget stays at the cap, most District homeowners will be eligible to receive the NYS STAR Property Tax Rebate in the fall.

Staffing levels were carefully examined and adjusted to meet enrollment and program needs. The budget includes the addition of a half-time enrichment teacher position at the Elementary School and a full-time special education teacher position at the Middle School. Budget highlights also include the addition of an introductory Spanish language program at the Elementary School, a Design & Modeling class at the Middle School, and a Theatre Production & Marketing class at the High School.

“By applying financially conservative



practices, we’ve been able to stretch our dollars to enhance Chatham’s educational program and provide financial stability for our District,” said Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Sal DeAngelo. “This budget not only holds taxes at the cap, but also includes no cuts to staffing or programs and strengthens learning opportunities for students.”

Included in the budget are the purchases of two large school buses and one medium bus, part of the District’s ongoing bus replacement plan, which keeps our fleet running safely and reliably by replacing older, high-mileage vehicles. Also included in the budget is a small capital project to replace the card-access door security system at the High School.

Voting on the budget will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School gymnasium. Voters will also be asked to elect candidates to fill five open seats on the Board of Education, as well as decide on a proposition to continue to allow a student representative to sit on the Board of Education as a nonvoting member.

A public hearing on the 2019-2020 budget is scheduled for May 14, 6:00 p.m. in the Chatham High School library.

## Most CCSD Homeowners Eligible for STAR Property Tax Rebate

NYS implemented a STAR Rebate program for the years 2016 through 2019. The rebate applies to homeowners who receive the STAR Exemption/Credit and who live in school districts that pass budgets at or below their tax levy cap. Because Chatham's 2019-2020 budget keeps the tax levy at its 1.24 percent cap, eligible homeowners earning \$275,000 or less will receive a rebate check from NYS in the fall. The amount homeowners will receive is based on a percentage of the homeowner's STAR Exemption/Credit benefit, with lower incomes receiving a higher percentage benefit. The STAR Rebate is in addition to the tax savings residents see through their STAR Exemption/Credit.

### HOW IS THE DISTRICT STRENGTHENING PROGRAM?

Providing students with a first-class 21st Century education means CCSD is continually evaluating and updating our educational program. Below are some examples of program initiatives included in the budget for next year.

**Enrichment** A new half-time enrichment teacher position will provide all elementary students with more opportunities to explore areas in which they excel or find interest in. This position will work closely with grade-level teachers to give students more ownership of their learning and challenge them in meaningful and fun ways.

**Spanish in Kindergarten** This new language program will introduce kindergarten students to the basics of Spanish. Learning a new language has been shown to stimulate intellectual growth, build foundational skills needed for reading comprehension, and provide a greater sense of understanding and sensitivity to other cultures, among other benefits. There are plans to expand this program into first and possibly other grades in the future if resources allow.

**Special Education** An additional special education teacher

at CMS will provide support for students moving from the elementary school to the middle school next year. This will allow intervention services to "follow" these students while sustaining current levels of staffing at the elementary school to support a high level of special education needs there.

**STEAM Learning** CMS will revamp its seventh grade technology program with Design & Modeling, a Project Lead the Way course that will teach students methods for communicating design ideas through sketches and physical and mathematical models.

**Theatre Production & Marketing** From play writing to lighting design, and market research to audience development and advertising, this new extra-curricular offering will allow CHS students to explore all aspects of stage production and learn strategies relevant to promoting artists, events, and creative products.

### STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ON THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Proposition #2** on the ballot asks voters to reapprove a provision that allows a Chatham High School student to be appointed to the Board of Education. The Student Representative serves a one-year term as a nonvoting member and acts as a liaison between the student body and the Board of Education. This provision was first approved by voters in 2009 and a student representative currently sits on the Board. Education Law requires the District to seek voter approval of this provision every two years. The current voter-approved provision will expire June 30, 2019.

### CHATHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY

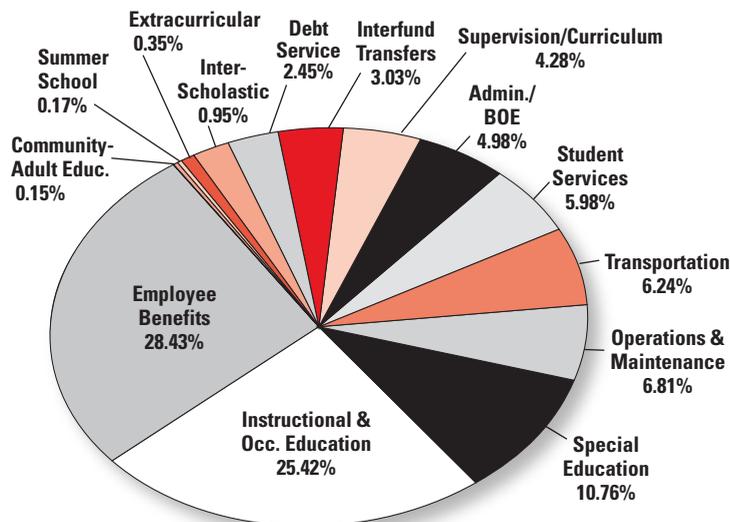
#### Serving the Greater Community

The Chatham Central School District budget fully funds the Chatham Public Library, which is one of only two public libraries in the state that are part of a school system. The Chatham Public Library and its branch in Canaan served more than 4,444 active borrowers this past year, who checked out items 63,319 times, accessed the Library's online media collection 10,598 times, used its public computers for 5,260 sessions, and logged into the Library's wi-fi 14,655 times. The Library also offered 475 programs for children and adults, which were attended by over 4,086 patrons.



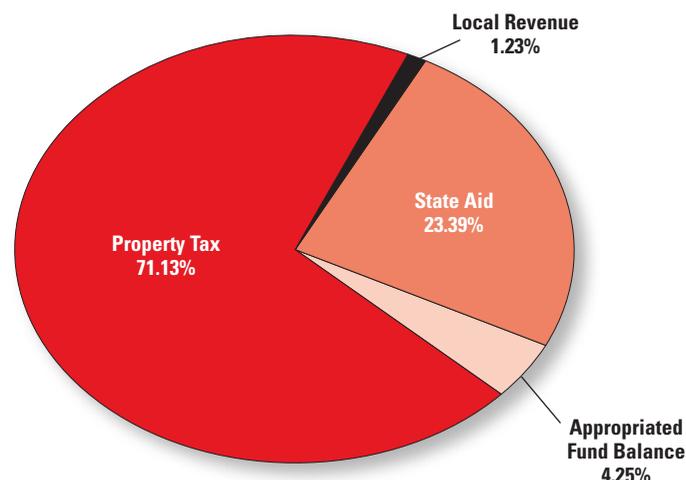
# 2019-2020 Proposed Budget

	BUDGET 2018-2019	PROPOSED 2019-2020
Instructional & Occ. Education	\$7,922,473	\$8,029,518
Special Education	\$3,270,428	\$3,399,540
Summer School	\$53,695	\$53,695
Student Services	\$1,941,799	\$1,888,772
Extracurricular	\$110,900	\$110,900
Inter-Scholastic	\$296,725	\$298,625
Community-Adult Education	\$47,718	\$48,100
Administrative/BOE	\$1,520,543	\$1,573,663
Supervision/Curriculum	\$1,289,964	\$1,350,908
Transportation	\$1,949,389	\$1,971,311
Operations & Maintenance	\$2,140,413	\$2,151,002
Employee Benefits	\$8,726,795	\$8,977,816
Debt Service	\$1,702,055	\$773,500
Interfund Transfers	\$963,408	\$956,040
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$31,936,305</b>	<b>\$31,583,390</b>



## Estimated Revenues

	BUDGET 2018-2019	BUDGET 2019-2020
Property Tax	\$22,192,631	\$22,467,992
Local Revenue	\$614,000	\$387,314
State Aid	\$7,788,074	\$7,386,484
Reserves	\$0	\$0
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$1,341,600	\$1,341,600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$31,936,305</b>	<b>\$31,583,390</b>



## Property Tax Report Summary

	2018-2019	2019-2020	% Change
Total Budgeted Amount, not Including Separate Propositions	\$31,936,305	\$31,583,390	-1.11%
Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy	\$22,192,631	\$22,467,992	1.24%
Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$829,405	\$494,209	
School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$21,391,493	\$21,973,783	
Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions	\$21,363,226	\$21,973,783	
Difference: (G - H); (negative value requires 60.0% voter approval)	28,267	0	
Public School Enrollment	1,029	1,004	-2.43%
Consumer Price Index			2.44%

\*Complete Property Tax Report Card available at [www.chathamcentralschools.com](http://www.chathamcentralschools.com)  
The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

## Moody's Upgrades CCSD to Aa2 Rating

In March, Moody's Investors Service upgraded Chatham Central School District's general obligation bond credit rating to Aa2 from Aa3. According to Moody's, the upgrade reflects the District's strong levels of reserves and consistent operating surpluses, stable tax base, low debt burden, and manageable pension liability. Moody's also noted as credit strengths the District's above-average resident wealth and incomes, and strong voter support for annual budgets.

