



## **Exit Poll 2016-17 Budget Vote Executive Summary**

**Survey participation was down this year with 19% of voters completing an exit poll.  
The actual vote was 81% yes to 29% no votes. The survey was 87% yes to 17% no votes.**

**Of those who responded to the exit survey, the majority:**

- Voted yes (87%)
- Felt maintaining a quality education was the most important factor in determining their vote (91%).
- Voted yes on the Capital Project (84%), Capital Reserve Fund (85%) and the Bus Referendum (84%).
- Rate the quality of education at Shenendehowa as excellent (61%). This number has increased consistently over the past six years (50% in 2011).
- Feel that the board and administration are leading the district in the right direction with 40% saying yes (the highest in six years) and 42% saying most of the time.
- Think that the district's taxes are reasonable (75%). This has consistently increased over the past six years (58% in 2011).
- Are willing to pay more than the maximum allowable tax levy in order to avoid cuts to the current programs (69%) up from 58% in 2011.
- Places the most importance on preserving a highly qualified staff (95%). The ranking of priorities has changed over the years but highly qualified staff and rigorous and relevant curriculum (88%) have stayed the top priorities.
- Get their information from the district's newsletter (81%). Use of the district's social media sites continues to increase.
- Feels that the district's communications provides them with good, sound information (69%).
- Live in Clifton Park (69%)
- Are between the ages of 31-50 (47%).
- Have children in Shenendehowa Schools (53%).
- Have children in grades K-5 at Shen (54%).
- Are not employed by the district (85%).

# Results

## Comparison between years

### Survey Participation

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Number of actual voters	6,092	4,524	3,765	3,577	3,411	2,558
Number of survey respondents	1,717	1,011	657	552*	831	495
Percent of voters participating in survey	28%	22%	18%	15%*	24%	19%

*\*Paper surveys submitted after 2 p.m. were erroneously discarded.*

### How did you vote on the budget?

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Yes	68.5%	79.5%	77%	71%	79%	87%
No	31.5%	24.1%	23%	22%	21%	13%

### How important were the following in determining your vote?

Selected "very important"

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Maintaining the quality of education	85.4%	91%	91%	91%	90%	91%
Efforts to control spending	80.7%	75%	71%	72%	72%	68%
Tax rate	68.1%	63%	58%	57%	59%	58%

**How would you rate the quality of education at Shenendehowa?**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Excellent	50%	50%	53%	53%	55%	61%
Good	43%	42%	41%	40%	39%	33%
Fair	7%	7%	5%	5%	6%	5%
Poor	1%	1%	1%	2%	0.5%	.8%

**Do you think the board of education and the district administration are leading the district in the right direction?**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Most of the time	41%	42.8%	41%	43%	43%	42%
Yes	25%	28%	35%	32%	28%	40%
Sometimes	20.2%	15.5%	14%	15%	14%	9%
No	10.1%	10.2%	7%	7%	13%	5%
Don't know	3.7%	3.5%	3%	3%	2%	4%

**Do you think Shen school taxes are:**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Reasonable	58.2%	65.7%	68%	66%	71%	75%
Too high	41.4%	33.1%	31%	33%	28%	24%
Too low	0.4%	1.2%	2%	1%	1%	1%

**Are you willing to pay more than the maximum allowable tax levy?**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Yes	58.2%	57.5%	59%	57%	58%	69%
No	41.8%	42.5%	42%	43%	42%	31%

### What level of importance do you place on the following areas:

Selected "very important"

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
High quality staff	87%	93%	93%	94%	95%	95%
Rigorous and relevant curriculum	87%	90%	91%	89%	89%	88%
Academic, social/emotional & health support services--librarians, nurses, counselors, psychologists	53%	63%	67%	64%	66%	75%
Extracurricular activities including music, arts, clubs and athletics	50%	60%	68%	63%	66%	73%
A variety of course options	57%	60%	62%	59%	64%	70%
Modern and well maintained facilities	39%	58%	61%	59%	63%	70%
Kindergarten --non-mandated	31%	59%	61%	61%	62%	63%
Transportation	15%	54%	58%	56%	61%	62%
Low class sizes	57%	57%	58%	58%	59%	66%

