

the
great
plains

Shenendehowa

Central School District

The \$206,611,477 budget for 2023-24 tax levy below tax cap

Innovation and Engagement...Positioned Windward

“This proposed budget positions Shen to preserve programs, better meet needs, and provide high-quality experiences for students...in the face of inflection points with the economy, price escalations, and increasing demands on schools.”

- Superintendent Dr. L. Oliver Robinson

Shenendehowa residents will vote on May 16 on a proposed \$206,611,477 budget for 2023-24 that includes a spending increase of 6.31% (\$12,255,425). The tax levy of 2.72% is under the New York state tax cap of 3.15%. The estimated true value tax rate would increase by an estimated 0.70%. A property with an estimated market value of \$300,000 would see an estimated increase of approximately \$32 in its tax bill.

2023-24 BUDGET VOTE

May 16, 2023 • 7 am-9 pm • Gowana Gym

Total budget:	\$206,611,477
Spending increase:	6.31%
NYS Tax levy limit cap:	3.15%
Proposed tax LEVY change (below the tax cap):	2.72%
Est. true value tax RATE change:	0.70%

A property valued at \$300,000 would see an estimated tax bill increase of \$32.

BUS PURCHASE RESOLUTION

Purchase 4 electric buses, 1 level-3 charger, and 5 standard buses to replace aging buses.

Total Cost Not to Exceed:	\$2,450,646
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CAPITAL PROJECT RESOLUTION

Renovation of 5 Maxwell Drive into an Early Learning Center for full-day Kindergarten, pre-K, alternative education options, and consolidation of district operations.

Total Cost Not to Exceed:	\$55,000,000
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SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

Two seats on the Board of Education are up for election. Each seat carries a three-year term. The seats are currently held by Naomi Hoffman and Gusta Miller. The incumbents are running unopposed.

Program enhancements

Each year there are many different budget requests for potential program enhancements. A value-added perspective is used to review requests. These proposals and/or requests for funds are reviewed and analyzed based on the following key factors:

- Engagement - Student voice and choice, fostering a passion for learning
- Innovation - Personally relevant learning opportunities
- Cultural Competence - Preserving equity in opportunities and outcomes
- Global Collaboration - Self-directed, civic-minded learners
- Collective Work and Responsibility - School and community partnerships

The proposed 2023-24 budget preserves current programs and services with a strategic focus on the needs of all students. It provides key program enhancements to provide innovative and creative experiences in and out of the classroom, as well as services that support student safety and well-being. Some specifics include the following:

- Creating a Middle School theater program, expanding modified sports and extra-curricular options to enhance engagement.
- Expanding contractual services with Saratoga Center for the Family to provide additional mental health supports.
- Providing additional academic supports at the Middle School for students struggling in ELA.
- Additional special education staffing at the Elementary School Level to meet growing needs.
- Expansion of Health Science course options at the High School.



\$55 million Capital Project - Early Learning Center Addresses Key District Needs

On May 16, residents will be asked to vote on a Capital Project Referendum to renovate the donated facility at 5 Maxwell Drive into an Early Learning Center. The authorization is not to exceed \$55 million borrowing. State Building Aid and Capital Project Reserves will be used to offset the impact on taxpayers.

With the use of \$3 million dollars in reserve funds, a 30-year bonding spread for the smoothing of debt, and approximately \$25 million in State Building Aid, it is estimated that the tax impact of this project will be approximately twenty-five cents (\$0.25) per \$1,000 of tax assessed value per year.

The district will apply for Kindergarten transition aid to offset operating costs. The district will also assess how changes to state funding for Universal Pre-K can be used to support the operations of applicable classes.

5 Maxwell Drive, a property donated to the district by Don and Beverly Greene & Family, is a 150,000-square-foot building, of which 110,000-square-feet will be completely gutted and renovated in accordance with New York State Education Department facilities/building standards. This facility will become an Early Learning Center that answers the district's need for space to accommodate full-day Kindergarten. This center will accommodate over 700 children and will also house alternative education programs and allow for the centralization of district operations.

The goals of this project include:

- Providing upwards of 42 classrooms for Kindergarten and potentially pre-K purposes.
- Expanding capacity for alternative education programming, from tutoring to special education, to college collaborations.
- Consolidating various district operations and warehouse storage, yielding cost savings and increasing efficiency.

This building is a major asset to the district. The Early Learning Center will be the equivalent of almost two elementary schools combined.

There are many additional advantages (economies of scale) to consider with this proposition as well. These include, but are not limited to:

- Minimizing or eliminating certain recurring operational costs (ex: warehouse lease expenses - \$135,000 per year).
- Freeing up 24 additional classrooms between the eight elementary schools, reducing congestion and allowing for future growth.
- Repurposing office spaces at the Middle and High Schools for classroom use.
- Potential proceeds from the sale of the existing District Office.