"Having our rating upgraded means our interest costs for new debt are now lower," said school business administrator Michael Chudy. "This is great news

because it is already saving our taxpayers money and shows our District is financially strong."

The District's rating was updated as part of its recent bond issuance to fund the Capital Improvement Project that voters approved in 2018 (renovations begin this summer). This allowed the District to pay a lower interest rate on the project bond, and refinance a portion of its existing debt to realize an estimated \$375,000 in savings over the terms of those bonds. The Aa2 rating also lowered the District's 2019 tax levy cap to 1.24 percent from 1.45 percent, resulting in additional savings for taxpayers.

## HOW IS THE DISTRICT USING RESERVES AND FUND BALANCE?

As a general practice, Chatham uses reserve accounts and fund balance to reduce year-to-year tax levy increases. Use of reserves and fund balance are part of the District's long-term fiscal plan to provide for the financial stability of the District.

The District allocated \$1,341,600 of fund balance to reduce the tax levy increase. Fund balance is a reserve much like a savings account. When District expenses are less than expected, or revenues are higher than projected, money remaining at the end of the year is held in the fund balance. The District utilizes fund balance each year in the budget to

minimize spending cuts and hold down tax increases.

In previous years, the District created voter-approved Capital Reserve Funds to pay for large-scale construction projects, which will now help to pay for the Capital Improvement Project voters approved in 2018. Along with using state building aid and fund balance as revenue, this allows the District to complete this project without the need to raise additional taxes.

Chatham's 2018-2027 Financial Reserve Plan is available on the Budget Information page at [www.chathamcentralschools.com](http://www.chathamcentralschools.com).

## CHS BUILDING ACCESS SYSTEM REPLACEMENT

Included in the 2019-20 budget is a small capital project to replace the door-access security system at Chatham High School. The building's current employee swipe-card system is outdated and no longer supported by the company that produced it, making maintenance difficult and upgrades to the system impossible. Similar capital projects replaced the building access system at the Elementary School last year and at the

Middle School this year. The project would not exceed \$100,000 and does not increase the 2019-20 budget because money for small annual capital projects was built into the budget in previous years. Chatham is entitled to 49.6 percent state aid on capital projects, so the District would be reimbursed for approximately half of the cost.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE BUDGET IS DEFEATED?

If voters do not approve the budget proposal on May 21, the Board of Education has the following options: put the same budget or a revised budget up for vote on June 18, or adopt a contingency budget. If the budget is again defeated on June 18, the Board must adopt a contingency budget.

The NYS property tax cap law holds a contingency budget's tax levy increase at 0 percent, requiring the District to levy the same amount of taxes or less as it did in 2018, regardless of cost increases. A contingency budget prevents spending on new

equipment and also limits public use of District facilities. However, all state mandated programs, whether funded by state aid or not, would be retained.

These regulations mean that in a contingent budget, the Board would need to make \$890,385 in cuts from the budget proposal. Therefore, the District would be required to eliminate any projected purchases of new equipment from the budget (except where safety is concerned), including replacement buses, and would consider other cuts to instructional and non-instructional budgets.

# 2019 Board of Education Candidates

Five candidates are running for five open seats on the Board. The three highest vote getters will be elected to three-year terms. The candidate who receives the fourth most votes will serve a two-year term and the candidate with the fifth most votes will serve a one-year term (these shorter terms fill the remainder of two terms left vacant by resignations). The candidates provided the following articles about themselves.



## MATTHEW FISCH

This past year I had the opportunity to serve the district in the role of vacancy appointed board member and look forward to serving in the future in an elected capacity. I am a registered independent and consider the merits of individual issues when establishing consensus. I am 36 years old, was raised locally and am proud to call Chatham my hometown. Currently, I am vested in the school with 5 children. I am passionate about rural values and quality of life, enjoy the outdoors, and am working on several initiatives to stimulate economic development in Columbia County with a strong emphasis on environmental and social good. As a career entrepreneur, I have strong competencies in team building, technology, policy, governance, risk, compliance, security, finance, legal, and negotiation. I run the Chatham Coworker as a community project, and am founder of a cybersecurity software company "FortMesa" which is working to protect the privacy and integrity of information systems.



## CRAIG SIMMONS

I would like to continue my service to Chatham Central School District. Having served on the Board of Education since 2012, I feel I've gained the knowledge and understanding of our district. Student success is the number one priority to me while maintaining a realistic budget. I currently chair our facility committee which has been working on our capital project. One of my goals is to see the completion of this project and help create a yearly strategy of improvements to our campus.



