



GATES CHILI

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Budget Newsletter 2021

Proposed budget to maintain excellent academic programs despite pandemic challenges

Dear Gates Chili Community,

We have experienced another unique year living through the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the many hurdles we have had to overcome, and continue to be presented with, I am filled with GC Pride at how our community has come together. As we begin to look towards the future, we will continue our tradition of excellence in academics, arts, athletics and more.

The most notable area for change in schools continues to come from the impact of the pandemic, the New York State Standards and the continued integration of technology in classrooms. The district is planning for a return to full in-person instruction in the fall, while allowing for the possibility that some students may need to be remote. This presents a definitive need for multiple training opportunities during the summer and coming school year for administration, faculty and staff members to gain more experience working with the higher standards demanded by the NYSED and our community. Elementary- and secondary-level teachers will continue to develop learning opportunities based on math, reading and writing assessments aligned to the New York State Standards and how to further enhance instruction through technology integration.

The proposed district budget also 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.

To support the aforementioned items and the continued health, safety and education of all students, the GCCSD Board of Education adopted a proposed spending plan for the 2021-22 school year of \$117,882,045 at its April 20 meeting. Under the plan, the overall spending would increase by \$4,457,732, a 3.93% increase over the 2020-21 budget. The proposed tax levy increase is 2.04%, which is lower than the 2020-21 tax levy increase of 2.38%.

This newsletter contains information about the 2021-22 budget on pages 2-5, along with the outstanding successes and offerings available to our students. 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

Tuesday, May 18, 2021



INSIDE THIS ISSUE: 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.

Together we teach and inspire excellence for all learners.

Three-Part Budget Summary

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

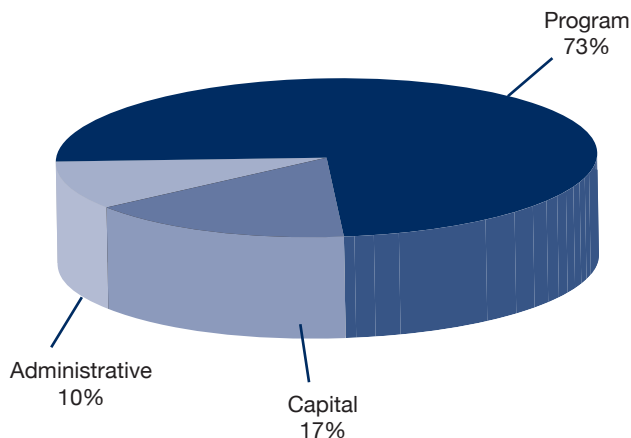
Total Budget: \$117,882,045

Administrative	2020-21	2021-22
Amount	\$11,380,098	\$11,728,156
Percent of Budget	10%	10%
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	2020-21	2021-22
Amount	\$84,196,352	\$86,401,287
Percent of Budget	74%	73%
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	2020-21	2021-22
Amount	\$17,847,863	\$19,752,602
Percent of Budget	16%	17%
Provides maintenance and custodial services for six schools, the surrounding property, utility services, debt service payments and benefits for maintenance and custodial staff.		

Proposed 2021-22 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 2021-22 fiscal year \$117,882,045 and to levy the necessary tax therefore.

Proposition 2 – Bus Purchases

This proposition authorizes the purchase of 15 school buses at a total cost of no more than \$1,930,918. New York State reimburses Gates Chili approximately 74% of the cost of bus purchases.

Proposition 3 – Establish Capital Reserve

This proposition would authorize the creation of a capital reserve fund to finance reconstruction and improvement of school buildings and facilities. This fund shall not exceed \$10,000,000 with a 10-year life.

Proposition 4 – Use of Capital Reserve Funds Audiovisual Technology Equipment Supplies

This proposition would authorize the transfer of up to \$300,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund to the District's General Operating Fund to finance, in whole or in part, the acquisition and/or lease of equipment, including computer equipment, as well as training and staff development in the use of said equipment. Approval of this proposition would not increase the proposed tax levy.

Board Candidates

Residents will vote to fill three Board of Education seats for three-year terms. Candidates are Nicole Littlewood, Kerri Keyes, Alicia Trumble, Lisa Singletary and Andrea Hinchey Unson.

Estimated Tax Rate

Estimated 2021-22 tax rates use tentative 2021 tax rolls. The Town of Gates is in the process of finalizing reassessed property values. This is lowering the estimated tax rates districtwide. Equalization rates are estimated to be 100% for the Town of Gates and 96% for the Town of Chili.

2020-21 Tax Rate	\$24.87
Estimated 2021-22 Tax Rate Based on Increased Assessments	\$25.40

Where does the money come from?

REVENUE SUMMARY

Revenue Sources	2020-21 Adopted Budget	2021-22 Proposed Budget
Tax Levy	\$55,821,084	\$56,958,890
PILOT Agreements	2,600,000	2,600,000
Sales Tax	3,500,000	4,000,000
Tuition, Fees, Interest	2,001,000	1,575,961
Sales of Equipment, Materials, Other	65,500	65,000
Forfeitures and Refunds	1,773,991	1,440,000
State Aid	42,467,738	45,457,194
Federal Aid and Interfund Transfers	95,000	135,000
Transfer from Retirement Contributions Reserve - ERS	1,200,000	1,550,000
Transfer from Retirement Contributions Reserve - TRS	800,000	800,000
Transfer from Tax Certiorari Reserve	100,000	100,000
Transfer from Employee Benefits Accrued Liability Reserve	100,000	100,000
Transfer from Capital Reserve - Technology	100,000	300,000
Appropriated Fund Balance	2,800,000	2,800,000
Total	\$113,424,313	\$117,882,045

Where does the money go?