### What are your sources of information?

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
District newsletter	77%	79%	84%	81%	78%	81%
District website <a href="http://www.shenet.org">www.shenet.org</a>	52%	51%	57%	57%	56%	54%
Parent Portal	38%	39%	38%	41%	41%	43%
Grapevine	34%	34%	34%	34%	31%	30%
Facebook	8%	13%	20%	17%	27%	29%
Board/public meetings	18%	17%	17%	19%	19%	14%
Twitter		3%	3%	6%	8%	9%
Superintendent's Community Conversations		9%	11%	10%	9%	8%
Shen YouTube						1%
Community News	63%	63%	61%	61%	59%	64%
Times Union	55%	50%	47%	49%	42%	46%
Clifton Park Spotlight	17%	21%	17%	15%	29%	25%
Television	41%	34%	33%	34%	32%	24%
Gazette	16%	18%	18%	16%	18%	18%
Students	35%	35%	37%	39%	44%	45%
District employee	25%	23%	23%	24%	25%	27%
PTA	21%	18%	20%	21%	20%	26%

**Do you think the district's communications provide you with good, sound information?**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Yes	62.7%	61.2%	68%	61%	60%	69%
Sometimes	25.8%	30.6%	25%	29%	33%	26%
No	11.5%	8.1%	7%	10%	7%	5%

**What town do you live in:**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Clifton Park	69%	73%	72%	75%	71%	69%
Halfmoon	19%	17%	16%	14%	16%	19%
Malta	5%	5%	6%	4%	5%	4%
Waterford	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Ballston	5%	4%	5%	5%	8%	6%
Stillwater	0	0	0	0	0	0

**What age category pertains to you**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
18-24	3%	4%	4%	4%	6%	5%
25-30	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%
31-50	51%	48%	46%	47%	48%	47%
51-64	27%	29%	26%	28%	27%	24%
65+	16%	18%	22%	20%	18%	23%

**Do you currently have children**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
In Shenendehowa Schools	51%	50%	49%	49%	51%	53%
Private/Parochial School	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	2%
Home Schooled	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0
Pre-school Age	8%	8%	7%	6%	7%	5%
No children under 18	44%	45%	46%	48%	44%	44%

**If you have children in Shen, what grade levels**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
Grade K-5	59%	58%	57%	60%	59%	54%
Grade 6-8	42%	38%	39%	40%	42%	47%
Grade 9-12	40%	39%	44%	43%	46%	46%

**Are you an employee of the district:**

	May 17, 2011	May 15, 2012	May 21, 2013	May 20, 2014	May 19, 2015	May 17, 2016
No	84%	89%	87%	88%	87%	85%
Yes	12%	9%	10%	9%	11%	13%
Retired employee	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%

# Data Cross-tabulations

Of those voting YES/NO, the majority:

	Yes	No
Most important factor in determining their vote	97% maintain quality of educational programs	97% efforts to control spending
Rate the quality of education good at Shen	68% excellent	54% good
The board and administration is leading the district in the right direction	46% Yes 45% Most of the time	37% Sometimes 28% Most of the time 20% No
District taxes	85% reasonable	90% too high
Willing to pay more than the maximum allowable tax levy	79% yes	93% no
Level of importance of various factors	97% High quality Staff	76% High quality Staff
Sources of Information	82% Newsletter 64% Community News 58% District Website	83% Newsletter 66% Community New 41% Times Union
District's communications provides good, sound information	76% yes 21% sometimes	54% sometimes 25% yes
Age	50% between 31-50	37% between 51-64 28% between 31-50
Children in Shen	55% In Shen 42% No Children Under 18	57% No Children Under 18 38% In Shen
Those who have children in Shen	58% K-5 48% 6-8 43% 9-12	21% K-5 42% 6-8 63% 9-12

## Children vs. no children, the majority:

	Children in Shen	No Children Under 18
Voted Yes	91%	84%
Voted No	9%	16%
Maintaining the quality of education was most important factor	94%	89%
Feel the quality of education is excellent/good	60% Excellent 34% Good	64% Excellent 33% Good
Feel the board/admin are leading in the right direction (yes/ most of the time).	45% Most of the Time 42% Yes	40% Most of the Time 40% Yes
Think the taxes are reasonable	77% yes	75% yes
Would override the maximum allowable tax levy cap	74% yes	63% yes
Level of importance of various factors	95% High Quality Staff 88% Curriculum 78% Social/Emotional/ Health support	93% High Quality Staff 88% Curriculum 71% Social/Emotional/ Health support
Sources of Information	82% District Newsletter 79% Website 77% Parent Portal	81% District Newsletter 70% Community News 53% Times Union
Think the district's communications provides good information	73% Yes 22% Sometimes	63% Yes 31% Sometimes

## Age Category, the majority:

	Yes	No
18-24	92%	8%
25-31	57%	42%
31-50	92%	8%
51-64	80%	20%
65+	85%	15%



# Comments

## How did you vote on the propositions?

Should be included with budget and use the property we have on the campus for a new school.

I work for SCSD so I know the importance / value of passing the school budget (both short-term and long-term impact).

I feel the school system should fund these as we go. Having a bank surplus leads to wasteful spending.