You are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years or older and have been a Shenendehowa District resident for at least 30 days prior to the vote. No preregistration is required. Official personal identification with a photo is required at the polls. It is a crime to falsify votes (i.e. voting twice or using false identification).



Shatekon Kindergarteners in Ms. Clark's class use their fun "monster fingers" to help them sound out words.



Gowana Middle School students make origami paper cranes and butterflies to brighten the days of children treated at The Melodies Clinic at Albany Medical Center.

Two Candidates vie for Two Seats on the Board of Education

Two seats on Shenendehowa's Board of Education are up for election. Each seat carries a three-year term. The seats are currently held by Naomi Hoffman and Gusta Miller. The following candidates submitted petitions with the required 89 signatures to run. Board members are unpaid and run at large. They are listed in the order that they will appear on the ballot.



Naomi Hoffman, of Clifton Park, is seeking her third term on the Board of Education. Currently, she is the co-founder and CFO of Mountain Dog Running, LLC. She also has 20+ years of private and public experience in accounting, finance, and audit through positions held with Kitware Inc, the NYS Teachers' Retirement System, and the NYS Comptroller's Office. She holds a BS degree in Accounting and an MBA with a concentration in Management Information Systems, all from SUNY Albany. She and her husband, Bill, are proud parents of two Shenendehowa graduates.



Gusta Miller, of Clifton Park, is seeking her third term on the Board of Education. Prior to moving upstate, she formerly had a psychotherapy practice in Manhattan. Gusta has both her undergraduate and graduate degrees from New York University and post-graduate degree from the Institute of Contemporary Psychotherapy. Gusta and her husband, Jeff, have two children. Their oldest graduated from Shenendehowa in 2022, and the younger currently attends Shen.

**Vote on May 16th: 7 am - 9 pm
at the Gowana Gym**

**2023-24 School Budget
Capital Project Proposition
Bus Purchase Proposition**

Two Seats on the Board of Education

Absentee ballots are available at the district office at 5 Chelsea Place, Clifton Park, or by calling the district clerk at 518-881-0623.

Restorative Practices

Over the next several months, staff from across the district will engage in training to learn more about implementing Restorative Practices in schools. Restorative Practices focus on relationships and community. When used proactively, Restorative Practices can improve school climate and culture. When used as an alternative to traditional disciplinary practices, it focuses on repairing harm and restoring relationships.

Shen counselors have used restorative circles for the past several years as a way to build community within classrooms. In a community circle, students have the opportunity to share openly about a chosen topic, guided by a staff member. Shen administrators can implement Restorative Practices to prevent and/or resolve conflict between students, with a focus on repairing relationships and preventing recurring problems between the same students. Restorative Practices provide a powerful framework for building and sustaining healthy relationships.

College in the High School

Did you know that Shenendehowa High School will soon offer nearly 50 college credit bearing courses?

Shen students are able to earn college credits in a variety of subject areas while still in high school at a significantly reduced cost.

Starting in the 2023-2024 school year, Shen will offer expanded opportunities for students to take College in the High School courses through Hudson Valley Community College. HVCC courses taken at Shen have significant benefits for students and families:

- Courses are taught by Shen teachers.
- Tuition is up to 90% less expensive than local public or private colleges at \$67 per credit.
- Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch receive a full tuition scholarship.
- HVCC credits transfer to all SUNY colleges and universities (and many non-SUNY schools), depending on major and GPA.

To learn more about available College in the High School courses, see our "Program of Studies" on shenet.org.

Bus Purchase Proposition

In order to act in accordance with the New York State mandate to purchase electric buses, fully converting the bus fleet to zero-emission buses by 2035, and in an ongoing effort to keep Shen's transportation vehicles in safe working condition and decrease repair costs, the district has put forth the following proposition:

- (4) Electric School Buses
- (1) Level-3 Charger for the Shop
- (5) 28-Passenger Type "A" buses

The purchase cost for all of the items listed above will not exceed \$2,450,646, of which approximately 60% may be reimbursed through state transportation aid, resulting in an average of a 0.19% tax rate increase over five years. This is approximately a three cent (\$0.03) increase per \$1,000 of assessed value beginning in 2023-24. Retired buses will be sold at auction or reassigned to the facilities and operations department.

Did you know...

The district's 217 buses travel 2.1 million miles per year. Shen bus drivers participate in 75-100 hours of behind-the-wheel and classroom training before they drive students. After that, bus drivers attend up to 12 hours of training each year on various topics, including student management, defensive driving, accident avoidance, disaster preparedness, and first aid. All bus drivers are subject to fingerprinting, federal drug and alcohol screening, annual defensive driving tests, biennial behind-the-wheel road tests, and physical performance tests.

Please consider becoming a Shen bus driver and making a real difference in the lives of our students and the community.



