



Budget Newsletter

Rush-Henrietta Rush-Henrietta Central School District

May 2024



VOTE MAY 21

2024-2025 District Budget Proposal

Proposed Budget: \$171,574,893
Budget-to-Budget Change: 6.05%
Tax Rate Change: 1.99% or Less

The Board of Education is pleased to present a proposed budget it believes is student-centered, equitable, and fiscally responsible. It is always challenging to develop a budget that meets both the needs of a thriving school district and the community it serves. We believe we've done that!

The Rush-Henrietta Central School District continues to deal with rising mandatory expenses, including increases in the minimum wage and special education costs, as well as the challenge of retaining and recruiting talented employees. However, board members are able to present a proposed budget that meets the needs of students while being mindful of economic realities facing many of our community members.

Rush-Henrietta is presenting a budget-to-budget increase of 6.05 percent. Under this proposal, the true value tax rate would increase 1.99 percent or less, and the total tax levy would be within the limits established under the state's Tax Levy Cap. **Rush-Henrietta's tax rate will remain among the lowest of the 17 local suburban school districts.**

The Board of Education is pleased the proposal maintains all educational programs for children. Please see special messages from Board President Scott Adair (page 2) and Superintendent Dr. Barbara Mullen (page 10) in this newsletter.

Highlights of Proposed Budget

- Preserves instructional programs and services for more than 5,400 students.
- Continues capital reserve planning to support aging infrastructure needs.
- Aligns spending with district priorities and supports student outcomes.
- Ensures ongoing mental wellness initiatives to support students.

What Does This Mean in Dollars and Cents?

- One of Rush-Henrietta's objectives is to maintain existing programs and services while minimizing impact to the taxpayer.
- Taking into account the School Tax Relief (STAR) benefit - for which all homeowners are eligible - a district resident owning a house assessed at \$200,000 would see school taxes increase by \$61 annually.

Did You Know?

- Rush-Henrietta has had one of the lowest true value tax rates in Monroe County for years.
- If the proposed budget is approved, Rush-Henrietta's true value tax rate in 2024-2025 will be lower than it was during the 2004-2005 school year.



From the Board of Education

Dear Community Resident:

On Tuesday, May 21, eligible voters in the Rush-Henrietta Central School District will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed 2024-2025 budget adopted by the Board of Education. We believe this proposal is student-centered, equitable, and fiscally responsible. We also believe the proposed budget is responsive to our evolving economy and inflationary concerns.

As board members, we are also your neighbors. We understand the emerging challenges that many in our community are facing. For that reason, the Board of Education adopted a budget that calls for a tax rate increase of less than 2 percent. A homeowner with property assessed at \$200,000 would pay an additional \$61 in taxes next year.

If voters approve the budget, Rush-Henrietta's projected tax rate again will be among the lowest in Monroe County. It's also important to note that the final true value tax rate for the past 10 years ended up being lower than the proposed rate. The actual tax rate is established after the town assessments are finalized. The school district has no role in property assessments.

As a district, we sought to develop a base budget that aligns with district priorities and supports student outcomes. We also know we need to grow capital reserve funds to support the needs of our aging infrastructure. In addition, it was important we find a way to fund items in the base budget that have been paid for with federal stimulus monies; that money goes away this year.

During the budget-planning process, we were careful to remain mindful of the tax impact on residents. I hope you can see that we are planning not only for next year, but for the future.

All eligible voters are urged to vote between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at the Transportation and Operations Center, 1133 Lehigh Station Road.

One does not need to own property in the district to vote, but must be at least 18 years old, reside here, and be a U.S. citizen. If you have questions, please contact a board trustee listed below.

Rush-Henrietta thrives in large part because of our community. Please know how deeply we appreciate that strong support and what a profound impact it has on our district and students.

Sincerely,

Scott M. Adair
President, Board of Education

2023-2024 Board of Education

Scott M. Adair, President	sadair@rhnet.org	585-329-9182
Mai Abdullah, Vice President	mabdullah@rhnet.org	585-734-3063
Shiloh Arthmann	sarthmann@rhnet.org	585-230-1751
Suzanne Bennett	sbennett@rhnet.org	585-334-8014
Laura P. Borate	lborate@rhnet.org	585-704-1571
Kimberly DeLardge	kdelardge@rhnet.org	585-330-4981
Rachel Sherman	rsherman@rhnet.org	617-780-5275

The R-H School Budget Helps Support...



Athletics: From individual achievements to team victories, our Royal Comets thrive in the sporting arena. Thanks to the support of our community, we're investing in additional ways to support these students. This photo shows the new multipurpose turf field being installed at the Senior High School. New tennis courts also should be ready next fall.