It seems every year we are voting on buying more buses. As I drive my child to school each day I seem more than half the buses sitting in the bus garage area. I think we have enough buses

You have sought funds for these same projects repeatedly - they never seem to get completed, and yet you found money to waste on men and huge earth-moving equipment to "level" an already flat field, and fence it in, for seemingly no purpose at all save to deprive the kids of open space. Even the workers mocked this as "your tax dollars at work." Meanwhile, bright kids are pretty openly mocked and discouraged by teachers and principals, while needy students are ignored and IEPs refused. The district needs a new attitude, not more funds. Education "quality" is sacrificed whether there's money for "capital improvements" or not. And I expect there'll be yet another "emergency" funding request in the future...Stop wasting time on questions of "rigorous and relevant" curriculum - "relevant" is code for popular-with-educator nonsense, rigorous hasn't been available for many years - and no, letting teachers indulge their urges to nitpick and hound innocent kids is not "rigorous," it's immoral and cruel.

Do not trust the oversight.

Expensive

More money doesn't mean better education. Sometimes. less money might teach the kids in a different way to solve the problems. It also encourages sharing and communication face to face. Right now, with new technology, people talk to each other through the phone, through internet, through text message..... We need more physical communication. We need more understanding and empathy. Of course, safety is always important.

We have surpluses already, why are we increasing budgets?

reserve is unnecessary in this district, and a function of too much taxes collected.

Disappointment with district level leadership and BOE, regarding their lack of support for students of Christian faith.

BUses are too much

i am a pensioner/ss voter. I cannot continue to pay increases in taxes every year.Eventually i will not be able to afford my home.

I am a senior on a limited budget!

Please keep our taxes in check.

Bus purchase - I feel like so many students do not take the buses to school. We live across the street and there is more car traffic than bus traffic. Also, i don't feel that as a tax payer i should be paying for a child to be bussed to another school outside the school district. That should be paid for by the parents of the child.. not the school or the tax payers.

You can find ways to keep the budget "as is" instead of raising it every year.

I am concerned with who will oversee these funds and how involved the community will be with the decisions to spend or maintain them. Plus it will increase my taxes.

Believe the operation budget can be reduce without impact to educational quality. It is not clear to me that we need to provide every student with a mobile device. We voted buses last year, can extend the life of most of the fleet. As to the capital project improvements...why do we need new signs? I can get behind a capital improvement program to provide long term maintenance of existing facilities (e.g. new roof) and more classroom space as the student population grows, but signs? Please show the discipline and frugality that most of us show in our household budgets and then I can consider additional funding. I will not consider paying more than the amount allowed under the tax levy limit cap and believe paying more is not necessary to maintain the quality of education.

Want to know what the money will be spent for. School should not hold money and have no accountability.

my taxes are too high

We need to be fiscally responsible and spend within the means of the tax payers and budget. Other Districts are not as fortunate as Shenendehowa. Without the property, those can not tax in the same ways and don't develop the same sort of reserve. We simply continue the cycle of "have" and "have nots." With a District that has much to be grateful for, there should be no need to tap into reserve.

I believe the district/state should make efforts to contain in standard operating budget.

State restores money and we just spend away. Enrollment down , home building up and we raise raise taxes  
sound financial management

Need to maintain some budget restrictions in view of other priorities.

Focus should be made to maintain current facilities and buses and care for what the taxpayers have already purchased. Quality education doesn't have to cost the excessive amount that is spent every year.

The board needs to maintain the capital investments as part of the normal budget. It should not be an add on outside the normal budget.

District needs to spend more wisely not just raise tax. I see it's critical to improve quality of education but still need to control spending.

Tired of paying for buses year after year. Students who live within a 1 mile radius should be walking to school. I don't like the fact that I do not know how much my taxes will increase with these propositions. I am not giving you a blank check. I want to know when my taxes will be going down. I am getting ready to retire.

cost

More \$\$ needs to be spent on staffing and support if students

I think that the number of buses we currently have are sufficient.

Unnecessary

amount too high

not convinced the added expense is currently warranted

Every year there is a multi million dollar bus purchase appropriation, as well as the administrative overload. Why does there have to be assistant this and that?

voted yes, but would have liked more details on capital improvements

think too much to save can use now

most of the kids either drive or are dropped off by parents

Want vs. need....nice to have new things if one can afford to do so and taxpayers can't afford to do so annually. Look to the 1% to assist in providing financially, not the 99%. Improvements don't need to be made annually! Reduce the salaries of some of the high paid employees and then propose a revised budget for reconsideration.

We had a terrible experience with all four of our children. We had to move them to private school to get a decent education. All four now hold masters degrees. If parents want quality education they can pay for it like we were forced to do. IIEP's are not followed. You should all be ashamed of yourselves. I'm in Shen 30 years. I'm tired of my neighbors moving out because the schools are so poor. Good sports team, that's all that's important.