ELL teacher, Mrs. Feinberg, teaches Mrs. Paupini's Karigon 3rd graders about Holi and they design festive flowers.



Isabella Gretzinger, part of Shen's first Girl's Wrestling team, had the historic honor of being the first NYS Girls Wrestling Champion from Shenendehowa!

Now Hiring for the 2023-24 School Year



Hiring for Excellence:
Shenendehowa seeks culturally proficient individuals who actively promote the highest levels of achievement for *every student.*

Scan the QR Code with your smartphone or visit shenet.org/employment to make a difference in the lives of our students, today.

Setting Goals that Create a Learning Environment Where All Can Excel

At Shenendehowa, our focus is on the students and how we can create the best outcomes for them and their education. We've set key goals in areas of Organizational Culture and Environment, School and Classroom Experiences, Personnel and Professionalism, and Fiscal Responsibility. Here are just a select few ways that we are reaching some of our goals, focused on continued improvement:

Organizational Culture and Environment

- Onboarded Behavioral Specialist in Elementary School focused on students in crisis, providing supports for students not identified as needing special education.
- Implemented the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) to help address both the academic and social emotional needs of students.
- Addition of a student support counselor at the Middle School Level to address social emotional needs of identified students.
- Enhanced safety protocols and the ability to identify potential online threats, and respond effectively.

School and Classroom Experiences

- Enhanced literacy teaching methods through targeted professional development at the Elementary School level, using data to drive targeted instruction.
- Used Shen Learning Framework to better activate student learning at the Middle School Level.
- Continued focus on equitable grading practices, bias-resistant and motivational grading practices.
- Expansion of college credit-bearing courses at the High School Level.

Personnel and Professionalism

- Continued focus on recruiting, hiring, retaining a diverse workforce, and cultivating a strong candidate pool.
- Systematized professional development offerings for both instructional and non-instructional personnel.
- Succession planning and cross-training to proactively preserve organizational viability.

Fiscal Responsibility

- Used Federal COVID funds to expedite purchasing of instructional resources and upgrading instructional technology.
- Made changes in Medicare and drug plans to yield millions in current savings and future cost containment.

Projected tax impact on homeowners

The following figures are based on estimated taxable assessment values (using the five year average). Property assessments are determined by the towns. Final data on assessments and equalization rates are not available to the district until August, prior to setting the tax levy and printing tax bills. These are merely estimates of the potential impact.

Town	Full Market Value*	Equalization Rate**	Taxable Assessed Value***	Est. Tax Rate Per \$1,000	Est. Total Tax Bill
Clifton Park	\$300,000	46.00	\$138,000	\$31.96	\$4,410
Halfmoon	\$300,000	47.50	\$142,500	\$30.95	\$4,410
Malta	\$300,000	100.00	\$300,000	\$14.70	\$4,410
Waterford	\$300,000	84.00	\$252,000	\$17.50	\$4,410
Ballston	\$300,000	76.25	\$228,750	\$19.28	\$4,410
Stillwater	\$300,000	76.00	\$228,000	\$19.34	\$4,410

*Full market value is the estimated potential selling price of a home.

**Equalization rates used above are the 2022-23 equalization rates. These rates are established by the NYS Office of Real Property Services and used to determine the percentage of the total tax levy each town must pay. They are usually finalized in August.

***Taxable assessed value is the amount used in calculating the actual tax bill once the equalization rates have been applied.

State-required School District Budget Notice

State law requires school districts to distribute this state-designed budget notice to district residents after the public hearing, but no later than six days prior to the school budget vote.

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Overall budget proposal	Budget for the 2022-23 school year	Budget proposed for the 2023-24 school year	Contingency budget for the 2023-24 school year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$194,356,052	\$206,611,477	\$202,990,933
Increase/Decrease for the 2023-24 School Year		\$12,255,425	\$8,634,881
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		6.31%	4.44%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		8.0%	
A. Proposed tax levy to support the total budgeted amount	\$133,333,097	\$136,953,651	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	NA	NA	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable**	NA	NA	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A+B+C-D)	\$133,333,097	\$136,953,651	\$133,333,097
F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$3,682,656	\$3,510,033	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$129,650,441	\$133,443,618	
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)	\$129,650,441	\$133,443,618	
I. Difference: (G-H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval (See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)**	\$0	\$0	
Administrative component	\$17,688,747	\$18,479,165	\$18,155,347
Program component	\$152,962,337	\$162,781,855	\$159,929,356
Capital component	\$23,704,968	\$25,350,457	\$24,906,230

** Separate Propositions	
Description	Amount
Bus Purchase	\$2,450,646
Capital Project	\$55,000,000

* CONTINGENT BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS: The contingent budget assumes no increase in the tax levy over the 2022-23 budget. Budget cuts would be pro-rated across all three component parts of the budget. Non-contingency items would be removed including: student supplies, community use of facilities, certain equipment purchases and certain non-contractual salary increases. In addition to this limitation, the percentage of the administrative component for the contingency budget cannot be greater than the percentage from the previous year.