Classroom Learning: Three third-graders at Leary Elementary School qualified for the New York State Elementary Mathematics Tournament this June 1 in Albany. The state gave students an all-expenses-paid trip to the tournament. Leary was also awarded \$1,000. Congratulations to our three regional winners, Tessa, Keith, and Spencer, pictured with math coach Thuy Tran.



Music: This spring, Rush-Henrietta again was named one of the Best Communities for Music Education in the nation - for the 15th consecutive year! Students in grades 4-12 have access to a variety of band, chorus, and orchestra opportunities, as well as general music. From concerts to solo competitions to musicals, our schools help bring out the best in our Royal Comets.



Bright Futures: In 2023, 99.8% of R-H graduates earned a Regents diploma or Regents diploma with Advanced Designation. Eighty-two percent of these graduates chose to pursue post-secondary education, while others sought full-time employment or joined the U.S. Armed Forces. R-H continues to emphasize different career path options to its students.



Hands-On Opportunities: Students in grades 7-12 are able to explore the trades and other outstanding learning opportunities. Senior High students taking the full-year course called Construction Systems reinforced their learning by constructing an 8'x12' storage shed. They have completed activities with concrete, electrical, plumbing, model building and house framing.



Dedicated R-H Employees: The district continues to look for ways to attract and retain caring, skilled employees. In addition, Rush-Henrietta also is identifying new positions that will help our students grow and learn. For example, a Career and Technical Education director is being hired this spring to help build partnerships with local businesses interested in supporting our students.



Guiding Student Success

Rush-Henrietta Central School District

Rush-Henrietta Central School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2023-24 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2024-25 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$161,779,198	\$171,574,893	\$167,970,508
Increase/(Decrease) for the 2024-25 School Year		\$9,795,695	\$6,191,310
Percentage Increase/(Decrease) in Proposed Budget		6.1%	3.8%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.12%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$89,496,816	\$93,101,201	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	-	-	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	-	-	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	-	-	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A+B+C-D)	\$89,496,816	\$93,101,201	\$89,496,816
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	-	-	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$89,496,816	\$93,101,201	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E-B-F+D)	\$89,496,816	\$93,101,201	
I. Difference: (G-H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)**	-	-	
Administrative Component	\$17,206,137	\$18,966,561	\$17,942,176
Program Component	\$123,391,587	\$130,683,470	\$128,653,470
Capital Component	\$21,181,474	\$21,924,862	\$21,374,862

* The Contingency Budget information displayed above has been calculated in total, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. Budget items excluded from the calculation include equipment expenditures and other non-contingent expenses. The actual appropriations under a contingency budget, should this be necessary, would be determined by the Board of Education and may include additional contingent expenditures if funding sources other than additional tax levy amounts are identified.

**Separate Propositions that
are not included in the
Total Budgeted Amount:

Description

Bus purchases utilizing the bus purchase capital reserve

Amount

\$1,400,000

Basic STAR Benefit Impact

Estimated Basic STAR Benefit Savings based upon the standard
\$30,000 exemption authorized by Section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

Estimated Basic STAR Benefit Savings¹

Under the Budget Proposed
for the 2024-25 School Year

\$527

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2024-25 by the qualified voters of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District, Monroe County, New York, will be held at the Transportation and Operations Center in said district on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, between the hours of 6:00 am and 9:00 pm, prevailing time in the Transportation and Operations Center, 1133 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta, N.Y. 14467, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

If you are a United States citizen, will be at least 18 years old by May 21, 2024, and have been a resident of the school district at least 30 days prior to the vote, you may vote.

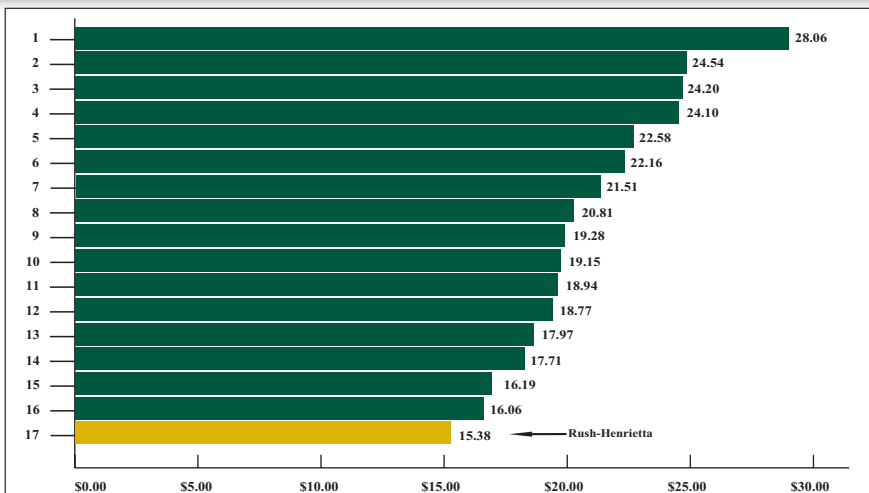
¹The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