Voted no on capital improvements because I believe that the necessary improvements could have been without tax levy or at least for a less cost.

Tax increases that would be levied immediately vs the level of need for such improvements to infrastructure and equipment.

this school deserves nothing this school teaches nothing but democratic values and brainwashes kids

I am just sick of the politics in the district. Voting no is only way to express my frustration.

Because this district wastes more than it spends on programs that are truly valuable for the students who attend. The administration needs to take a hard look at these costs.

all too much money especially capital reserve fund, why so much

I think the reserve fund has potential to be slush fund. Even if voters have to approve, I think the fact that the money is already "in the pot" makes it easier to approve unimportant projects. I always vote against bus expenditures - kids within walking distance are still bused.

We don't need a capital reserve fund---lower taxes now !!!

too much is spent on this school, teachers, admin and staff should start paying into their own retirement and health cost like the rest of us and stop spending our hard earned money.

I trust the people who make up the budget to know what needs to be purchased and what needs to be maintained, therefore I support their efforts,

a 10% of total budget for add on's is a bit much. The \$16,000 +/-, per pupil should be enough. I smell common core in this so called capital project. I strongly; that is, very strongly oppose common crud

The capital project spending was not presented in a detailed enough financial breakdown.

Capitalism Kills

Makes me uncomfortable

tax rate

Shen has plenty of buses already and does not need to be subsidizing the transportation of students who live within 1.5 miles of school and are able to walk. The facilities proposal did not specify a possible tax increase in the flyer and did specify a possible one on the ballot thus I voted no.

Can not afford any increase in taxes.

Taxes and Shen school budget are out of control. While the rest of us tighten our belts and make do with less, the school district ALWAYS wants more. When was the last time a budget was requested with no increases? Our family will continue to vote "NO" until it can be proven that significant cost control efforts are made. Only when the Board proves it can control spending through a "no increase" budget will we consider voting FOR any future proposals. Start by increasing the class size....we did quite well with 50+ in classroom. Next, cut programs. Shen can maintain its quality education but still cut programs instead of increasing taxes!!! It just doesn't have the guts to do either of these.

we don't need to buy new buses every year.. you don't buy a new car every year.....

The board needs to work together to streamline the budget. Really look at where the money goes! Cut the waste...people like to think there is no waste but there is. Shen also needs to look at what the kids are doing in unsupervised areas of the schools. The monitors, aides jobs need to be looked at; they are noticing petty things

when they need to be more observant, vigilant throughout the day. And, please stop the movies on days before breaks. The kids who attend do not learn anything and the kids who have illegal absences are not penalized.

too much

I do not see the need

because i believe in the importance of these propositions and i also believe in making Shenendehowa a better place for generations to come both in general and financially.

control spending; these seem excessive

The school system is growing way to fast versus the economy and enrollments. This isn't Disneyland where need to implement the latest fad or amenity in order to have good education. The school board has done a lousy job of negotiating teacher increases. There are other school employees who contribute to the educational process and help teachers get their job done and they have not had an increase in years.

State aid increased by millions, but they chose to spend the increase plus more. They did not hold spending down. There should have been a slight tax decrease. Also, I was not sent notice of meetings to discuss the budget. The notices should be sent to all taxpayers, not just ones with kids who bring the notices home from school. How about a "plain vanilla" budget with no accounting tricks and increased debt, so we can achieve no debt.

Schools need to live within their means. Teachers want to be pampered at everyone else's expense. If teachers are being paid an annual salary they should work more than 1/2 the year. The public is sick of hearing them moan. Sports are emphasized too much and too competitive.

It is my opinion that buying buses all the time and spending money so the schools are on one campus is crazy. Children should go to school in their neighborhoods not sit on buses. Then the buses could be utilized better

Safe transportation, Keeping buildings in good repair, and creating what a college would call an endowment fund.

In my opinion, the powers- that- be look on property owners as cash cows to be milked until dry. This is especially irritating since i have never had a child in this school system, and never will, and income remains fixed or less year after year. You school officials don't listen.

Need lower taxes

too much

Need more specifics on exactly what this year's capital project expenditures would be.

The teacher and faculty pensions are far too high and far too generous in this state.

I like the idea of a reserve (safe now for future needs). We must learn how to stop the rate increases. The district continues to develop generating additional income. We should budget within our current rate. STOP

INCREASING THE TAX RATE. Furthermore, there is little correlation in school spending and the quality of education. Figure out how to do better with less.

### **General Comments**

Tax cap keeps spending in line. Transportation - safety first. Teacher evaluations - include other aspects area, class size - not based on one test, one day - and under state by John King.