EXPENSE SUMMARY

Budget Category	2020-21 Adopted Budget	2021-22 Proposed Budget
Administrative Component - \$11,728,156 or 10% of the Total Budget		
Board of Education	\$29,675	\$28,670
Central Administration and Finance	1,328,425	1,341,140
Legal, Personnel, Public Information	895,310	862,645
Central Services and Special Items	1,159,030	489,030
BOCES Admin Costs	1,360,000	1,355,745
Curriculum Development, Supervision, and Training	3,723,064	3,756,866
Employee Benefits	2,884,594	3,894,060
Administrative Budget	\$11,330,098	\$11,728,156
Program Component - \$86,401,287 or 73% of the Total Budget		
General Education and Training	\$28,017,431	\$28,032,802
Programs for Students with Disabilities	19,869,222	18,803,350
Occupational Education & Summer School	1,534,400	1,539,923
Instructional Technology and Library Services	1,627,523	2,727,973
Pupil Personnel, Guidance, and Health	3,310,503	3,628,515
Transportation	5,086,173	4,684,732
Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities	1,361,206	1,495,307
Community Services	504,737	495,653
Transfer to Special Aid Fund		260,000
Employee Benefits	22,935,157	24,733,032
Program Budget	\$84,196,352	\$86,401,287
Capital Component - \$19,752,602 or 17% of the Total Budget		
Operations, Maintenance and Security	\$5,018,329	\$5,138,910
Refund on Real Property Taxes	4,000	4,000
Transfers to Debt Service	10,863,633	12,682,479
Transfers to Other Funds	100,000	100,000
Transfer to Special Aid Fund	260,000	
Employee Benefits	1,601,901	1,827,213
Capital Budget	\$17,847,863	\$19,752,602
Total Budget	\$113,424,313	\$117,882,045



Learn more at gateschili.org/vote

PROPOSED BUDGET INFORMATION

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2020-21 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2021-22 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2021-22 School Year
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$113,424,313	\$117,882,045	\$117,172,405
Increase/Decrease for the 2020-21 School Year		\$4,457,732	\$3,748,092
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		3.93%	3.30%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.23%	
A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$55,821,084	\$56,958,890	
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)	\$55,821,084	\$56,958,890	\$55,821,084
F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$3,395,794	\$3,490,346	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$52,425,290	\$53,468,544	
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)	\$52,425,290	\$52,425,290	
I. Difference: (G - H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)**	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$11,380,098	\$11,728,156	\$11,510,506
Program Component	\$84,196,352	\$86,401,287	\$85,975,992
Capital Component	17,847,863	\$19,752,602	\$19,585,907
Public School Enrollment	3,698	3,684	

**If a contingent budget is required, the Board of Education will review all areas of the budget to develop a contingency budget for the 2021-22 school year, pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. Should the 2021-22 budget be defeated, the following items may 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 fifteen (15) school buses at an estimated net aggregate cost of \$1,930,918 after such trade-in value, potential rebates, and/or incentives, 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 \$1,930,918 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.

To authorize the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund pursuant to Section 3651 of the Education Law, with the purpose of such fund being to finance reconstruction and improvement of school buildings and facilities, and the acquisition of furnishings, equipment, machinery or apparatus; not to exceed \$10,000,000 with a 10-year life.

To authorize the transfer of up to \$300,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund to the District's General Operating Fund to finance, in whole or in part, the acquisition and/or lease of equipment, including computer equipment, as well as training and staff development in the use of said equipment.



	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2021-22 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$762

¹ 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 2021-22 by the qualified voters of the Gates Chili Central School District, Monroe County, New York, will be held on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at the Gates Chili Administration Building, 3 Spartan Way, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. or by mail-in ballot. Ballots must be received by the district clerk no later than 5 p.m. on May 18 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/

2021-22 Estimated STAR Values

Basic STAR Exemption	\$30,000
Enhanced STAR Exemption	\$70,000

Veterans' Exemption

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

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



Learn more at gateschili.org/vote

PROPOSED BUDGET INFORMATION

Budget Ambassadors close out inaugural year

The Gates Chili Budget Ambassador program wrapped up on March 16 after a fruitful first year in the district.

The group of 11 ambassadors met with Superintendent Christopher Dailey, Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Mitchell Ball, District Treasurer Sally Sanford and Payroll/Benefits Manager and Budget Analyst Anna Lamb for two three-hour sessions. Each session, participants engaged in discussion on the budget development process and where funds are generated and allocated in the budget each year.

Budget Ambassadors learned about the making of a school budget, as well as the district's overall fiscal health and outlook. The group asked poignant questions during the presentations and provided valuable insight and feedback.

Thank you again to this year's ambassadors for volunteering their time.



Board of Education Candidates

Three candidates will be elected to the board at the annual district vote on May 18, 2021. Each will serve a three-year term beginning July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024. Below are statements from each candidate about their interest in serving on the board and their experience.



