



# GATES CHILI

## CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Budget Newsletter 2020

## Gates Chili budget not exceeding tax cap, despite difficult fiscal landscape

Dear Gates Chili Community,

This budget season is unlike any other in the history of our district. Gates Chili has been resilient during these unprecedented times. We must now navigate our district's future with a budget that sustains the level of excellence our community has come to know.

Over the past few years, Gates Chili has been a leader in technology integration. Our students are digital natives and have made great strides using instructional technology. We would have never anticipated the critical role technology would play this year, but we are grateful for the tools and ability to continue education beyond the classroom.

We want to continue to support staff member growth in the area of classroom technology through professional development opportunities this summer and in the upcoming school year. As we develop our staff, our instructional technology implementation strengthens, and we will achieve the high standards of 21st-century learning and increase students' readiness for the rigorous demands of college and careers.

The district budget supports a list of programs and services that are vital to your child's educational experience but are not deemed mandatory by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). These items

include: kindergarten, teacher aides, elementary school librarians, elementary art and music instruction, school plays/musicals, instrumental lessons, extracurricular clubs, grades 7-12 interscholastic athletics, intramurals, and dual-credit and advanced placement (AP) courses.

In order to support the aforementioned items, the GCCSD Board of Education adopted a spending plan for the 2020-21 school year of \$113,424,313 at its April 28 meeting. Under the plan, the overall spending would increase by \$3,243,643, a 2.94% increase over the 2019-20 budget. The proposed tax levy increase is 2.38%, significantly below the 2019-20 tax levy of 3%.

This newsletter contains information about the 2020-21 budget on pages 6-9, along with many highlights that make up our collective GC Pride. On behalf of the Gates Chili Board of Education, faculty and staff, we thank you for your continued support.

Go Spartans!

Christopher J. Dailey  
Superintendent of Schools



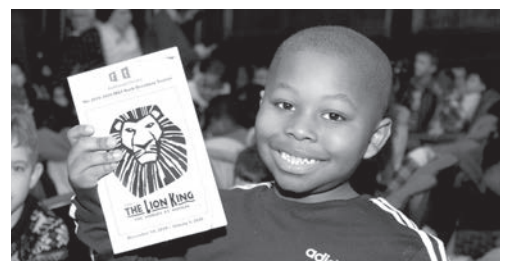
@GatesChiliSuper



# BUDGET VOTE

Mail-in ballots only  
Details on back

Tuesday, June 9, 2020



*Together we teach and inspire excellence for all learners.*

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

*Gates Chili CSD is grateful for the community's continued investment in the district. While the return on investment isn't measured in dollars, it can be measured in success and achievement. Throughout this issue, you will find how your investment is reaping great returns.*

### Grades UPK-2

- More than 130 UPK and kindergarten families kicked off the school year at the annual Reading Caravan event, where each family left with a free book.
- Forty teachers and specialists support more than 275 students through Flexible Instruction Time (FIT), a developmental team approach to learning that provides both enrichment and support at the kindergarten level.
- Incoming kindergarteners and their families take part in 180+ quick activities to support development as outlined in Gates Chili's Countdown to Kindergarten Calendar, provided to every family at registration and available online.

### Grades 3-8

- Over 40% of students in grades K-5 have demonstrated accelerated growth in reading and math on diagnostic assessments this school year.
- Nearly 50% of middle school students are involved in at least one extracurricular club, not including athletics or intramurals.
- More than 40% of middle school students earned honor roll or high honor roll for quarter two this school year.

## #GCcares: learning from home during a pandemic

When staff and students left school on March 13, they had no idea they'd be spending the remainder of the school year teaching and learning from home. The COVID-19 school closure that shut down schools across the nation quickly proved that the Gates Chili school community is resilient and reaches far beyond the school walls.

Many of the processes and practices already in place at Gates Chili gave our educators and students an advantage as they began their at-home teaching and learning journeys. For example, secondary students with 1:1 device access were familiar with taking their devices home to complete work and communicate with their teachers. Within days of the closure, technology teams began planning for a device distribution at the elementary level, so those students could use their 1:1 devices at home, too.

Now, more than two months into remote learning, teachers are offering office hours and appointments via video conferencing, phone, and/or other platforms to support student learning. They are also using Schoology, a learning management system, to communicate weekly assignments to parents. Mental health staff is also available for students and families in need of emotional support or those who have questions about finding support in the community.

"We know this closure has been hard on everyone," said Associate Superintendent for Instruction Carol Stehm. "We cannot thank our families enough for their patience and support as we quickly converted to this new style of teaching and learning. The cooperation between families and educators really shows how much Gates Chili cares about its students."



## #GCcares on social media

As a result of the closure, the district launched the #GCcares campaign. Check the hashtag #GCcares to see the variety of ways in which our community has helped and encouraged one another during the COVID-19 school closure.





# #GCcares: providing meals during school closure

Every weekday since the school closure began, Gates Chili school nutrition staff members have been busy providing meals for children in our community: an average of 11,500 meals per week and a whopping 75,000+ meals to date!

Any child in the community, 18 years and younger, is eligible for a free meal. There are no income requirement and registration is not required. This program is fully-funded by the USDA, so there is no cost to district taxpayers.