I don't feel that I am able due to possible repercussions for my job.

\* Computer Survey \* It was fun reading the exit survey of others by back clicking maybe we need an IT person on staff.

Way too much \$\$ spent. Need to cut back.

Grapevine comments by staff seem very sarcastic (defensive) at times - should consider reviewing comments as they are public and represent Shen School District. Serve coffee and donuts next time or snacks as many voters come to discuss school budget (issues with other voters).

The district is getting too big. The quality of education available and the care to the students provided by staff is decreasing from when I was in school. It's as if the students are just 1 in a class of 750+ and they get lost in the shuffle. It might be time to consider splitting the district into a north and south Shenendehowa district...

I think tenure is a bad idea. District should be able to fire the bottom 1% of teachers each year. Should be more incentive for teacher performance.

I choose not to identify my child's grade - there have been too many incidents of harassment of too many kids. You've got a district-wide problem. The school does not exist to employ staff and "sculpt" children's opinions, it's supposed to supply factual and effective education with a broad variety of approaches, not this "chain-em-to-their-desks-while-we-watch-the-clock" depressing approach.

love Shen 3 children graduated from here with great educations and 2 with terrific sports experiences. currently I employ 50+ students from Shen at my area McDonald's restaurants. keep up the effort for both great academic and extracurricular results....our children are our future roger grout

I know the schools contain good teachers but they are hindered massively by the uninvested and just plain bad that I have encountered. I also see a lot of blaming the victim of bullying, 'oh you just misunderstood, johnny' seems to be a method to keep your stats down.

I did not find the voting process very secure this year. The three way border is something used for students taking exams in elementary schools. With all the technology currently available, I did not feel my vote was a private vote.

Thanks

I don't like the new bathroom rules for transgender people. It's not right to satisfy 2% of people and let the other 90% suffering (Assume 8% of them don't care). Not sure if there's a chance to change it back. If do, please try it.

will be sending my children to a private school next year

see previous .....re reserve fund. Also....The transgender bathroom concept is not scientifically based or medically necessary. It will tear the district's support from the school leadership. It is culturally progressive stupidity, and non-democratic. It is not bigotry to accept the birth certificate gender while children grow and develop. Ask the psychiatric profession.

I voted "no" because the board of education and district administrators fail to support students of Christian faith, while other faiths are supported. I also voted no because some administrators in the district are unresponsive, unwilling to speak with parents for any reason. Customer service is important.

reserve fund defeats ability to request state funds when needed, and allows overtaxation to be placed in slush fund instead of returned to the taxpayers. The district is taking advantage of the good policies of a conservative county and risking alienation of its taxpayers. I voted for the budget, but reject reserves without basis. This town has typically provided upon demonstration of need by the csd.

I vote yes on things to insure the district is in good shape when my kids enter school. I want them to have the best education process available

I think Shen is doing a great job of educating our kids and giving them a lot of opportunities in and outside of the classroom.

I have strong concerns with the quality and oversight of teachers in core academic areas. There is uneven quality in the academic administrators at the high school. The social studies department is generally poor and the poor results in upper level math assessments should be troubling to Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instructions. Also, the relationship between Dr. Robinson and the Athletic Director appears to highlight the over importance placed on athletics and sends the wrong message for those in the community who are more concerned with academic achievement.

happy with the school district

Please keep taxes in check so we can continue to live here. Thank you.

District remains top heavy with administration. Teachers are micromanaged on evaluations to a degree not found in other Districts. Yet the District has taken no action to evaluate the administration. The District needs to provide 360 degree input to employee evaluations at all levels. If this had been in place, the Administration would not have been surprised at what it found left behind when a principal left a school this academic year. The School Board does not listen to most of its stakeholders - the legitimate views of parents, the community, and teachers are ignored or disparaged. The teacher evaluation system in which the District takes such pride is demoralizing all teachers and is driving the best ones out of the District and even the profession. I would be remiss if I did not note the presence of some outstanding administrators in this District. Sometimes they support

students, sometimes parents, sometimes teachers, and sometimes the Administration, but always what is right and what is best for the education of the students. I hope you know who they are and recognize them for their value to this community.

The new BOE should take a fresh look at our district's transgender bathroom and locker room policy. There is no reason to mix biology in our kids bathrooms and locker rooms. The American College of Pediatricians has put out a statement that "gender ideology is child abuse". Gender ideology should not be taught at Shen (as it currently is,) without presenting all views on this subject.

I feel fortunate to have my children attend Shenendehowa schools. Keep up the great work.

get rid of standardized testing

In the rush to communicate with us via all the electronic gadgetry, I feel left out of the loop because I don't choose to use those sources. You should reach out to parents and ask what their preferred communication is and tailor to us all.