R-H True Value Tax Rate: Among the LOWEST in Monroe County

Monroe County School District Comparison*

Tax rates are a means of comparing taxes between districts. The true value tax rate in the Rush-Henrietta Central School District is consistently among the **lowest** in Monroe County. Next year, Rush-Henrietta again will have one of the lowest tax rates in the county. Rates shown for 2023-2024.

* Data from "2024 Facts and Figures" published by the Monroe County School Boards Association



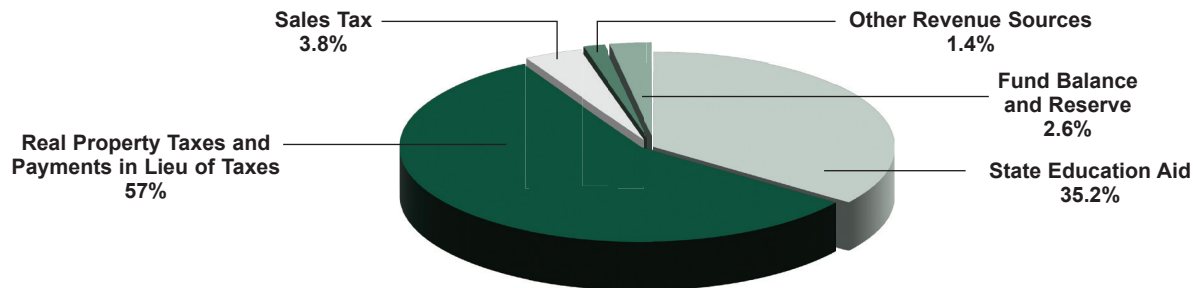


Rush-Henrietta Central School District Budget Proposal

2024-2025 Projected Revenue Statement

Revenue Source	2023-2024	2024-2025	+/- Change	Inc. (Dec) %	% of Budget
State Education Aid	\$57,966,097	\$60,440,215	\$2,474,118	4.3%	35.2%
Real Property Taxes and Payments in Lieu of Taxes	93,496,816	97,801,201	4,304,385	4.6%	57.0%
Sales Tax - County	5,440,000	6,460,000	1,020,000	18.8%	3.8%
Other Revenue Sources	1,776,285	2,383,159	606,874	34.2%	1.4%
Fund Balance and Reserves	0	4,490,318	4,490,318	0	2.6%
Federal Stimulus Funds	3,100,000	0	-3,100,000	-100.0%	0.0%
Revenue - Grand Total	\$161,779,198	\$171,574,893	\$9,795,695	6.1%	100.0%

REVENUES AS A PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET



2024-2025 Proposed Expenditures

There are five expenditure categories in the 2024-2025 budget proposal, as outlined below, that support educational programs and school district operations.

Instruction: 53.6% — The instructional program is the largest category in the budget and is the focal point of our educational system. All services that provide, or directly affect, instruction to students are budgeted in this area. The following are included in this category: regular school program, special education, summer school and support services [school libraries, health, psychological and social work services, curriculum coordination and supervision, curriculum development, research and evaluation], BOCES instructional programs, student activities [interscholastic sports, intramurals, co-curricular activities] and required tuition payments for Rush-Henrietta students attending approved private and public school programs.

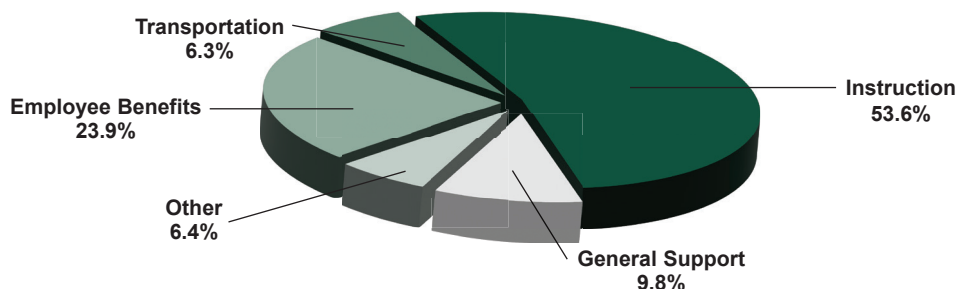
General Support: 9.8% — This part of the budget covers the areas that support the educational program through central administration, business operations, human resources, community relations, maintenance and repair of all district grounds and facilities, printing, mailing, district meetings, Board of Education and legal services.