Menus are posted on [gateschili.org/SpartanEats](https://gateschili.org/SpartanEats). The USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.



## Free meals continue this summer!

**WHO:** All children 18 years old and younger

**WHEN:** July 6 to Aug. 21, 2020

**WHERE:** Gates Chili Middle School and Paul Road Elementary School

Breakfast and lunch will be served Monday through Friday. Call 247-7213 with questions.

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

### School Nutrition

- Students have increased exposure to fresh fruit and vegetables thanks to the introduction of self-service salad bars in all four elementary schools this school year.
- School nutrition workers prepare and serve an estimated 750 breakfasts and 2,200 lunches in Gates Chili cafeterias daily.
- Gates Chili staff served 23,000+ hot meals to children during the 2019 free summer meals program.



### #GCPride

- The district has honored more than 25 students, staff and community members with a GC PRIDE Award for their professionalism, respect, innovation, dedication and excellence.
- Staff sent over 10,000 #GCPride postcards to students and staff members throughout the district, celebrating successes and victories inside and outside of the classroom.
- #GCPride has been used on social media by students and staff roughly 200 times per week in 2019-20 to share Gates Chili pride.



## GC PRIDE Award

Gates Chili CSD is proud to recognize students, staff and community members who go above and beyond on behalf of the district and its students. The GC PRIDE Award stands for and honors professionalism, respect, innovation, dedication and excellence. Congratulations to the all of the recipients for February and March.



Feb. 11 recipients (l-r): GCHS senior Katelyn Weeks and Paul Road fifth-grader Alanna Kester



March 10 recipients (l-r): GCMS art teacher Amy Cocuzzi and GCMS PTO Vice President Tracy Dalykas

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**Technology**

- All 3,442 grades 1-12 students and 1 in 2 kindergarten students have a laptop available to them daily.
- More than 1,200 students have taken part in approximately 50 sessions of virtual reality this school year.
- Two innovation coaches support technology integration efforts at all six schools, which include planning and leading instructional technology professional development as well as co-planning, teaching and modeling effective technology integration for staff.

**Library**

- Students have checked out in excess of 78,000 books from school libraries across the district and 7,000+ e-books/audiobooks through the district's collaboration with the BOCES School Library System.
- Staff and students have used library databases over 130,000 times for various projects and assignments.
- Gates Chili provides access to more than 100 digital resources covering all content areas to enhance learning experiences for our students throughout the district.



## Creating a *new world* through code

Walking through the Gates Chili Middle School library on a Wednesday afternoon, you may miss the hive of activity in the back room if you don't hear the quiet click of the mouse and rapid clack of the keyboard. A question, a high-five, or a burst of joy interrupt the quiet concentration of the girls in front of their screens, the girls who code.

This national initiative is put on by the Gates Public Library. GCMS staff member Sarah Johnson runs the afterschool group in the middle and high schools. In less than two months, 24 girls have signed up for the club in the middle school.

"I like using computers and I'm usually the one in my family helping with the tech problems. I've learned a lot since becoming part of this group. Coding is like putting together a puzzle," expressed sixth-grader Chloe Favasuli, who never coded before joining the club. Now, she's building video games.

Favasuli and her classmates are guided through different programs with the help of Johnson, GCMS librarian Cynthia Ratajczak and math teacher Rachel Serpe.



"It is awesome to see them build their skills and to see their success. We're hoping to expand the program to introduce them to women in the STEM fields. We want them to think 'That could be me,'" explained Serpe.

"I'm going to go to college and get a good job to make my mom proud," said Barker, noting she would be one of the first females in her family to go to college.

The club creates the building blocks students need for higher computer programming. They start from scratch and build upon what they learn every week.

## Celebrating technology integration

Several local leaders visited Gates Chili Middle School during National Public Schools Week Feb. 24-28. GCMS welcomed New York State Board of Regents Vice Chancellor T. Andrew Brown, Monroe County Executive Adam Bello, RIT's Dean of Engineering Technology Dr. Manian Ramkumar and others for a VIP virtual reality experience.

Middle school English teacher Heather Coughlin led her seventh-grade class in a field trip to Latino communities around the United States after they read the book, "Crossing the Wire" by Will Hobbs. Through this VR field trip, the special guests were able to experience the technology integration students experience every day. After the lesson, the group toured capital improvement upgrades at GCMS.

Public Schools Week is a way to promote great things happening in classrooms every day.





## Class of 2020 Top 20

Congratulations to the top 20 ranked seniors from the Class of 2020, according to their weighted GPA.



1. Katelyn Weeks



2. Sara Firnstein



3. Chelsea Pappa



4. Ciara Bailey



5. Sinaiya Kerns



6. Audrey Lamendola



7. Alexa Kretchmer



8. James Schmidt



9. Jillian Yates



10. Julia Crocker



11. Daniel Sarkis



12. Anna Quan



13. Jacob Antinelli



14. Jamie Hogancamp



15. Stacey Do



16. Simal Ekmekci



17. Vanessa Nowicki



18. Tuan Le



19. Makayla Perry



20. Julianna Wolf

## Adding up the math to *help animals*

Lollypop Farm is taking care of a record high number of pigs. Thanks to Todd Esposito's GCHS math class, those farm animals are finding shelter in a new temporary home.