Shen does a great job managing the educational curriculum and finances. I really want to see a long term effort to have the State take over most if not all of the costs of educating students and reducing and eventually eliminating property taxes as a source of revenue for financing schools and replace it with income taxes based on each individual taxpayers ability to pay.

When will sex education return to Shen? Shame on Shen for lying to the public! We need to teach our kids the whole world not just books! Catering to a few religious zealots is poor way to show kids how to deal with radicals.

Keep up the good work!!!!

shen is terrible compared to saratoga and bethlehem

School tax is way too high, not sure why the superintendent should be paid that much for the job

I have noticed voter turnout has been dropping rapidly since 2006. It has dropped by nearly half. Have you wondered why?

I recently moved to the area and was surprised that the voting rolls weren't the standard ones that I am accustomed to. Luckily the poll worker didn't mind that I have yet to update the address on my drivers' license!

I think the School Board needs to make a push in ensuring that staff is more representative of the growing number of diversity in the student body. One way I have been disappointed by the District has been in its narrow vision of inclusion of students and their culture's contribution to American History. Black History Month and a sombrero on Cinco De Mayo, does not equal a culturally responsive community.

The school budget should already cover the things needed. If this isn't true, then things that don't matter so much should be cut ie: technology, staff events and other social gatherings.

I will vote yes if the district is able to reduce tax burden YtY.



We pay union officials money to do union business which is ridiculous. Union president only teaches 40% of her time and get 100% pay. The small amount of money that the union pays to the school district does not equal 60% of her pay. So the tax payers get stuck. The BOE refuses to address this issue in contract talks. This also applies to the union rep

give Kelly D. a raise...she's doing a great job!

taxes too high way too many sports and too high salaries transportation management

In my profession I hear a great deal about the amount of Shen students with drug problems, including the heroin and rx drug addiction problems. If the school system is as stellar as it is stating to be, maybe some of the almost 200 million dollars in tax money spent in the district could be used to keep these kids actually focused on academic success, which is what this money should be going towards. There are much bigger problems in this district than new uniforms for our team. Stop sweeping them under the rug because it is bad for your image

Maintaining a quality education and a fair budget are not mutually exclusive. The district needs to actually drive prioritization in where it spends its money and not simply increase the budget. I will be impressed when the board actually makes the financial trade-offs that we must work with in our personal and business operation budgets.

Shen offers a very good education, but even good can be improved to excellent. We need to improve our offerings every year. I am in favor of adding the IB program and expanding the districts technology resources for teaching and student learning. I also would like to see more emphasis on recognizing academic achievement. Our outstanding sports programs deserves all the press it receives, but so do our Shen scholars.

add more rigorous courses in middle school programs

Stop increasing budget above the rate of inflation and without measuring the performance to teachers and students. You are doing to disservice to the students and society. Stop being the puppets of the teachers unions. Act like adults with a vision of the future.

It is truly PATHETIC that in the year 2016 Shen is still only offering HALF DAY Kindergarten and still paying fines to the State for this! We are one of only about 5-6 districts in the entire state of NY that does not offer full day Kindergarten...when are we going to get with the times and offer the increased benefits of a full day of learning which almost all kids at that age can handle??? It would also allow Kindergarteners to learn through play and lunchtime with each other, something they currently do not get by having only half a day since they get on a bus prior to recess and lunch. Many of us are hoping Shen will "see the light" in the near future and switch to a full day of Kindergarten as all of our neighboring Capital Region districts have done recently. This can only aid kids on their academic journey by providing them more classroom and instruction time and socialization skills. Get with it Shen...

common core needs to end for the sake of the elementary school aged children who will struggle with it thought their whole schooling lives

Would love to see full day kindergarten as an option

I care more about appropriate social and emotional supports/special needs supports than I do a strict, rigorous common core curriculum in K and 1. Those academic skills will come, but the social foundation is key. I also do not want to ever see music and art taken away from the kids. Willing to pay more to keep it, even long after my child is no longer in the district.

I am in hopes that the school stands behind what they stated about using the funds for what is truly needed and that it is put to the general public before being decided on, it was a shame to watch the Albany district go through the mess with trying to get a sound building, hopefully Shenendehowa will never have to fight for a safe and sound educational structure.

Thank you for the good work you are doing. I am proud to raise my family in the Shenendehowa School District.

Shen is awesome.

Thank you to both the BOE and the entire administrative staff for their efforts in preparing an effective budget. I have to also thank our school superintendent. I am one district resident who understands and appreciates all of his hard work and caring. Job well done.