Nicole Marie Littlewood

Nicole Littlewood is the proud mother of two boys and a 13-year resident of this amazing school district. Both of her sons attend Paul Road Elementary School, are very active and involved, and love their school community.

Nicole has been an educator for 19 years and brings unique experience and perspective. A graduate from SUNY Geneseo, she began her career in the Rochester City School District as a special education and math teacher. After nine years in the classroom, Nicole became a school administrator focusing on curriculum and data analysis. In that role, she advocated for and worked closely with student teams as a coordinating administrator for special education. Currently, she serves as an administrator at Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES, supporting the academic and post-secondary goals of students with disabilities ages 14-21. As a longtime advocate for all learners, Nicole believes that every student deserves an equitable and inclusive education that encompasses academics, physical movement, social-emotional learning and extracurricular activities. Each member of the school community plays a critical role in our children's education, and Nicole is excited to use her experience to fulfill her role as a member of the Gates Chili Board of Education.



Kerri Keyes

Kerri and her husband, Phil, are long time Gates residents and Kerri has lived in the district her entire life. Her two children attend Gates Chili and are third generation in the district. She attended SUNY Brockport and

Genesee Community College and currently works for Rochester Regional Health System, where she has been employed for the last 18 years. Kerri was elected to serve on the Gates Chili Board of Education in 2018. She also serves on the District Improvement Team committee, Finance and Facility committee, and is Co-Chair of Monroe Counter Information Exchange Committee and Monroe County Steering Committee.



Alicia Trumble

Alicia and her husband, Ben, have lived in the Gates Chili Central School District for 42 years. Their three children attended district schools, Alicia volunteered in the Neil Armstrong school, later to be employed at he

Middle and High School as a Note Taker for students with a hearing impairment. She went on to be employed at Hillside Children's Center as a Speech Teacher. Alicia graduated from SUNY Geneseo in 1970 with a Bachelor of Science in Education, Speech Pathology and Audiology, and in 1990 a Master of Science, Speech and Hearing Handicapped. Alicia was elected President of Irondequoit Theatre Guild and served for 14 years before the Guild was disbanded. She performed a variety of duties in this role.



Lisa Singletary

Lisa F. Singletary has been a Gates Chili resident for the past 9 years. She is a proud mother of a GC scholar with special needs and an educator with 15 years of teaching experience.

Currently, she is a doctoral candidate at the University of Rochester. She earned a Master's degree in Differentiated Instruction with a specialization in Gifted and talented Education which includes twice-exceptional children. Finally, Lisa teaches, writes, researches, and advocates at the intersection of racism, education, and abolition.



Andrea Hinchey Unson

Andrea has lived in Gates her entire life at same address. She is a graduate of Gates Chili. She continued her education at Nazareth College as an undergraduate in Mathematics

and Education. Andrea earned her master's degree at SUNY Brockport in secondary education and mathematics. She will complete her 27th year teaching mathematics at Hilton Central School District this year. Andrea's husband is a mathematics teacher and curriculum leader, and teacher leader here at Gates Chili High School. Her son graduated from GC in 2017, will be graduating from UB with a BS in Industrial Engineering and a BA in Statistics and will be pursuing a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering with a concentration in Operations Research at UB. Her daughter is a junior at the high school and enjoys participating in soccer, bowling and softball. Andrea has been on the board for the past six years working as a member of the team. She would like to come back and continue the work, especially with equity. She wants to continue to make Gates Chili a District that is thought of in a positive light. Andrea wants to help shine the light on our accomplishments and make this the best school district around.

BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday May, 18, 2021

Gates Chili Administration Building, 3 Spartan Way

6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Capital Project Update

Warm, dry spring weather is clearing the path for progress on several parts of the Gates Chili Capital Project. Crews are packed up and cleared out of Gates Chili Middle School after completing the final phases of work on an adaptive living space, OT/PT room and other classroom spaces for special education programs. Meanwhile, work continues at several other construction sites throughout the district.

Crews are working hard inside and outside of Walt Disney and Neil Armstrong elementary schools. Floors and ceilings at both schools are done and crews are wrapping up remaining casework. New classrooms and office spaces in both schools feature large open spaces and large windows with plenty of natural light.

Crews have turned over the new areas at both schools and all construction work at

these buildings is expected to be complete by early September.

Work at the new Gates Chili Performing Arts Center is progressing on schedule. Crews there completed the water piping and back of stage heat piping this winter. The interior stair tower stairs have also been installed, so backstage crews can access lighting and other equipment during theater productions. Masons continue to lay block and will do so for several more months. Metal stud framing, drywall and ductwork also continue, and demolition of the old high school auditorium is underway. This area will become new band and chorus practice rooms. Crews hope to turn this space over to the district by early 2022 with the hopes of hosting the spring musical on the brand-new stage.

The entire project is currently on budget and expected to be completed by spring 2022.



Walt Disney Elementary School



Neil Armstrong Elementary School



Gates Chili Performing Arts Center

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Transportation and Facilities

- The Transportation Department is partnering with Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES on a training program for drivers that will help the district fill and maintain much-needed driver positions.
- Maintenance and grounds crews maintain more than 820,000 square feet of building space and approximately 230 acres of land, that includes 24 athletic fields, 12 tennis courts and an eight-lane track and field complex.
- Gates Chili's energy performance contract, which includes a lighting upgrade, water conservation, duct sealing and more, saves the district approximately \$225,501 per year in energy costs.