"Many people are getting pigs for pets without being educated on their care, and pigs are paying the price," explained Lollypop Farm's Farm and Safety Manager Joanna Dychton.

As her crew is taking care of double the number of pigs they usually have, Esposito's Geometry in Construction class challenged its math skills to build a structure similar to a doghouse for the pigs.

"The project inherently allows us to differentiate among all learners," explained Esposito. "All students see the value of

real-life geometry. For example, we begin with the foundation. In class, if you get a question wrong, you move on to the next one. However, if the students measure wrong, then things will go wrong quickly."

After completing the structure, students traveled to Lollypop Farm to install it and meet the pigs who will call it home until they are adopted.



## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

### Grades 9-12

- High school students taking part in 35 different dual-credit courses have the opportunity to earn college credit at various schools including Syracuse University, Roberts Wesleyan College and Monroe Community College.
- The GCHS peer leadership class has swept the top spots in the Monroe County Public Service Announcement Contest Against Drunk Driving for three consecutive years, with PSAs appearing on both television and radio.
- By the end of February, high school counselors logged more than 2,600 meetings with students to advise them on topics such as college prep, academic support, and social and emotional needs.

### Social and Emotional Learning

- Gates Chili students have participated in 800+ community-building circles districtwide this school year, twice the number from last school year.
- All elementary schools utilize the Second Step program, a research-based SEL program designed to empower children to manage their own emotions, form healthy relationships, make good decisions and cope with everyday social and academic challenges.
- The District Resiliency Committee, made up of representatives from each building, works to build assets in students so they are equipped to bounce back when life is challenging.

## Three-Part Budget Summary

New York State requires school districts to present their budgets divided into three expenditure categories – administrative, program and capital.

**Total Budget: \$113,424,313**

Administrative	2019-20	2020-21
Amount	\$11,829,715	\$11,380,098

Percent of Budget	11%	10%
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Provides overall general support and management services including employee benefits for administrative and clerical support staff, costs for administration and supervision of each of the six schools, staff development, business operations and central administration.

Program	2019-20	2020-21
Amount	\$82,040,225	\$84,196,352

Percent of Budget	74%	74%
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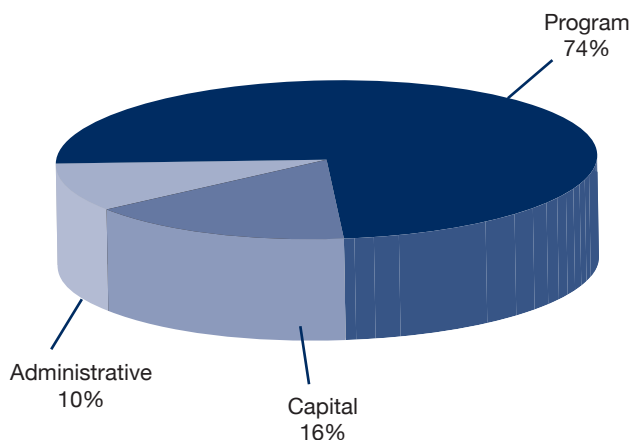
Provides instruction and educational support services for the district's students. This includes the transportation costs, special education services and benefits for the instructional and non-instructional program staff.

Capital	2019-20	2020-21
Amount	\$16,310,730	\$17,847,863

Percent of Budget	15%	16%
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Provides maintenance and custodial services for six schools, the surrounding property, utility services, debt service payments and benefits for maintenance and custodial staff.

### Proposed 2020-21 Three-Part Budget



## What's on the ballot?

Residents will vote on the following propositions:

### Proposition 1 – School Budget

The school budget proposition authorizes the Gates Chili Central School District to spend for school purpose during the 2020-21 fiscal year \$113,424,313 and to levy the necessary tax therefore.

### Proposition 2 – Bus Purchases

This proposition would authorize the purchase of 15 buses at a total cost of no more than \$1,945,100.39.

This would include nine 66-passenger buses, four 74-passenger school buses, two 35-passenger buses. New York State reimburses Gates Chili approximately 74% of bus purchases.

### Board Candidates

Residents will vote to fill three Board of Education seats for three-year terms. Candidates are Raymond Banks, Catherine Coffee, Robert Long, Jeffrey Pettenski and Miriam Rivera.

## Estimated Tax Rate

Estimated 2020-21 tax rates use tentative 2020 tax rolls. The Town of Gates is in the process of finalizing reassessed property values. This is lowering the estimated tax rates district wide. Equalization rates are estimated to be 100% for the Town of Gates and 96% for the Town of Chili.