Transportation: 6.3% — Includes bus transportation for more than 6,000 students to district, charter, parochial and private schools; BOCES centers for vocational and special education programs; field trips and athletic team trips.

Employee Benefits: 23.9% — Included in the employee benefits category are health insurance, retirement, social security, and the risk fund which includes unemployment insurance, worker's compensation insurance, disability and life insurance.

Other: 6.4% — A small portion of the budget is for other expenditures that include capital funding (buildings and grounds reconstruction, repairs, and improvements to all district buildings and grounds), and community services.

EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET





Rush-Henrietta Central Sch

2024-2025 Component Budget

Administrative Component: 11.1% of Budget

The Administrative Component provides for overall general support and management activities, including business office operations, payroll, purchasing, general administration, personnel, legal and auditing services. Cost for administration and supervision of each of the District's schools is also included in this component.

Function or Account	2023-2024	2024-2025	Increase/(Decrease)
Board of Education	153,619	143,351	(10,268)
Central Administration	411,761	863,440	451,679
Finance	853,716	874,878	21,162
Legal Services	240,000	215,000	(25,000)
Personnel	705,054	796,902	91,848
Public Information	242,020	257,496	15,476
Other Central Services	1,698,853	1,626,025	(72,828)
Other Special Items	1,379,828	1,439,597	59,769
Curriculum Development & Sup.	2,791,682	2,890,816	99,134
Supervision-Regular School	3,301,469	4,008,369	706,900
Supervision-Special School	265,039	296,821	31,782
Research, Evaluation & Planning	509,183	545,005	35,822
Employee Benefits	4,653,913	5,008,861	354,948
TOTALS	\$17,206,137	\$18,966,561	\$1,760,424

Program Component: 76.1% of Budget

The Program Component provides funding for the instruction of and educational support services for the District's students. Programs are offered in four (4) primary buildings, two (2) intermediate buildings, two (2) junior high schools, and one (1) high school. Funds are also included in this component for transporting students.

Function or Account	2023-2024	2024-2025	Increase/(Decrease)
Instruction	77,667,518	83,321,728	5,654,210
In-Service Training	515,815	928,062	412,247
District Transportation	8,131,995	8,816,806	684,811
Garage Building	215,938	237,843	21,905
BOCES/Contract Transportation	1,978,452	1,673,429	(305,023)
Community Services	324,158	354,600	30,442
Employee Benefits	33,107,711	33,901,001	793,290
Other Transfers	1,450,000	1,450,000	0
TOTALS	\$123,391,587	\$130,683,470	\$7,291,883

Capital Component: 12.8% of Budget

The Capital Component pays for maintaining buildings, for upkeep of property, repairs and refurbishments of buildings and grounds, and for electricity, heat, oil, water & sewer and telephone services. Funds are also included for "debt service" payments on capital projects and for refund of taxes for claims against property assessments.

Function or Account	2023-2024	2024-2025	Increase/(Decrease)
Operation of Plant	6,191,504	6,454,850	263,346
Maintenance of Plant	3,291,111	3,520,177	229,066
Refund of Taxes	236,000	285,000	49,000
Other Special Items	302,256	310,563	8,307
Employee Benefits	2,267,076	2,160,746	(106,330)
Transfer to Capital	7,600,408	8,049,658	449,250
Debt Service	1,293,119	1,143,869	(149,250)
TOTALS	\$21,181,474	\$21,924,862	\$743,389
GRAND TOTAL	\$161,779,198	\$171,574,893	\$9,795,695

School District Budget Proposal

2024-2025 Proposed Expenditures

Instruction: 53.6% of Budget

	2023-2024	2024-2025	% Change
Salaries	59,273,319	66,181,058	11.7%
Equipment	292,129	302,646	3.6%
Supplies & Materials	1,561,223	1,825,392	16.9%
Textbooks & Software	842,157	908,394	7.9%
Contractual Expenses	2,409,686	2,565,109	6.4%
BOCES	17,477,343	17,030,162	-2.6%
Tuition	3,194,850	3,178,040	-0.5%
Totals	85,050,707	91,990,801	8.2%

General Support: 9.8% of Budget

	2023-2024	2024-2025	% Change
Salaries	5,867,485	6,394,162	9.0%
Equipment	494,757	512,569	3.6%
Supplies & Materials	1,167,058	1,278,979	9.6%
Contractual Expenses	5,420,668	5,851,531	7.9%
BOCES	2,755,754	2,750,037	-0.2%
Totals	15,705,722	16,787,278	6.9%