School Nutrition

- New this school year, in conjunction with hybrid and remote learning, families had the opportunity to pick up free meals over the holiday, winter and spring recesses.
- Since the beginning of the pandemic, school nutrition team members have served 350,000+ meals, oftentimes braving the elements during drive-up meal service.
- This school year, Gates Chili students enjoyed approximately 22,000 gallons of milk as part of a nutritious breakfast and/or lunch.



RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Grades K-5

- Each month, K-5 remote teachers prepared learning materials for more than 2,200 bags full of remote supplies for elementary remote learners to use at home.
- The district autism specialist visited classrooms throughout the district to share about Autism Spectrum Disorder, allowing for all students to better understand how to interact and communicate with their peers on the Autism spectrum.
- Students in grades 2-5 are fully engaged in a new math program this school year that is aligned to the rigorous learning criteria of the Next Generation Math Standards.

Social Emotional Learning

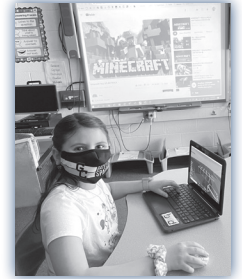
- So far this year, elementary counselors have led 500+ classrooms lessons about social-emotional wellness and topics such as empathy, coping skills, problem-solving, anti-bullying and more.
- Using feedback from multiple mental wellness surveys throughout the year, the district provided targeted support to students, for a total of more than 500 one-on-one meetings with students.
- The District Resiliency Committee, made up of representatives from all buildings, works to support the implementation of wellness practices, such as trauma-informed care, mindfulness and community-building through peace circles.



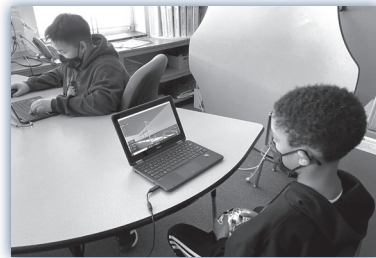
Sparking *curiosity* in the classroom

Out-of-the-box thinking is becoming out-of-the-block thinking as teachers leverage the use of Minecraft to engage students in learning.

It's not exactly the video game students are used to playing at home. Minecraft: Education Edition, or Minecraft EDU, is a game-based learning platform that promotes creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving in an immersive 3D environment. Teachers are incorporating it into lessons across various subjects like social studies, math, science, art and even in enrichment opportunities.

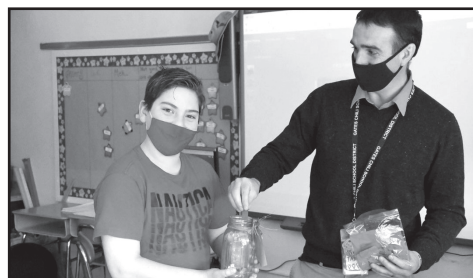


In Sam Marollo's third-grade class at Neil Armstrong, students used Minecraft EDU to learn math concepts. They went on a fishing expedition, kept track of the fish they caught with tally marks, then made a graph using the data. Marollo reported, "Suddenly, their learning is becoming more meaningful as the opportunities are soaring past what a piece of paper and a pencil can do."



Sixth-grade students in Stacy Kanaley's social studies class at Gates Chili Middle School recently took a walking tour of Mesopotamia and shared, "I love Minecraft Education as a tool for showing our learning in social studies because it is both fun, and you get to learn many things!" To read more about MinecraftEDU, go to gateschili.org/Minecraft.

Showing R-E-S-P-E-C-T



The Spartan Way value of respect took center stage at Florence Brasser from March 15-April 20 as students embarked on a respect challenge. Staff issued tickets to students who showed respectful behaviors. Congratulations to the classrooms with the highest number of tickets: Kristen Galliford's first-grade class for grades K-2 and Jeff Curran's fourth-grade class for grades 3-5.

Autism awareness



Every student is an important piece of the puzzle. Students at Walt Disney Elementary School, home to two 6:1:1 Autism Spectrum Disorder classrooms, and schools throughout the district have been working to learn more about autism and bring awareness for a more inclusive school community.

A focus on *child safety*

Comprehensive lessons aimed at personal safety are now being taught in Gates Chili elementary classrooms. Child Safety Matters, a curriculum new to the district, educates and protects students from all types of bullying, abuse and victimization.



New tech helps keep learners *sharp*

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way activities are conducted in school, and library time is no exception.

The pandemic changes to the school schedule allowed Gates Chili Middle School Librarian Cynthia Ratajczak and her team to take stock and assess the middle school library's collection, and to incorporate new, contemporary titles with an eye toward books aimed at the middle school age group. They also adopted more culturally-responsive and diverse titles to represent the diverse mosaic of Gates Chili students.

Students and staff alike are excited for the next big project at the middle school library: the installation of two new Maker Spaces. The library is the new home of a 3D printer and green screen area for video production to challenge students to stretch their creative muscles and demonstrate learning with new tech tools.



Lessons ripped from the headlines

Keeping students engaged and active as they learn remotely has come with its challenges during this pandemic. Dr. Robin Williamson, a seventh-grade science teacher at Gates Chili Middle School, has taken an approach “ripped from the headlines.” It’s a program she calls Science in the News.