2019-20 Tax Rate	\$26.87
Estimated 2020-21 Tax Rate Based on Increased Assessments	\$25.00



# Where does the money come from?

## REVENUE SUMMARY

Revenue Sources	2019-20 Adopted Budget	2020-21 Proposed Budget
Tax Levy	\$54,521,227	\$55,821,084
PILOT Agreements	2,580,000	2,600,000
Sales Tax	4,500,000	3,500,000
Tuition, Fees, Interest	1,984,040	2,001,000
Forfeitures and Refunds	1,759,853	1,773,991
State Aid	40,725,750	42,467,738
Federal Aid and Interfund Transfers	100,000	95,000
Transfer from Unemployment Reserve	1,055,000	
Transfer from Retire Contribution Res	354,000	800,000
Transfer from Tax Certiorari Reserve	100,000	100,000
Transfer from Employee Benefit Accrued Liability Reserve	100,000	100,000
Appropriated Fund Balance		2,800,000
Appropriated Reserves	2,400,000	
Appropriated Reserve-ERS		1,200,000
Capital Technology		100,000
Sales of Equipment, Material and Other		65,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$110,180,670</b>	<b>\$113,424,313</b>



# Where does the money go?

## EXPENSE SUMMARY

Budget Category	2019-20 Adopted Budget	2020-21 Proposed Budget
<b>Administrative Component - \$11,380,098 or 10% of the Total Budget</b>		
Board of Education	\$20,675	\$29,675
Central Administration	292,150	288,368
Finance	990,400	1,040,057
Staff	704,100	895,310
Central Services	811,000	831,030
Specialty Items	1,576,500	1,688,000
Instructional Administration and Staff Development	978,200	982,412
Supervision of Schools	2,632,500	2,740,652
Employee Benefits	2,669,190	2,884,594
Transfer to Other Funds	1,155,000	
<b>Administrative Budget</b>	<b>\$11,829,715</b>	<b>\$11,380,098</b>
<b>Program Component - \$84,196,352 or 74% of the Total Budget</b>		
Instructional	\$55,010,625	\$55,514,435
District Transportation	5,093,100	5,086,173
Community Services	468,400	504,737
Transfer to Special Aid Fund	360,000	
Employee Benefits	21,468,100	23,091,007
<b>Program Budget</b>	<b>\$82,040,225</b>	<b>\$84,196,352</b>
<b>Capital Component - \$17,847,863 or 16% of the Total Budget</b>		
Operations and Maintenance	\$5,087,950	\$5,018,329
Refund on Real Property Taxes	3,000	4,000
Debt Service and Transfer to Capital Reserve	9,377,500	10,863,633
Transfers to Other Funds	360,000	360,000
Employee Benefits	1,482,280	1,601,901
<b>Capital Budget</b>	<b>\$16,310,730</b>	<b>\$17,847,863</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$110,180,670</b>	<b>\$113,424,313</b>



<b>Overall Budget Proposal</b>	<b>Budget Adopted for the 2019-20 School Year</b>	<b>Budget Proposed for the 2020-21 School Year</b>	<b>Contingency Budget for the 2019-20 School Year</b>
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$110,180,670	\$113,424,313	\$112,796,910
Increase/Decrease for the 2020-21 School Year		\$3,243,643	\$2,616,240
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		2.94%	2.37%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.81%	
Resulting est. property tax levy for the 2020-21 school year		\$55,821,084	\$54,521,227
A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$54,521,227	\$55,821,084	\$54,521,227
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable			
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Available**			
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy			
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$54,521,227	\$55,821,084	\$54,521,227
F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$3,266,821	\$3,395,794	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$51,809,870	\$52,425,290	\$51,125,433
H. Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, Excluding Permissible Exclusions and Levy for Library Debt, Plus Prior Year Tax Cap Reserve (E - B - F + D)	\$51,254,406	\$52,425,290	
I. Difference: (G - H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)**	\$555,464	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$11,829,715	\$11,380,098	\$11,192,404
Program Component	\$82,040,225	\$84,196,352	\$83,759,143
Capital Component	\$16,310,730	\$17,847,863	\$17,845,363
Public School Enrollment	3,686	3,698	
Consumer Price Index	2.44%	1.81%	

*\*If a contingent budget is required, the Board of Education will review all areas of the budget to develop a contingency budget for the 2020-21 school year, pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. Should the 2020-21 budget be defeated, the following items will be deleted: bus purchases, equipment purchases, free public use of buildings, instructional and non-instructional positions, to be identified.*

To authorize the school district to undertake the acquisition of nine (9) 66-passenger school buses at an estimated maximum cost of \$128,685.11 each, two (2) 35-passenger school buses at an estimated maximum cost of \$124,885.62 each, and four (4) 74-passenger school buses at an estimated maximum cost of \$134,290.79 each, all at an estimated maximum aggregate cost of \$1,945,100.39, less trade-in value, if any, and that such costs, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax to be collected in annual installments; and, in anticipation of such tax, debt obligations of the school district as may be necessary not to exceed \$1,945,100.39 shall be issued, or the school district may enter into an installment purchase contract if the Board of Education determines that it is in the best interest of the school district to finance the purchase in that method.



	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2020-21 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup>	\$750

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

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2020-21 by the qualified voters of the Gates Chili Central School District, Monroe County, New York, will be held. on Tuesday, June 9, 2020 by mail-in ballot only. Ballots must be received by the district clerk no later than 5 p.m. on June 9 in order to be counted.





## STAR Exemption

The School Tax Relief (STAR) program provides eligible homeowners in New York State with relief on their property taxes.

If you're a STAR recipient, you receive the benefit in one of two ways:

- the STAR credit program (open to any eligible homeowner whose income is \$500,000 or less)—you receive a check in the mail from the Tax Department to apply to your school taxes
- the STAR exemption program (now closed to new applicants)—you receive a direct reduction on your school tax bill in the form of a property tax exemption

Enhanced STAR, which provides increased savings, is available to qualifying senior citizens ages 65 and older in both the credit and exemption programs.