Transportation: 6.3% of Budget

	2023-2024	2024-2025	% Change
Salaries	5,792,057	6,387,635	10.3%
Equipment, Supplies & Materials, Contracts	2,555,876	2,667,014	4.3%
BOCES, Public, Contract Transportation	1,978,452	1,673,429	-15.4%
Totals	10,326,385	10,728,078	3.9%

Employee Benefits: 23.9% of Budget

	2023-2024	2024-2025	% Change
Social Security	5,347,527	6,077,285	13.6%
Retirement	7,859,028	8,770,716	11.6%
Insurance	26,822,145	26,222,609	-2.2%
Totals	40,028,700	41,070,610	2.6%

Other: 6.4% of Budget

	2023-2024	2024-2025	% Change
Bus Purchase & Capital Transfers	7,600,408	8,049,658	5.9%
Capital repairs at all district grounds and facilities such as fields, roofs, boilers, lighting, flooring, HVAC, bus purchases, etc.			
Community Service	324,158	354,600	9.4%
Transfer to Special Education Extended School Year	600,000	600,000	0.0%
Transfer to State Schools (Blind & Deaf)	550,000	550,000	0.0%
Transfer to School Food Services	300,000	300,000	0.0%
Debt Service	1,293,118	1,143,868	-11.5%
Totals	10,667,684	10,998,126	3.1%
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	161,779,198	171,574,893	6.1%



Candidates Vie for Three Board of Education Seats



RACHEL SHERMAN

RESIDENT OF THE DISTRICT: 22 years

FAMILY: Spouse: Matt. Children: Noah, 16; Susie, 14; Ellie, 12

EDUCATION: Rush-Henrietta Class of 1994, Regents Diploma.
Cornell University, B.S. Harvard Law School, J.D., Cum Laude

EMPLOYMENT: The Wilson Foundation, Executive Director

HONORS/ACTIVITIES: Rush-Henrietta Central School District – Board Member since 2021; Chair, Policy Committee (2023-present); Board Liaison to town of Henrietta, MCSBA Information Exchange, and Sherman and Roth parent groups (2023-present); Member, Sherman (2018-2023), Winslow (2018-19), and Roth parent groups (2018-present); Member, R-H Budget Advisory Council (2020-21). Community/Professional – Member, Town of Henrietta Board of Ethics (2024); Winner, Assemblymember Harry Bronson's Women of Distinction Award (2024); Member, Urban League of Rochester Housing Action Committee (2023-present); Board Member,

Upstate Institute (2023-present). Pro bono legal services volunteer, JustCause (2019-present); Member, Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative Housing Sub-Committee (2020-2021); Volunteer, Mary's Place Refugee Outreach (2019-2020); Chapter Leader, Start School Later Rush-Henrietta (2019-2021); Member, Rochester Mennonite Fellowship (RMF) (2020-present); Member, American Immigration Lawyers Association (2019-2024); Notary Public (2014-present); Board Member, Community Foundation of Corning, Elmira & the Finger Lakes (2017-2020); Board Member, Triangle Fund (2014-2018); Volunteer, Salvation Army (2014-2018); Coach, Corning Falcons Soccer Club (2016-2018); Member, New York State Bar (2009-present); Inactive Member, Massachusetts Bar (2003-present).

STATEMENT: I had a wonderful experience as an R-H student, exploring many academic and extracurricular interests and making good friends in school. When I was in ninth grade my world turned upside down when I lost my mother to cancer. I credit the support of caring teachers and a strong sense of belonging in my school and community with helping me to heal and move forward. Out of this sense of gratitude, I ran for the board in 2021. Since then, I have worked to improve transparency, accountability, communication, and equity, and ensure that all students are resourced to reach their full potential. I have used my analytical, financial, and governance skills in board service, which I have developed in my career as a lawyer and executive. If re-elected, I plan to continue the progress we are making, supporting students and employees to realize the promise of our amazing, diverse district!

On May 21, 2024, Eligible Voters Will Vote On...

Proposition 1

BUDGET PROPOSITION

Shall the following proposition be adopted?

Shall the Board of Education of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District be authorized to expend the sum set forth in the estimate of amount of money required for school purposes during the fiscal year 2024-2025 in the total amount of \$171,574,893 and to levy the necessary tax therefore?

Proposition 2

BUS EXPENDITURES

Shall the following proposition be adopted?