Science in the News invites all students to participate and engage with a scientific topic that’s top of mind and in the media. Dr. Williamson curates and collects articles and videos relating to a science topic in current events, then invites students to investigate the topic and ask questions about what they’ve learned. The Science in the News unit culminates in a virtual talk and then a Q and A with an expert in the field.

This past fall, students spent several Wednesdays learning about how clinical trials of vaccines are carried out, then met virtually with a scientist running the local Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine study. They also spoke with a post-doctorate candidate with NASA after learning about the discovery of water on the sunlit surface



of the moon. Then this spring, students devoted Wednesdays to learning about how infections occur and how vaccines target and prevent viral infections. In late March, a professional with Novavax met with the students and answered their questions about that company’s COVID-19 vaccine.

Dr. Williamson said her young scientists were excited to speak with experts in their fields, who also gave advice on careers in science and explained how they became involved in scientific professions. Her students reported they enjoyed learning about scientific events that are happening in real-time, and that they were able to share COVID-19 vaccine information with their families during the vaccine rollout.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Grades 6-8

- Because students have been able to establish a greater understanding of topics through virtual class meetings, recorded mini lessons and other online demonstrations necessitated by the pandemic, teachers plan to continue using these tools post-pandemic.
- Family and consumer science teachers created sewing and food kits for remote learners to be able to engage in important lessons from home.
- Students in grades 6-8 met virtually with acclaimed author and New York Times bestseller Kwame Alexander to discuss some of his recent works, and then received signed copies of several of his books courtesy of the GCMS PTO.



Library

- The Gates Chili school library program provides inquiry and research instruction, technology integration, and serves the literacy needs of all staff and students.
- With more than 100 library digital resources available, staff and students have accessed resources more than 181,00 times for projects and assignments.
- Even with safety restrictions and hybrid/remote instructional models, students have checked out 22,000+ books and 14,000+ ebooks.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Grades 9-12

- Gates Chili High School was named in the top 100 high schools out of more than 1,200 public high schools in the state by Wallet Hub based on college readiness, school experience, diversity and teachers and staff.
- GCHS students log into Schoology to complete online assignments an average of 140,000 times per month, with parents/guardians logging in an average of almost 1,900 times per month checking on student progress.
- With traditional venues unavailable during the pandemic, GCHS hosted five commencement ceremonies in Spartan Stadium in 2020, and plans to hold similar ceremonies for the Class of 2021 this June

Technology

- Tech staff have completed more than 2,600 support tickets since September, representing almost 15% of the total requests since 2008.
- The Digital Conversion Team worked with teachers to identify areas to provide targeted training and ongoing support to leverage best practices for technology integration throughout the pandemic and beyond.
- Gates Chili provides support for 4,580+ staff and student devices, 4,500+ district email addresses, 150+ applications and 185+ printer devices



Supporting student needs

For more than 20 years, Gates Chili teachers have helped students cross the finish line to graduate through the alternative education program named Crossroads. The program, unique to Gates Chili, provides general education students who have dealt with personal hardships the individualized supports they need to succeed.

As a freshman, senior Leon Burgess said he was failing classes, disengaged with school and described himself as having behavior issues in the classroom. He struggled to stay motivated and as a result, found himself getting in trouble a lot. To get him focused and back on track, Burgess' teachers encouraged him to join of the Crossroads program and it was in that very first semester that something clicked for him.

"I started showing up to school more because I felt like I had more support and I had a very solid support system built," said Burgess. I always felt heard."

Crossroads students are held to the same state standards as all other students, but through smaller class sizes and more individual teacher attention, Crossroads provides more targeted

support in students' core classes of science, English, math and social studies.

"One of the greatest parts about Crossroads is the collaboration," explained Crossroads Teacher Leader Linda Wetherell. "We are in constant contact with families as long as we need to be to help students find their footing. It's all rooted in transparency; teachers are upfront with students and families so learning can be supported at home."

Since joining Crossroads his sophomore year, Burgess has been named a student of the month, as well as Crossroads student of the quarter. He mentors his younger Crossroads peers, instilling in them the same valuable lessons he learned, "I tell them, 'it's okay to do your work. You have teachers who care.'"

For Wetherell, seeing students like Burgess come into their own brings to life the Crossroads mission.

"Every student can be helped," Wetherell said. "No matter what struggles or obstacles they come in with, we're there to support them through it and give them the tools they need to be independent lifelong learners."

Tech courses provide a world of opportunity

The buzz of a saw, the whir of a laser cutter and the wonder and awe of learning; that's what you'll hear on any given day you pass by Jared Starbird's classroom at Gates Chili High School.

Starbird is one of several teachers at GCHS who lead coursework involving structural engineering, electrical/mechanical engineering, auto safety engineering, power tools and engineering material. Each week, young engineers utilize CNC lasers and other equipment to construct detailed pieces, most often out of recycled materials. Often, the result is not just a physical object, but also the confidence and pride that comes with creating something from nothing. It also helps prepare students for life after high school. Starbird's Basic Electricity/Electronics class has the highest dual enrollment of any high school in the county.

While sharpening critical technical skills, students also hone a love of creativity.

Starbird's classroom is filled with wooden and metal items made by students expressing themselves through these carefully-crafted creations. While students recognize the many benefits, for them, it's about the support they receive from their teachers.