Taxes are too high for seniors with no kids in the schoolsystem

would like to see a leveling of the budget for a period, maybe 2-3 years. School system is strong, can take a couple of frozen budgets.

Baa Baa Booeey to you all !!

I'd really like to see the District move to a more Conservative budget with less dependency upon Federal & State funds. This will better prepare the District in the event of reduced funding comes in from those entities. I believe the District should also stand independent of mandates placed upon the District that could be better driven by the Staff of Administrators, Teachers & Support Staff. They have a better understanding of what our children need and I would much prefer that level of attention as opposed to misaligned standardization tests coming from bureaucrats 300 miles away from our District.

in general, I am willing to pay for whatever is needed to maintain a high quality and level of education, but would like to have more specific details on why the need for the recommended level of capital improvements, and how the reserve amount was projected. Also, the Shen HS Math Dept needs a complete overhaul, as the teachers my kids have had have been AWFUL. My kids are smart and do well in school, yet we've had to spend a fortune on math tutors

Keep up the good work and continue to support World Languages and exchange programs.

Why do the elementary schools have the shortest school day of most if not all schools in the capital area. Also, family/ friends in MA, CT, MD, MI, and SC all have longer school days and pay less in taxes!

Would really like to see World Languages in the elementary schools to help students compete in a global economy.

I feel the board should involve itself in some key decisions. and not let the superintendent lead them, such as when he decided to no longer use Planned Parenthood. After being criticized by the newspaper and many citizens, the superintendent created a committee to look into the issue. I never heard the committee's report. Was there one? If so what did it say? I feel the board played no role in that decision and left the decisions totally up to the superintendent, who may be a slick politician but not always right.

publicity was very poor,

The proposed homework and grading policies are taking the district in the wrong directions. Policies in other exceptional schools are nothing like the one proposed here. This policy will be extremely detrimental to students.

Please start doing a good job, our children's future is in jeopardy at Shen.

Why can't the incredible amount of new housing taxes offset my increase in taxes and bus purchases. I am not a fan of the paper ballots, they take away from the whole voter experience!

We need full day kindergarten.

Shen is top heavy. We don't need 7 principals in the high school each making six figures!!!!

there has been a tax increase every year since moving here 7 years ago. my previous inner city school did not have an annual increase and the level of education and social services was more than adequate to meet needs. Perhaps this year with increased state aid, taxpayers could have had relief rather than increasing taxes again. love idea of planning of capital improvements and voted yes with enthusiasm for that. Also why do we need 72 seat buses--only reason I voted no to bus replacement plan.

Shen needs to consider some of their hiring choices regarding hall monitors. Some of them are very disrespectful to the students and don't foster the same learning environment as the rest of Shenendehowas staff.

NO transgender bathrooms, showers, etc.

I do disagree with transgender locker rooms!

this school has been the worst experience ever this school has ill prepared its students for the real world and promote bullying of its students. this school is overglorified in its sports programs and doesn't care to teach kids nothing. i wake up constantly with visions of being bullied by other students and Shen staff this school is as good at lying about itself and to parents like Hillary Clinton. this school should be closed permanently or replace the staff with teachers that can actually teach

This community faces difficult choices in the future. We should learn to be more fiscally responsible.

You need to cut salaries and especially benefits. Private industry offers small raises and lump-sum pmts, teachers seem to get raises every year. Private industry has eliminated defined benefit plans and schools should do this also. If the teachers complain, repeat what we were told in private industry => take your skill sets and go somewhere else where they will pay you more.

As a retired teacher with 40 years of experience, I do watch as much as possible what is going on here. I just wish the kids were taught to have more respect for the wonderful district they are lucky enough to reside in, and to remember to give back to the less fortunate when they have the opportunity. This is not a microcasm of the rest of the world, It is indeed unique and we are truly blessed.

I am retired from Shen. I have good memories and strongly support it's programs.

I just hit one key at this point and lost my entire survey comments. What gives? I am not going back and doing it over. I close by saying Shenendehowa central schools is derelict in it duty keeping common core. Of course, they weasel out saying they have no choice, B S

Return the duty and responsibilty of crafting and managing the education of its residents to the school board where it once was; but no longer is;

We need ALL DAY KINDER!! Also, smaller class sizes and need to re-district the larger schools to be in better size comparison to other elementary schools in the district. Arongen and Orenda are WAY TOO BIG

Eventually the straw will break the camel's back.

get rid of the pool; higher more teachers

Art is a very important of rounding out students. Please bring art back for 8th graders.

You asked about sources of information but failed to provide a box that lists "your tax bill". This is a bottom line source for how much more it'll cost us this year to live in this school district. It's a shame you neglected to offer this option. Please include it in next years survey

i live on a fix income retired.....i can afford to live in Clifton Park any more....

teachers are overpaid , in relation to other professions, reward the good teachers raises should be earned, too many teachers doing less than a good job getting paid more than, better, younger more well rounded teachers,

The budget was well done.