Shall the Board of Education of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District be authorized to (1) expend up to \$1.4 million from the 2016 Bus Purchase Reserve, (2) combine said \$1.4 million with additional funds allocated for the same purpose in the capital portion of the District's 2024-2025 budget, and (3) expend such combined funds for the purpose of purchasing and replacing vehicles for the transportation of district students?

Proposition 3

2024 CAPITAL RESERVE

Shall the following proposition be adopted?

Shall the Board of Education of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District be authorized to establish a reserve fund for the purpose of construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, repair and equipping of school buildings, and facilities and site improvements in accordance with Education Law Section 3651, to be designated as the "2024 Capital Reserve Fund," over a probable term of 10 years, but to continue for its stated purpose until liquidated according to Education Law or until its funds are exhausted, the ultimate amount of such fund to be \$25,000,000, the source of which shall be determined by the Board of Education including but not limited to any and all state aid and any and all federal and state funds available by grant or otherwise generated by projects for construction, renovation, reconstruction, rehabilitation or repair of school facilities, any identified General Fund balance, any identified surplus funds in previously established capital reserve funds, other reserve funds, and interest earnings.

Propositions 2 and 3 will NOT affect the tax rate.

Candidates Vie for Three Board of Education Seats



SCOTT M. ADAIR

RESIDENT OF THE DISTRICT: 30 years

FAMILY: N/A

EDUCATION: SUNY Geneseo, B.S., Accounting
Monroe Community College, Associate of Applied Science, Accounting

EMPLOYMENT: Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority, Chief Financial Officer

HONORS/ACTIVITIES: Rush-Henrietta Central School District – Board Member since 2021; Board President (2023-2024) and Vice President (2021-2023); Member, Audit and Finance Committee and Policy Committee; Board Liaison to Leary Elementary. Monroe County School Board Association – Co-chair of the Labor Relations Committee; Member of the Executive Committee, Member of the Steering Committee, Member of the Legislative Committee. Community/Professional – Member of the Board of Directors of Baden Street Settlement, Member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Government Performance and Accountability Committee,

Past Henrietta Town Board Member, Past President of the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants.

STATEMENT: My first three years on the Board of Education can be summarized by one word: change. The 2021-2022 year was the district's emergence from the pandemic and the issues faced from a governance perspective, the 2022-2023 year was focused on the search for a superintendent, and the 2023-2024 year has been focused on steadying for the future. I now want to continue to see the execution of the Vision 2037 Strategic Plan and support the efforts of the committed employees of the district, all while balancing the long-term fiscal stability of the district. My goal, if re-elected, is to continue bringing my professional experience and my enhanced understanding of the needs of the district to a Board of Education that is working together to further the educational experience of all students.



KIMBERLY DELARDGE

RESIDENT OF THE DISTRICT: 9 years

FAMILY: Spouse, Roland. Son, Blake, 14

EDUCATION: SUNY Brockport, Master's, Public Administration
Syracuse University, B.A., Public Relations/Communications

EMPLOYMENT: Monroe Community College, Director, Student Services (downtown campus)

HONORS/ACTIVITIES: Rush-Henrietta Central School District – Appointed to Board of Education (2023-2024); Member, Space Committee (2024); Member, Budget Advisory Committee (2024); Member, Burger PTO (2022-present); Past Member, Vollmer and Fyle PTO Groups; Past Member, DPAC; Member, MPAC and DEI Committee. Community/Professional – Board Member, MCC Association; Member, MCC President's Emerging Leaders Program; Member, SUNY Coaching Academy; Advisor, Women of Excellence; Member, African American Affinity Group; Teacher, Rhema Life Community Children's Church; Hospitality Committee

Member, Rhema Life Community Church.

STATEMENT: I've been asked to describe my qualifications to be elected to the R-H school board. Aside from the legal qualifications, the answer is simple: I care. I care about the community I've chosen to live in. I care deeply that my son, and every student in Rush-Henrietta, receives the best education possible, and I care about making a difference. What does that look like? Access to strong academics and social-emotional supports and equity-focused and inclusive instruction. Additionally, my professional background with 27 years of higher education experience, including enrollment, retention and student success, align well with service on the board. I moved to Rush-Henrietta because of its strengths - diversity, quality, excellence. I have been honored to serve on the board this past year and would like the opportunity to build on the great work being done and continue to be a part of moving the district forward.

The school district is governed by a seven-member Board of Education elected by the eligible voters of the district. Members are volunteer public officials who serve without pay. As elected representatives of district residents, and as officers of the state of New York, board members must carry out duties required by the state Legislature, the Board of Regents, and the state Commissioner of Education. The board establishes policies for the operation of the district. This year, eligible voters in Rush-Henrietta will elect three candidates to the Board of Education. This information is provided by each candidate. A random drawing determined the ballot order of the candidates.