"Mr. Starbird is one of my favorite teachers at the high school and this is one of my favorite classes," junior Thein Nguyen said. "I highly recommend it for anyone who likes to get their hands dirty. We focus on the quality over quantity of our work."





Building a *CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE*

The Spartans are celebrating, and the community is celebrating with them after winning a Section V Class AA championship. For senior Spartans, it was a moment they have been waiting for.

“Our goal was a Section V title. I’m so proud of my teammates and this program,” said Spencer Glenn, a senior center on the varsity team. “The best teams have chemistry. They communicate with each other on and off the court and they sacrifice personal success for the common.”



Boys Varsity Basketball Coach Jeff LaFave said in the weeks since the team clinched the championship win against Victor, members of the Gates Chili community have approached him in the grocery store and on the street to offer their congratulations. LaFave said it hadn’t really sunk in how much the community supported and was rooting for the team until after it was over, and the championship was in Spartan hands for the first time in 11 years.

LaFave credits the win to his players’ resilience and their drive to achieve excellence. He explained that a championship culture means measurable, constant growth. He says the mindset of trust in GCCSD athletics runs deep, all the way from the Jr. Spartans athletic programs through to the district’s varsity teams.

Assistant coaches Teddy Tuggles and Chad Dillard were players on the last Spartan squad to bring home a Section V Basketball Championship. Now, they’re part of history twice over. LaFave said their participation in this victory was crucial: “[H]ow do you build a championship culture? You have champions on your staff.”

Spartans back in *action*

After an almost-year-long hiatus for some, Gates Chili clubs, some activities and athletics are trickling back into action at Gates Chili middle and high schools.

The Fall II sports season kicked off on March 1 then, spring JV and varsity sports began on April 19. Modified spring sports followed course on April 26. Gates Chili Unified athletes are getting back in the game too; bowling began on April 12 and Unified basketball is scheduled to start later in May.

Several clubs throughout the district also began meeting again, including music clubs, aquatics club, botany group and multicultural club at the high school and LEGO Club, Spartan Original Singers (SOS), culinary club and more at the middle school.



EXPLORING ESPORTS

Esports may soon be an option for students at Gates Chili! The district is exploring offering esports as an extracurricular club in the coming months. Stay tuned for more on this exciting new opportunity!

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Physical Education and Athletics

- Physical education teachers packed up athletic equipment including kickballs, jump ropes, scarves and tennis balls for remote learners to use during PE class at home.
- The district has been live streaming athletic competitions since the return of sports and plans to continue post-pandemic with the installation of cameras in the field house and at Spartan Stadium.
- Gates Chili High School’s four-lane 1/8-mile indoor track, eight-lane competition-sized swimming pool and newly-upgraded 7,700-square-foot fitness center are back open for community use.



Health and Safety

- Each school day, district staff, including school nurses and health aides, verify more than 4,500 daily health screenings for students and staff to ensure the health and safety of the school community.
- Promoting health and wellness, as well as school spirit, the district provided each staff member and student with a Gates Chili face mask.
- Thanks to the capital project currently underway, all elementary schools have been upgraded to feature secure entrances.



RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Arts

- Since they couldn't perform in person, music students districtwide shared their gifts of song in virtual performances shared on social media.
- Music and art teachers prepared learning materials for more than 400 elementary remote learners to use during synchronous and asynchronous lessons from home, including items such as markers, sketchbooks, watercolors, clay, rhythm sticks, egg shakers, scarves and recorders.
- Middle school leaders created two courses centered around digital art and voice class to engage students in different aspects of the arts and foster career exploration.



World Languages

- More than 20 seniors have applied to earn the Seal of Biliteracy upon graduation, demonstrating proficiency in English and at least one other world language.
- Teacher leaders from the English as a New Language (ENL) department launched a monthly newsletter to help GC staff members learn about the ENL program as well as the languages, cultures and home countries of our students.
- ENL teacher aides support English Language Learners (ELLs) by helping to reinforce skills, re-read content area material, review vocabulary, encourage and model conversation and more.

Students blend art and *advocacy*

Young artists at Gates Chili Middle School and Walt Disney Elementary School are learning how to use their voices to advocate for things they believe in, and they're gaining recognition for their efforts.

This fall, GCMS art instructors Amy Cocuzzi and Alyssa Viggiani called on students to identify a social issue, research it and create artwork that advocated for their beliefs. Students selected issues that included women's rights, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, mental health, conservation and racial justice and created pieces reflecting these issues in several mediums. Viggiani said students were passionate about their pieces and were excited to present them to their classmates.



"We know art is powerful, art can unify...and too often kids are led to believe that their opinion isn't important," explained Cocuzzi.

This spring, the duo entered several of their students' pieces in an open call for student art by the Bridge Art Gallery, which is part of URM's Pediatric Behavior Health and Wellness department. The gallery selected several GCMS student pieces to display in the "Youth for Racial Justice: Not a Moment, But a Movement," show, which ran through April. The gallery held a virtual show on March 18 to celebrate the student artists.

Earlier this spring, young artists at Disney shared some of their works calling for animal rights and encouraging compassion for animals. To read more about those, go to gateschili.org/ArtAdvocacy.