### What's changed over the last few years

- the value of the STAR credit may increase by as much as 2% each year, but the STAR exemption cannot increase; and
- the income limit for the Basic STAR exemption is now \$250,000.

### Who must switch

- If your income is more than \$250,000, you must switch to the STAR credit to continue receiving your benefit.
- If your income is \$250,000 or less, you have the option to switch.

### How to switch to the STAR credit

- Notify your assessor that you wish to withdraw your STAR exemption.
- Register for the STAR credit at [www.tax.ny.gov/star/](http://www.tax.ny.gov/star/)

## Veterans' Exemption

This exemption provides relief to wartime, combat and disability veterans. Veterans must apply for this exemption with their town assessor's office.

### 2020-21 Estimated STAR Values

Basic STAR Exemption	\$30,000
Enhanced STAR Exemption	\$69,800

	Assessed Value	Maximum Assessment of
Wartime Veteran Exemption	15%	\$9,000
Combat Exemption	25%	\$6,000
Disability Exemption	N/A	\$30,000

## Fund Balances

Year-end fund balances of school districts are the result of the recognition of revenues in excess of amounts estimated and expenditures that are less than the total amount of appropriations. Fund balances in excess of zero suggest positive operating outcomes for schools.

	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Estimated
Adjusted Restricted Fund Balance	\$18,551,713	\$19,563,250
Assigned Appropriated Fund Balance	\$2,400,000	\$2,800,000
Adjusted Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$4,342,380	\$4,536,973
Adjusted Unrestricted Fund Balance as a Percent of the Total Budget	4%	4%

# Board of Education Candidates

Three candidates will be elected to the board at the annual district vote on June 9, 2020. Each will serve a three-year term beginning July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023. Below are statements from each candidate about their interest in serving on the board and their experience.

## Raymond Banks



I am an Independent Real Estate entrepreneur, freelance photographer, freelance journalist and a home brewer. I graduated from Washington State University. I have two daughters and 10 boys. Nine of my children have finished college. They are all professional. My youngest one is a senior at Gates Chili High School. He soon will be attending RIT. He wants to follow his older two brothers and become an engineer.

I served for 23 years in the US Army. I retired as an Officer. I also worked for 20 years for the Department of Defense. Serving as a Gates Chili School Board Member is a great way to help create a shared vision of high academic standards for all students.

I can represent all the students and parents as to ensure they all have a voice in all matters important to them in improving the quality of public education at Gates Chili School District.

## Catherine (Katie) Coffee



Catherine Coffee is a Special Education Teacher in the public school system. She has worked to support her students by developing after school clubs that support Social-Emotional Learning and is an active member of the Guardians of Equity team.

Catherine has had the honor of serving on the Gates Chili Board of Education for the past three years. Catherine is an active advocate for the community and school. She has served on the Policy Committee, Education Foundation, District Improvement Team, and the Counseling Advisory Committee.

Catherine and her husband have two children who attend Gates Chili. Her oldest child will be entering the Middle school while her younger child will be enjoying another year at Brasser. Catherine and her family are active 4-H members. They have been living in Gates for five years.

## Robert Long



Robert Long is employed by the Town of Gates Police Department holding the rank of Police Lieutenant. Robert is in charge of the day to day operations of the Gates Police road patrol division. Robert holds a B.A. in Criminal Justice from Gannon University and is a proud graduate of Gates Chili High School (class of 1998). He has assisted in the preparation and management of agency budgets, reviewed labor and employment contracts, and other long-term strategic planning projects.

Robert and his wife of 10 years have two sons: one who graduated from Gates Chili in 2019 and is attending Monroe Community College, and the other is a third-grader at Paul Road Elementary School. Robert and his wife are both lifelong Gates Chili residents.

## Jeffrey Pettenski



Jeff Pettenski holds an ICCP certification as a Certified Computing Professional and currently works as the Technical Lead for the Systems Integration Project at the United Way of Rochester. Prior to that, Jeff has held the positions of Enterprise and Integration Architect for Carestream Health, Eastman Kodak and Xerox Corporation.

Jeff has spent much of his life as a Gates resident and for the last 27 years, he and his wife Sandee raised their three children in Gates. He has experienced the Gates Chili School District as a student, a parent of three graduates and as a parent volunteer and PTO member as his children grew up in the district. Jeff was first elected to the board in 2014 and has been Board President since 2018.

In his spare time, Jeff has earned his second-degree black belt in Isshin-Ryu karate, continues to work on his tennis game and enjoys being a grandfather. He is looking forward to the opportunity to continue to grow and participate in the Gates Chili community.

## Miriam Rivera



My name is Miriam Rivera. I have been living in the Town of Gates for over 10 years. Born and raised in Rochester, I'm proud to serve Rochester/Gates as a local Farmers Insurance agent. I have an office located on 1038 Lyell Avenue as well as 511 Beahan Road serving the Gates Community. I firmly believe I am good fit for this position because of the specific qualities I hold. I am determined to make a difference in

our schools in a positive and uplifting way while consistently taking on new challenges to better my character. Because of this, I have potential to gain more knowledge about our district.