Reflecting on One Year as Superintendent

It has been one year since I arrived in Rush-Henrietta and started work as your superintendent. It's been a true privilege! As we continue to get to know each other better, I'd like to share some thoughts about where our district has been and where we are heading together.

When I first began this leadership role, I discovered a district that had enjoyed a great amount of success - and I know that didn't happen by accident. The Board of Education made clear to me that the time was right for the district to grow in new ways. These ideas included the creation of a long-term strategic plan we call Vision 2037. Read more about it at www.rhnet.org/vision2037.

To make this plan a reality, the district relied on feedback and input from students, staff, parents, and the community at large. Highlights of our collective work included a survey shared last fall with every R-H resident, and a Community Design Day event attended by residents of different backgrounds this winter. To help facilitate some of this forward-thinking work, we partnered with consultants who helped us learn more about what people who live and work in Rush-Henrietta think about our district and where we need to go. External partners helped us think through a number of key issues. Most recently, we hired an outside expert to help us manage challenges presented by our growing special education population. It is sometimes helpful to seek a fresh set of eyes to review information, make suggestions, and foster a more thoughtful conversation.

At the same time, district leaders need to continue to grow to expand their knowledge and support the work they do on a daily basis. The educational landscape is changing quickly, which makes professional development a sound investment. While some of that growth and learning can and does take place in the virtual world,



Jason Nudds, teacher at the Senior High School, was recently recognized for his efforts. He poses here with some of his social studies students and Superintendent Mullen.

nothing can replace the power of personal interactions with colleagues, experts, and mentors. I believe deeply that Rush-Henrietta should find more ways to develop its own leaders so they are able to serve our school community in different ways in the future. We continue to work on that.

As part of my personal leadership philosophy, I've explored different ways to recognize district employees for their outstanding efforts. We announced the 2024 Teacher of the Year Award and I have visited buildings to present lion ducks and Comet Kudos certificates to employees who have been nominated

for recognition. In addition, the district granted a mid-year wage increase to almost every employee as a way of expressing how much we value their contributions. We will continue to look for ways to recognize those who work here!

In the meantime, please know I appreciate your support of me and our school district. My family and I appreciate the warm welcome we have received and we have enjoyed getting to know so many of you; we truly feel like we belong. I stand in gratitude to the Board of Education for its support and look forward to leading this district for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Dr. Barbara Mullen
Superintendent

R-H Works Breakfast Helps Make Connections

Our district had the pleasure of hosting the R-H Works Industry Breakfast in March. More than 75 people attended the inaugural event, which brought together business leaders from Monroe County. The goal was to have a thoughtful conversation about the skills and attributes that will be essential for the workforce of the future.

Public education plays a critical role in preparing students for success. Whether students plan to attend college, enlist in the military, or enter the workforce after graduation, we want to ensure they have the skills needed to become the next generation of industry leaders. It's a key component of our Vision 2037 strategic plan.

We have asked for feedback from those who attended, and will continue to develop partnerships in the months to come. This includes the creation of the R-H Works Industry Council, a collaboration between the school district and local business leaders. Our community also should know we were especially proud of our business students from the Senior High School who were in attendance. They represented Rush-Henrietta well at this event and impressed guests with their demeanor, interests, and talent.



R-H WORKS

Because You Asked...

The Board of Education and superintendent have been engaging the community in an open dialogue about financial issues impacting our community and Rush-Henrietta Central School District. If you have a question, ask by visiting the website at www.rhnet.org and clicking the Contact Us button. We look forward to hearing from community members.

For more information about school district finances or the budget development process, please consult the district website at www.rhnet.org/budgettalk. Or, contact Andy Whitmore, assistant superintendent for school finance and operations, at 359-5037 or awhitmore@rhnet.org.

Q. How are school taxes determined?

A. Your school taxes are determined by three factors— the school tax levy, property assessments, and equalization rates.

- The school tax levy is the total dollar amount the district will collect from property owners to support the annual operating budget. Once approved, this amount is fixed and does not increase if assessments increase.

- In terms of property assessments, Rush-Henrietta uses property values provided by the four towns in the school district – Brighton, Henrietta, Pittsford, and Rush – to levy taxes. Each property within a town is assigned a value by the town assessor.

- Each year, the New York State Office of Real Property Services evaluates each town's assessment practices and sets specific equalization rates to ensure a fair tax burden distribution across the district. For this reason, an 8 percent increase in property assessments in one town does not mean that all four towns within our school district would experience the same increase. If the school tax levy increase is less than the increase in property assessments for the district as a whole, the district's true value tax rate decreases.