Celebrating cultural differences

Ramadan is a month in the Islamic calendar when Muslims observe fasting from sunrise to sunset. English Language Learners (ELLs) at Gates Chili Middle School set out to educate their teachers and peers about this month-long celebration and how they can support them during this time.



Ahead of the start of Ramadan, they starred in a video, sharing facts about Ramadan, how fasting works and other practices shared by many Muslims worldwide. To see the video, go to gateschili.org/Ramadan2021.

D&C names Gates Chili a Top Workplace

Just two months after being named a Top Workplace USA for 2021, Gates Chili Central School District has been awarded has been named a Rochester Top Workplace for 2021 by the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

"To receive this recognition amongst other local businesses is a great honor and a true testament to the culture we foster in Gates Chili," said Superintendent Dailey Christopher Dailey. "I'm humbled to know that despite the obstacles we faced throughout the pandemic, our outstanding faculty, staff and administrators take pride in our district and helping prepare our students thrive."

In addition to the Top Workplaces title, Gates Chili was also honored with a Diversity Award, which recognizes employers that have policies and practices aimed at providing a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace.

"While we have much work still to do, it is an honor for us to be recognized in our region for the hard work that has already been done to focus on equity, diversity and inclusion," said Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Labor Relations Michaela Perrotto. "We will continue to embrace opportunities to learn and grow."



BECOME A SPARTAN!

Many of our employment opportunities provide flexible schedules that align with the 10-month school year. GCCSD employees also qualify for NYS pension and may enroll in health benefits.

Apply at gateschili.org/jobs

Staff Spotlight



Karen NaDell
Teacher Aide
Paul Road
Elementary School

Karen NaDell starts her day with a goal: helping the students in her care navigate their days. It's a goal she has had for her 23 years with the Gates Chili Central School District. A mom of two Gates Chili graduates, she began her time at Gates Chili as a volunteer; a title she held for a decade. For the last 13 years, she has supported Gates Chili students as a district staff member, most recently as a teacher aide at Paul Road Elementary School—a job she calls an honor.

Though she's no longer a volunteer, NaDell's giving nature is still on display every day in a 12:1:1 second-grade classroom, where, in her words, she "helps the teacher help the students." A lifelong learner with a passion for reading, she loves to help students gain confidence with language and reading and says her most rewarding moments come when her students master a skill and become successful.

NaDell and her fellow instructors have found success with the students in the COVID-19 world by carefully considering what she calls "the little things"—like how to make hands-on group activities safe and distanced.

NaDell's students have proven to be resilient and adaptive as they all learn how to navigate the new normal.

"We thought masks would be a big deal, but the kids have adapted...we learn together, but with our own manipulatives [classroom objects]," said NaDell.

NaDell's colleagues call her a natural communicator and collaborator who always has a positive attitude. Working with her fellow teacher aides at Paul Road, NaDell explained, is a wonderful experience and that she learns from her colleagues every day. When asked who she learns from most, though, she said, "People don't realize that we learn from the students. Every day, it's something new! We learn from them; we learn from each other. It's a great place to work."

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Equity and Inclusion

- The GCMS School Improvement Team, consisting of staff, students and parents, engaged in a book study of "Stamped," by Ibram X. Kendi, which shines a light on the many forms of racism and how to "stamp" them out.
- Students and staff districtwide participated in equity challenges to push their growing edge, including the GCHS 10-day Equity Challenge in March and Brasser 10-week Equity Challenge from January through March, to name a few.
- Librarians throughout the district have worked to ensure all students see themselves positively represented in literary works in the district's six libraries.

Professional Learning

- Thirty-one district staff members were among the presenters who led more than 130 workshops and trainings, including a 30-hour culturally-responsive training and book studies with staff and board members about equity, instructional technology and more.
- Staff and families took part in various learning opportunities as part of multiple GC CARES learning series throughout this year, including four days for staff learning in September, a month-long series for families this fall, and a four-month-long series for staff focused on wellness this spring.
- To meet the unique demands of remote learning this year, K-5 remote teachers were provided with a series of differentiated trainings to support student learning.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Community

- More than 20 community members, including parents/guardians and students, volunteered to provide oversight on the district's equity efforts by serving on the District Equity Team.
- GCHS peer leaders are heavily involved in community service through their monthly work at FoodLink distribution centers and the creation of pandemic life hack videos for the K-12 learning community.
- Over the holiday season, the school nutrition team came together by raising and donating money to support educational and career skills training for students with developmental challenges in the community.

Pupil Personnel Services

- This school year, more than 175 students participate in specialized learning opportunities in a special class setting such as 6:1:1, 8:1:1, 12:1:1 and 15:1 classes.
- Responsive to the needs of students, related service providers, including counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language therapy, have engaged students in roughly 1,500 remote sessions to date.
- Working collaboratively with the parents and community members in the Special Education Parent Teacher Organization (SEPTO), the PPS department focuses on providing both support to parents/guardians and information about student resources provided by the district.

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, March and April.