Bullying by district leadership and administration needs to stop

I would really like to see full day Kindergarten be something that we seriously explore next year. Please reach out to teaching staff, especially first grade teachers. We are getting nearly an entire class of new first graders in some of our buildings coming from private Kindergartens. As a whole, these students are academically higher than most of our students who come from our Shen half day K. We are missing the boat on early education. EDK is not doing enough. We can only select a certain number of students and we have students needing support services far beyond the spots available. Please look at the data in our first grade classes, I would guess it would confirm this. Our first grade classes are ending up with MANY children who require AIS in reading. As amazing as our K teachers are in Shen we are simply asking too much given the 1/2 day program. If you truly looked at their instructional time it would likely only be 1.5-2 hours daily. We need to even the playing field and not use space as a reason against it, there is always a way if it is a priority. Thank you for your consideration!

keep up the good work.

i would class size in the elementary schools to be looked at. i have had two children go through the elementary schools one in a class size no bigger than 20 and the other in a class size no smaller than 23. it is a huge difference in the quality of time they each have received with the teacher

not happy was forced to vote for 3 candidates for the school board. i wanted to vote for fewer but the voting machine would not accept my ballot with less than 3.

We are lucky to live in an affluent area with economic growth. The rest of the State is struggling to meet the educational needs of their students.

Where's the high school band!!

There is no representation for senior citizens, people on fixed incomes.

More attention needs to be paid to benefit costs which are over 50% of payroll on the instructional side. Likely driven by retirement and health insurance. Perhaps a strategy of reducing certain benefits and increasing salaries should be looked at to better attract staff and avoid potential unfunded liabilities.

I do not get a newsletter or any type of communication from the district. I have no children, therefore all the info I get is on the news or an occasional news story. The budget is presented in Halfmoon at an afternoon session which is ridiculous! I pay taxes that man should present the budget during normal Town Board meetings in the evening. People that contribute to his salary work during the day.

much emphasis on IS athletics Too mch!

While I believe in challenging courses, the amount of homework my High School children receive is much more than necessary, making it difficult to maintain balance in their lives. I really hope the new HW policy being considered is put into place and is followed by the teachers! This is especially true for Honors students!

Extremely impressive music program. Don't lose it.

Keep up the good work!

Never have had any kids in this system; superintendent is overpaid

"Low" class size is not specific enough. What do you really mean by this? Under 35? How many can a class hold without loss of instructional time for class room management concerns? As an educator on the post secondary level, if oversized I have to put more chairs than the room can logistically handle and makes me restricted when attempting to navigate to students.

I graduated from Shen in 2014, and I believe that the education that I got here truly prepared me, both for college and the real world. I believe that Shen did provide for me a strong, and well rounded academic career here, and I hope Shen, and the school board, continues funding the many wonderful programs that I was provided with during my time here.

we need full day kindergarten

There is way too much spin and positive propaganda coming out of the Superintendent's office. Also, there is not enough independent thinking going on among the school board members. The school board, rather than providing actual oversight, has allowed itself to be seduced by the Superintendent -- capable and charming though he is. "When everybody thinks the same, nobody is thinking very much." Shen has a great reputation that is not entirely deserved. More students could be even better served if the Superintendent and the board members would allow themselves to think more critically.

I am very concerned about education for the average student. Attention to these students, and concern for their success, seems to be lacking.

While student enrollment has usually declined from highs of earlier years, budget always rises. With the societal transition to more reliance on electronic devices, I assume Shen will need total revision of its electric capacity and availability within the schools. Careful study of how to do this is an important step to take.

i would be interested in knowing more details about the state of the buss fleet. i.e. number of buses needed and breakdown of the budget including the cost of replace vs repair for buses before I voted to increase the budget for transportation. If necessary, I would prefer the district staff up mechanics, and repair budget to extend the life of school buses. I also don't understand why we send multiple buses to the same facility for sporting events when they are barely full. (one for boys; one for girls. Additionally why do we hire buses in lieu of using our own at times for local field trips and sporting events?

Keep up the great work!

thanks

I appreciate the leadership at all levels: board, superintendent, teachers, parents and students. Setting the expectation for this leadership is one of the many things that this district does well.

I voted for the capital improvements but it would help if you had provided with a link to the list and approximated cost of the specific projects in consideration. If I was to spend \$16 M in my work, you bet I better had a very specific list of projects with all the details, otherwise I would not get the funds. Shen can do better with the budget details. thanks

Thanks for putting up with my kids! I really do thank everyone involved for always being there.