Q. How will the proposed budget affect homeowners?

A. The Board of Education's \$171.6 million budget proposal calls for a tax-rate increase of 1.99 percent or less. Taking into account the STAR benefit - for which all homeowners are eligible - a district resident owning a house assessed at \$200,000 would see school taxes rise by \$61 annually.

Q. Is the school district involved with property reassessments?

A. No. State law puts this responsibility on local towns.

Q. How is R-H supporting the mental health needs of students and employees?

A. Supporting the mental health and wellness of our students remains a top priority in Rush-Henrietta. In March, the district again partnered with the University of Rochester Medical Center's Pediatric Behavioral Health and Wellness team to open a fourth school-based mental health clinic at Vollmer Elementary School. Site-based clinics at Crane, Fyle, and Sherman schools also offer outpatient mental health services for students. The clinics offer diagnostic assessment, individual and family therapy, and thoughtful consultation services that help parents, teachers, mental health workers, and administrators to better collaborate with one another. Using a consultation model, URM practitioners work closely with families to identify community support and resources, monitoring progress, and addressing common issues. These include identified mental health concerns, difficulty functioning in the classroom, concerns about attendance or academic achievement, challenges with peer or adult relationships, and disciplinary issues. This new clinic is further proof that Rush-Henrietta is committed to serving the diverse educational needs of each student. R-H also continues to support the mental wellness of employees. One example is by providing 10-minute chair massages to employees in each of our buildings. The district also offered access to free mindfulness and yoga sessions. This year, we also hosted an empowering book study focused on the best-selling book, "Onward," by Elena Aguilar. These types of efforts will continue in the future.

Rush-Henrietta Athletics Hall of Fame Founded



Our school district has a rich and storied sports history, and it's time to recognize some of the outstanding people who have made Rush-Henrietta such a special place to learn and play! Our new Athletics Hall of Fame is seeking nominations for the inaugural class, which will be honored this summer or fall. There are three categories to consider nominating potential inductees:

Athletes/Teams: Athletes and members of significant teams must have graduated at least 10 years ago.

Coaches: Coaches must have made significant and extraordinary contributions to the athletic program.

Honorees: These candidates must have made a significant impact on Rush-Henrietta athletics and/or on sectional, regional, national, international, or professional athletes.

To learn more and make a nomination, please visit www.rhnet.org/athleticshall.

Rush-Henrietta Central School District

2034 Lehigh Station Road
Henrietta, New York 14467
(585) 359-5000
www.rhnet.org

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2023-2024 Board of Education

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Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Barbara A. Mullen

Published by the Office of Community Relations

VOTE MAY 21

Voter Eligibility

- You must be a United States citizen.
- You must be at least 18 years old by May 21, 2024.
- You must be a resident of the school district at least 30 days prior to the vote.
- You do not have to own property in the district.

Absentee or Early Ballots and ASL Interpreter

Qualified voters who would like an application for an absentee ballot or early voting ballot may request one from District Clerk Cheryl Castronovo at 359-5010 or ccastronovo@rhnet.org. If the early mail or absentee ballot is to be mailed to the voter, the completed application must be received by the district clerk no later than Tuesday, May 14. If the early mail or absentee ballot is to be handed to the voter in person at the Office of the District Clerk, the completed application must be received by the district clerk during regular office hours no later than Monday, May 20. The Office of the District Clerk is located in the Parker Administration Building, 2034 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta. To be counted, both types of ballots need to be received by the district clerk no later than 5 p.m. Tuesday, May 21, via postal mail or the drop-box located at the administration building. If you need ASL interpreter service at the polling site for the May 21 vote, contact Ms. Castronovo to request that an interpreter be present.

2024-2025 Proposed Budget: Striving for a Fiscally Responsible, Equitable, Student-Centered Budget

- Preserves instructional programs and services.
- Supports infrastructure with capital reserve planning.
- Ensures ongoing mental wellness initiatives.
- Aligns spending with district priorities.

**All Voting Will Be At The
Transportation and Operations Center
1133 Lehigh Station Road**



RUSH-HENRIETTA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024

LOCATION

**Transportation Center
1133 Lehigh Station Road
6 a.m. to 9 p.m.**

**Choose three BOE candidates.
Vote on three propositions:**

**PROPOSITION NO. 1
BUDGET PROPOSITION
\$171,574,893**

**PROPOSITION NO. 2
BUS EXPENDITURES**

**PROPOSITION NO. 3
2024 CAPITAL
RESERVE FUND**

**Propositions 2 and 3 will NOT
affect the tax rate.**

Visit our district website (www.rhnet.org) or Facebook page (facebook.com/rhschools)