My mission is to make a difference in our district, ensuring our students are receiving the education they need in order to be successful. As I have my own children that attended Gates Chili, I take into account their experiences as well as mine as a parent and feel communicating with the parents regarding their concerns is also very important. While being a member of the School Board, I am looking forward to the opportunities that are ahead and proud to say I'm a member of the Gates School Board.

# BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

Mail-in ballots only  
Details on back





# Capital Project Update

Work on the Gates Chili Capital Project has continued to progress during the school closure. Despite complications involving availability of labor and materials, the project is still running on time and under budget.

Construction has officially kicked off at Neil Armstrong and Walt Disney elementary schools. Crews have begun demolition and abatement in the locker rooms at both sites.

Work at Gates Chili Middle School is advancing. In March, crews completed masonry in the boys' locker room, as well as plumbing rough-in, metal stud framing, drywall and duct work installation in the core area of the building. During the closure, construction workers began finishes in the core area including paint, ceramic wall tile and ceilings. This work will continue for

several more months. Meanwhile, the gym has been gutted and the masonry work in the girls' locker room is continuing. Ongoing brickwork on the exterior of the building is underway. This phase of the project is set to be complete just before the start of school in September.

Across the parking lot at Gates Chili High School, crews are making excellent progress on site work. Abatement is complete and foundations for the new auditorium are underway. Electricians and plumbers are continuing to work on their respective areas.

The entire project is scheduled to be completed in fall 2021. The latest developments can always be found on the Gates Chili website at [gateschili.org/capitalproject](http://gateschili.org/capitalproject).



*Gates Chili Middle School*



*Gates Chili Middle School*



*Walt Disney Elementary School*



*Neil Armstrong Elementary School*

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

### Transportation and Facilities

- The facilities team is leading the district in an energy efficiency project with a focus on reducing energy costs and the district's carbon footprint.
- The Gates Chili Safety Bus has been permanently incorporated into the sixth-grade curriculum, teaching students important lessons about what to do in case of an emergency on the school bus.
- Gates Chili bus drivers have been volunteering to deliver free meals to students for weeks during the COVID-19 school closure.



### Community

- More than 300 people of all ages participated in the Gates Chili Fall Family Fest, where they were engaged in demonstrations, interactive attractions and giveaways by 50 local vendors.
- So far this school year, over 140 volunteers worked nearly 3,000 hours assisting in classrooms, libraries, cafeterias, field trips and more—a savings of more than \$40,000, if paid at the minimum wage rate.
- Students and staff came together to assemble and donate 18 kindness baskets to three local fire stations in honor of fallen firefighter Joe Manuse.



## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

## Arts

- An impressive 76 students in grades 2-12 were set to act, sing, play an instrument and/or provide backstage support in this year's high school production of "Les Misérables."
- Sixteen fifth-grade students participated in Gates Chili's first-ever fifth-grade jazz band this school year.
- This school year, 85% of elementary students and 90% of middle-schoolers benefited from arts integration curriculum, with thousands attending performances tying in themes they learned in the classroom.



## World Languages

- More than 200 English language learners, connected by heritage to more than 25 different countries around the world, are supported by 13 certified ESOL teachers across the district.
- Nineteen members of the Class of 2020 are set to earn the NYS Seal of Biliteracy diploma endorsement, representing eight languages.
- Thirty-eight members of the Class of 2021 have applied for the NYS Seal of Biliteracy diploma endorsement, representing six languages.



# Communicating culture through *fashion*

Walt Disney Elementary School fifth-graders played the role of designer and model during a multi-cultural fashion show on Feb. 14.

Kelly Hanning's art classes spent several weeks learning about Australian and Pacific Island fashion designers. They discovered the ways designers use culture, personal interest and identity to shape fashion around the world. Taking those lessons, GCCSD students then created fashion designs of their own to highlight various cultures and interests.

The fashion show was presented by Disney's Art and Multicultural Committee.



## Aiming to be an *Upstander* at GCMS

This year, students at Gates Chili Middle School are focusing on being mindful, being thankful and being kind through the schoolwide initiative called Upstanders.

Upstanders is a student-led movement that began several years ago. It aims to transform bystanders into upstanders, a student community where everyone is aware of the importance of taking a positive stand for all students. Upstanders stand up for their beliefs while respecting others. They do what they think is right, even if they stand alone. Most importantly, Upstanders act to interrupt bully behavior. Each month, GCMS celebrates Upstander Monday to further this movement.



"Upstander Mondays allow us to focus on promoting positive character and behaviors," said Kerry Sabido, GCMS counselor. "We encourage students to be their best selves so they can interact and support each other with the Spartan Way in mind."

This year's theme of "Be Mindful, Be Thankful, Be Kind" has focused on using mindfulness techniques, which encourage them to stay focused in the present moment, rather than the past or future.

"Mindfulness means calmly acknowledging and accepting one's emotions, thoughts, and physical body, and is a great way to help with anxiety and stress," Sabido explained. "Ultimately, being mindful leads to the ability to be kind to others, and to be thankful through sharpening our attention for the positive in life."





## Building a *CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE*

Athletic teams are often like family; They spend many hours together, working hard to support each other and teach important lessons. It's no surprise that when GCMS teacher and varsity girls' basketball coach Rachel Leonard was named Section V Class AA Co-Coach of the Year on Feb. 21, her basketball family was there cheering her on.