## GRAHAM BUTTON

As a passionate advocate for the power of education, I am dedicated to ensuring that our students are enriched with the amazing opportunities that our District and community provides while remaining responsible to the taxpayers. Professionally I hold a Master's Degree in Education and have more than ten years of experience in the education sector, including as a middle and high school teacher. Presently I serve on four Board committees – Policy, Finance, Negotiation, and the Vision/Mission/Wellness committees. In the past year, these committees have been fundamental in strengthening District policy, ensuring fiscal responsibility, working with our unions, and defining the role of wellness within our District. I have developed a solid understanding of the District's strengths and areas of potential improvement through my duties as a Board member and committee work. My desire for another term on the Board is to continue to strengthen our policies and procedures and support the dedicated teachers and staff of the District with the tools they need to prepare our students for success.



## MEGHAN CHARRON

My name is Meghan Charron. I am running as a candidate for the BOE. I have been a member of this community for my entire adult life & have gained firsthand knowledge about how specific issues affect our schools, children & community. I believe I have ideas & insight that would be beneficial to help improve things for our children & incorporate ways to help ensure community involvement to best serve everyone. I am actively involved in my children's education, extracurricular activities, & have a vested interest in the wellbeing of this district & community that my family calls home & have strong community ties. Over the past year, I have been a volunteer on multiple CCSD BOE Committees. I have worked closely with current board members & administrators to address goals & outcomes in the best interest of our students & community. I would like to help ensure we provide an environment where students can safely learn, grow & have the support to become contributing members of society in their future lives.



## MURIEL FAXON

I have a long involvement with Chatham and feel that my background experience with the district will allow me to participate again as an active, open-minded board member. I have a very good working relationship with our present board, Superintendent, and administration. I am committed to carrying out the goals that this board has set forth. For the past 6 years I have been a member of CPLAC, Member of the facilities committee, member of the district negotiations team, and "head cheerleader" for our music and arts education programs, and recently board representative to the Chatham Education Foundation. Most important of all, I am committed to working together with all to give the students of the Chatham District the best possible choices in education so when they walk out of our doors after 12 years, the only thing that will be in front of them will be success.

## CAR-RT SORT POSTAL CUSTOMER

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### ADMINISTRATORS

Sal DeAngelo, Ed. D. 392-1501  
*Superintendent*

Michael Chudy 392-1534  
*School Business Administrator*

Lucas Christensen 392-1501  
*Administrator of Educational Services*

Brian Simon 392-1540  
*Director of Special Education*

Kristen Reno 392-2255  
*Mary E. Dardess  
Elementary School Principal*

Brett Fortran 392-2255  
*Mary E. Dardess  
Elementary School Assistant Principal*

Michael Burns 392-1560  
*Chatham Middle School Principal*

John Thorsen 392-4142  
*Chatham High School Principal*

Eric Papandrea 392-4142  
*Chatham HS Assistant Principal*

### BOARD MEMBERS

Craig Simmons 2019  
*President*

Rachel Galvin 2020  
*Vice President*

Denise Barry 2021

Graham Button 2019

Muriel Faxon 2019

Matthew Fisch 2019

Beth Hover 2021

Carol Wilber 2019

Patricia Wilson 2020

Althea Brennan 2019  
*Student Representative*

### SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE

Voting will take place on  
**Tuesday, May 21, 2019**  
**9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.**  
in the Mary E. Dardess  
Elementary School gymnasium,  
50 Woodbridge Avenue,  
in Chatham.

### ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Absentee ballots may be applied for at the Office of the School District Clerk, located in the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School (518-392-1501). Applications for absentee ballots must be received by the School District Clerk no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 14, 2019 if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter; or prior to 4:00 p.m. May 20, 2019 if the voter wishes to obtain the ballot in person.

### VOTER INFORMATION

To be eligible to vote on May 21 you must be:

- A citizen of the United States 18 years of age or older
- A resident of the Chatham Central School District for a period of 30 days or more directly preceding the day of the vote
- Registered to vote with either the School District or the Columbia County Board of Elections

If you have not previously registered and would like to vote in this election, you must register with the School District Board of Registration. The next Voter Registration Day is Tuesday, May 14, from 3:00-7:00 p.m. in the MED Elementary School lobby.

### BUDGET DETAILS AVAILABLE ONLINE!

More information about the proposed 2019-20 budget is available at:

[www.chathamcentralschools.com](http://www.chathamcentralschools.com)