Feb. 23 recipients

A-Z: Marla Chefalo, Director of Continuing Education; Jessica Frank, Disney Fourth-Grade Teacher; Daniel Kim, Disney Computer Aide; Audrey McLendon, Disney Teacher Aide; Chuck Phelan, Security Guard



March 23 recipients

A-Z: Trevor Brugger, Groundsman; Lindsey DiMartino, Administrative Assistant; Paula LaManna, Volunteer Coordinator; Andy Porter, Lead Mechanic; Kristen Read, Paul Road Teacher Aide; Diana Sachs, Bus Driver; John Sodeman, Security Lead; Tom Scoppa, Head Groundsman; Don Voelkl, Head Custodian; GCMS School Improvement Team Students and Parents: Caleb Wall, Scotty Wall, Preston Dixon, Andre Dixon, Laila Moyer, Marena Thornton-Lawhorn, Jaiden Schmackpfeffer, Cassandra Carpenter, Emma Herweg



April 20 recipients

A-Z: Karen Lynch, Armstrong Office Clerk; Mary Anne Prescuitti, PPS Clerical Support; Keighlin O'Connor, PPS Clerical Support; Erica To, GCHS Student; Deborah Wagner, Armstrong Office Clerk; Armstrong Cafe Monitors: Sarah Firpo (not pictured), Sheila Lukacko, Jan Murray and Diane Read

GC CARES about connections

As a way for staff to stay connected, Gates Chili launched the GC CARES Wellness Series this spring. This series of events and resources for staff focused on their own social-emotional and physical wellness and that of others.

It all kicked off in March when Gates Chili staff collected 65 boxes of food to support military families. They also held informal coffee chats at local businesses and discussed self-care and healthy habits. In April, staff had the opportunity to physically come together and recognize their hard work, all while supporting local businesses in the Gates and Chili communities.



2021-2022

Gates Chili Central School District Faculty / Student Calendar

SEPTEMBER (18/16)

September 6 (Mon) Labor Day
September 7-8 (Tues-Wed) .. Superintendent's Conference Days
September 9 (Thurs) School Opens (P-12)

OCTOBER (20/19)

October 8 (Fri) Conference Day
October 11 (Mon) Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day

NOVEMBER (19/19)

November 11 (Thurs) Veterans Day
November 25-26 (Thurs-Fri) Thanksgiving Recess

DECEMBER (17/17)

December 6 (Mon) P-5 Student No School /Conf. Day
..... 6-12 Student Half Day/Conf. Day
December 23 (Thurs) P-5 Student Half Day/Parent Teacher Conf.
December 24-30 (Fri-Thurs) Holiday Recess
December 31 (Fri) New Years Observance

JANUARY (20/20)

January 17 (Mon) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 25-28 (Tues-Fri) Regents Exams

FEBRUARY (15/15)

February 21 (Mon) President's Day
February 22-25 (Tues-Fri) Mid-winter Recess

MARCH (23/22)

March 11 (Fri) Conference Day, No School for students
March 29-31 (Tues-Thurs) 3-8 ELA Exam Window

APRIL (15/15)

April 15 - 22 (Fri-Fri) Spring Recess
April 26-28 (Tues-Thurs) 3-8 Math Exam Window

MAY (21/21)

May 30 (Mon) Memorial Day

JUNE (18/17)

June 14-23 (Tues-Fri) Regents Exams
June 20 (Mon) Juneteenth Observance
June 22 (Wed) Graduation Day
June 23-24 (Thurs-Fri) . P-12 Student Half Day/Conference Day
June 24 (Fri) Last Day for Students
June 27 (Mon) Conference Day/Last Day for Staff

Total School Days in Attendance

Faculty = 186 Students = 181

KEY	
	School Opens
	No School (Grades P-5)
	Half Day (Grades P-12)
	No School (Grades P-5) Half Day (Grades 6-12)

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26	27	28	29	30		

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29	30	31				

	No School for Students/and 10 month staff
	No School (Grades P-12)
	Exams (Grades 3-8)
	Regents Exams

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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26	27	28	29	30		

NYSed requires 180 student attendance days

One (1) snow day on Feb. 25 has been built into the calendar to meet the NYSed 180-day student attendance requirement.



GATES CHILI CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Free meals for the summer

Gates Chili is proud to once again host the USDA Free Summer Meals Program this summer! Free summer meals will kick off on Tuesday, July 6 and run through Friday, Aug. 13. Drive-up meals will be available at Gates Chili Middle School and Paul Road Elementary School. Hours and menus will be shared in mid-June at gateschili.org/SchoolNutrition.



In the meantime, the USDA has extended free meals for all students through June 2022. The district still encourages families to apply for free and reduced-price meals, as the free meals program may end at any time.

BUDGET VOTE May, 18, 2021

Gates Chili Administration Building
3 Spartan Way

6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Proof of Residency

The school district may require all persons offering to vote at the budget vote and election to provide one form of proof of residency pursuant to the Education Law §2018-C. Such form may include a driver's license, a non-driver identification card, a utility bill or a voter registration card. Upon offer of proof of residency, the school district may also require all persons offering to vote to provide their signature, printed name and address.

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 May 18, 2021 vote is eligible. You do not need to be registered to vote, but you must bring identification and proof of residency.

Absentee Ballots

Residents unable to vote because of disabilities, illness, travel or other reasons listed as valid under election law, may request applications for absentee ballots at Gates Chili Central School District Administration Building, 3 Spartan Way, or by calling the Gates Chili District Clerk Joanne Doud at 247-5050 ext. 12101. Once the application is approved, an absentee ballot will be mailed or can be picked up. Completed absentee ballots must be received by the district clerk's office no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 18, 2021.

Stay Connected!



@GatesChiliInfo #GCPride #GCCares