"I am incredibly proud and thankful for having the opportunity to coach our young women," said Leonard. "We have developed a family culture where we honor, empower, and hold each other accountable. Our girls, humor, strength, courage and tenacity are so inspiring, and I am very proud to be their coach."

This season, Leonard's third as varsity coach, the team finished 18-2.

Leonard previously served as the JV coach. Having coached the majority of this year's team since they were in middle school made this year's 18-2 run that much more special.

"This season was one of the best for our team," explained captains Sy'Ann Hall-Johnson and Terah Echols. "With all the support from Coach Leonard back on JV, she made it easy for us to play together as a family. We accomplished a lot during our season, and we couldn't have done it without Coach Leonard and Coach Anthony. They pushed us to do better and become better on and off the court."



## Q&A with locally-recognized scholar-athlete

GCMS senior and basketball standout Serdrick Thomas joined the ranks with esteemed area student-athletes by being named Scholar-Athlete of the Week by local TV station WHEC. Thomas, who has played varsity boys' basketball for three years, spoke with WHEC about his time on and off the court. Afterwards, he answered a few questions about his GC career and beyond for this newsletter.



**Q: How do you think your time at Gates Chili has shaped you as a person?**

**A:** My time at Gates Chili shaped me into a better leader and a role model. Many of my teachers and peers have always encouraged me to become the best version of myself. Gates Chili has provided me with a lot of opportunities to succeed in the future.

**Q: What is a favorite memory you have of your time playing for the Spartans?**

**A:** Last year, Coach T showed me how to dunk consistently with two hands. I could dunk at the time, but I was very inconsistent. He showed me how to maximize my potential and use my height effectively.

**Q: How have athletics helped you off the court, and in your academic career?**

**A:** Athletics helped me get a break from the stresses of everyday life. Additionally, it allowed me to get stronger and more confident. Lastly, it helped me maintain discipline and get work done in the classroom.

**Q: What are your plans for after high school?**

**A:** I plan to attend RIT this Fall and major in management information systems and minor in entrepreneurship and finance. The technology field really fascinates me because I love solving problems and implementing solutions. I hope I can use my knowledge to help facilitate upcoming breakthroughs in technology and to find the talent that can help me accomplish that task.

**Q: Is there anything else you'd like to add about Gates Chili, sports or the future?**

**A:** I just want to thank my family and friends for always being there for me. Lastly, I want to thank my boys for always having my back with everything we've been through.

To see Thomas' WHEC feature, go to [gateschili.org/Serdrick](https://gateschili.org/Serdrick).

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

### Athletics

- In 2019, nearly 13,000 residents took advantage of the Gates Chili athletic facilities, with 9,000+ using the fitness center, 2,300+ using the indoor track and 1,300+ using the indoor pool.
- This school year, Gates Chili increased its number of Unified sports offerings to include bowling.
- Nearly 30 Gates Chili student-athletes received the All-County Award for eight different sports.



### Health and Safety

- More than 30 Gates Chili staff members are trained in Trauma, Illness and Grief (TIG) procedures and are prepared to respond to crisis situations.
- Gates Chili security workers logged nearly 1,400 assisting at Gates Chili special functions including concerts and athletic events.
- In addition to providing a holistic approach to treating students, Gates Chili school nurses throughout the district constantly educate staff, parents and the community about the most up-to-date health and safety best practices.



## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**Staff Development**

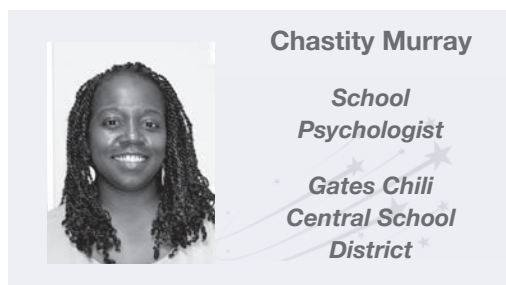
- Professional development has extended beyond teaching staff to include support staff, bus drivers, school-related professionals, maintenance and other groups.
- Staff, administrators and board members have spent over 3,800 hours in culturally-responsive trainings and workshops to learn how to best meet the needs of all students.
- More than 120 classroom and content-area teachers have attended targeted professional development focused on best practices to support English language learners (ELLs).

**Pupil Personnel Services**

- More than 750 new students in grades UPK-12 joined the Gates Chili CSD family in the 2019-20 school year.
- Students are provided with a robust continuum of services, including 12:1:1 special classes at every grade level and Communication and Social Skills (CaSS) programs at the secondary level.
- Related services such as counseling, speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy are provided to students grades K-Transition who qualify.



## Staff Spotlight

**Chastity Murray***School Psychologist**Gates Chili Central School District*

She's often a silent observer in the back of a classroom, but her knowledge and advice have a loud impact on the lives of students in the Gates Chili Central School District. Dr. Chastity Murray is the district's behavioral specialist, the first for GCCSD.

"What first appealed to me about working for Gates Chili is the feel of the district in how it looks at supporting students, an endeavor everyone here wants to get behind.

"I take on the role to help staff do that – by addressing behavioral concerns and past discipline trends. I help them understand how to approach those needs to meet the students where they are and make them as successful as possible," shared Dr. Murray.

She first began working with adults in the addiction field then transitioned to working for a local high school in the City of Rochester.

"I would provide preventative substance abuse counseling and education. Working in a school made me realize I wanted to catch people before they became addicted as

adults. I wanted to understand the barriers students come into school with that prevent them from being successful adults," she explained.

Building on her education foundation of two master's and a doctorate, Dr. Murray experienced the most valuable lesson of all – that of being a parent herself.

"My oldest son is on the spectrum, so I often tackle cases through the lens of a mom and the needs of the family," shared Dr. Murray.

She can often be seen working in every building in the district, tailoring plans for staff to use to support individual students in their classrooms.

"The time I spend in the classroom, I get a sense of triggers, of the student's social interactions. I take that and summarize it all into a suggestive strategy. It helps the teacher feel more supported, while having the child's needs met. This also allows the teacher to deliver instruction to the entire class," said Dr. Murray.

She does this by taking a whole-child approach, taking into consideration factors outside of school that could be impacting the child's behavior and academic learning ability. While the strategies change for each student, the goal remains the same: to support students so they can succeed.

## Increased participation in Learning Labs

Fifteen teachers from around the district hosted 23 guest teachers during the Spring Learning Labs.

The classroom-based professional development opportunities, held on March 4 and 11, focused on instructional practices that are enhanced with technology.

"We're finding that sharing best practices among colleagues is better meeting the needs of our teachers, and as a result, our students," said Director of Technology Troy Olin. "The practical application, collaborating in real-time and focusing on our students, has helped better prepare teachers for implementing the at-home learning model."

Learning Labs will be available again in the fall. To learn more about Learning Labs, go to [gateschili.org/LearningLabs](https://gateschili.org/LearningLabs).





# 2020-2021

## Gates Chili Central School District Student/Faculty Calendar

### SEPTEMBER

September 7 (Mon) ..... Labor Day  
September 8 (Tues) ..... Superintendent's Conference Day  
September 9 (Wed) ..... School Opens (P-12)

### OCTOBER

October 9 (Fri) ..... Superintendent's Conference Day  
October 12 (Mon) ..... Columbus Day

### NOVEMBER

November 3 (Tues) .... P-12 Student Half Day/Conference Day  
November 11 (Wed) ..... Veterans Day  
November 26-27 (Thurs-Fri) ..... Thanksgiving Recess

### DECEMBER

December 7 (Mon) ..... No School P-5 Parent Teacher Conf.  
December 23 (Wed) ..... P-5 Student Half Day  
December 24-31 (Thurs-Thurs) ..... Holiday Recess

### JANUARY

January 1 (Fri) ..... Holiday Recess  
January 18 (Mon) ..... Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
January 26-29 (Tues-Fri) ..... Regents Exams  
January 29 (Fri) ..... 6-12 Student No School

### FEBRUARY

February 15 (Mon) ..... President's Day  
February 16-19 (Tues-Fri) ..... Mid-Winter Recess

### MARCH

March 29-31 (Mon-Wed) ..... Spring Recess

### APRIL

April 1-2 (Thurs-Fri) ..... Spring Recess  
April 19-26 (Mon-Mon) ..... 3-8 ELA Exam Window  
April 30 (Fri) ..... Superintendent's Conference Day

### MAY

May 3-10 (Mon-Mon) ..... 3-8 Math Exam Window  
May 31 (Mon) ..... Memorial Day Recess

### JUNE

June 16-24 (Wed-Thurs) ..... Regents Exams  
June 23 (Wed) ..... Graduation Day  
June 24 (Thurs) ..... P-12 Student Half Day/Conference Day  
June 25 (Fri) ..... P-12 Student Half Day/Conference Day  
Last Day for Students and Staff










### Total School Days in Attendance

Faculty = 186 Students = 182

*NYSED requires 180 student attendance days*

*Two (2) snow days have been built into calendar to meet NYSED 180 student attendance requirement.*

*The following order will be followed if additional snow days are needed: 1) March 29 2) March 30*

 School Opens	 No School (Grades P-5)	 Conference Day, No School for Students
 Regents Exams	 No School (Grades 6-12)	 Half Day (Grades P-5)
 Exams (Grades 3-8)	 No School for Students and Faculty	 Half Day (Grades P-12)

SEPTEMBER						
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28						

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JUNE						
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27	28	29	30			



## GATES CHILI CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Rochester, New York 14624  
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### Board of Education

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*Designed and printed at  
Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES*

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Rochester, NY  
Permit No. 1034



# BUDGET VOTE

## Tuesday, June 9, 2020

For health and safety reasons due to COVID-19, the Budget Vote and Board Election will be conducted entirely by absentee ballot.\* Each district household will be provided with two (2) ballots.

Ballots may be returned by mail or in person at the dropbox located at 3 Spartan Way, Rochester, NY 14624. All ballots must be received by the district clerk no later than 5 p.m. on June 9, 2020.

Requests for additional ballots, instructions for ballot completion and additional vote information may be found at [gateschili.org/vote](http://gateschili.org/vote).

*\*absentee application suspended*

### Voter Eligibility

Anyone who is at least 18 years old,  
a U.S. citizen and a resident of the  
Gates Chili Central School District  
for at least 30 days prior to the  
June 9, 2020 vote is eligible.

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