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings

Average Basic STAR Tax Savings for 2023-24 Budget Proposal is \$583.

Maximum Allowable Tax Levy Limit

Using an 8-step formula developed by the Office of the State Comptroller, Shen's 2023-24 maximum allowable tax levy limit is 3.15%. The proposed 2023-24 budget is below the NYS tax cap at 2.72%.

Okte students celebrated International Day where students and their families came together to share all about their cultures.



Proposed 2023-24 Expenditures

Budgeted 2022-23 Proposed 2023-24

Program Budget: 78.79% of Budget

Instruction	\$93,866,892	\$100,333,319
Pupil Transportation	11,593,793	12,550,285
Central Svc & Legal Costs	1,408,405	1,603,416
In-service Training	636,247	626,086
Community Service	17,650	17,650
Transfers	600,000	600,000
Employee Benefits	44,839,350	47,051,099
TOTAL	\$152,962,337	\$162,781,855

Capital Budget: 12.27% of Budget

Operation & Maintenance	\$11,115,386	\$12,389,664
Tax Certiorari	100,000	100,000
Debt Service-Building/Buses	9,500,000	9,500,000
Employee Benefits	2,989,582	3,360,793
TOTAL	\$23,704,968	\$25,350,457

Administrative Budget: 8.94% of Budget

Board of Education	\$53,837	\$62,385
Central Administration	504,139	519,771
Finance	1,295,408	1,424,869
Personnel/Records Mgmt	665,265	689,576
Central Svc & Legal Costs	835,383	835,312
Insurance	720,038	720,038
Public Information	137,664	150,911
Curriculum Development	350,806	426,794
School Supervision	5,927,377	6,213,195
Research/Evaluation/Planning	607,606	612,246
Employee Benefits	5,390,531	5,601,321
BOCES Administration/Facilities	1,193,193	1,215,247
Unclassified	7,500	7,500
TOTAL	\$17,688,747	\$18,479,165

Total Expenditures:

\$194,356,052 \$206,611,477



Skano first graders play math games to learn addition facts.

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Proposed 2023-24 Revenues

Budgeted 2022-23 Proposed 2023-24

Property Taxes: 66.29% of Budget

Property Taxes	\$133,333,097	\$136,953,651
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State Aid: 31.55% of Budget

Foundation Aid	\$36,952,452	\$45,194,840
Excess Cost Aid	1,630,169	1,437,331
Instructional Material Aid	937,511	929,002
BOCES Aid	2,561,008	2,841,201
Building Aid	4,171,975	3,974,098
Transportation Aid	10,320,366	10,702,874
Other State Aid	100,000	100,000
TOTAL	\$56,673,481	\$65,179,346

Other Items: .76% of Budget

Interest Earnings	\$35,000	\$300,000
Tuitions & Admissions	154,175	168,675
Rentals, Sales, Refunds & Other	400,000	392,250
Federal Reimbursements	200,000	200,000
Other Tax Items	650,299	507,555
TOTAL	\$1,439,474	1,568,480

Fund Balance: 1.41% of Budget

Appropriated	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Re-approp. Employee Benefits	660,000	660,000
Use of Retirement Reserve	750,000	750,000
TOTAL	\$2,910,000	\$2,910,000

Total Revenues:

\$194,356,052 \$206,611,477

Naomi Hoffman, President
Jason DiGianni Vice Pres.
Petra Holden
Gusta Miller
Stacey Pflomm
Deanna Stephenson
Tom Templeton
Superintendent
Dr. L. Oliver Robinson
Editor
Kelly Barclay

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The complete budget complies with the regulations set by the NYS Education Department requiring school districts to include salary information as well as student achievement. Copies are available on Shen's website (shenet.org), in the main office of each school and at the district office. If you have questions, please call the superintendent's office at 881-0610.

When/where is the vote?

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

7am to 9pm

Gowana Middle School Gym

Who can vote?

You are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years or older, and have been a Shenendehowa district resident for at least 30 days prior to the vote. No pre-registration is required. Official personal identification with photo is required at the polls. It is a crime to falsify votes (i.e. voting twice or using false identification).

Can't get to the polls?

Absentee ballots may be used by any resident who will not be available to come to the campus to vote. They are available at the district office, 5 Chelsea Place, Clifton Park. For information, call the district clerk at 881-0623. By law, absentee ballots are mailed to any resident who is certified by Saratoga County as disabled. If you are disabled and did not receive one, please call the district clerk's office. Ballots must be returned to the district clerk no later than 5 pm on May 16.

Directions to the polls

Gowana Middle School is located on Shen's main campus. Enter the campus using the Route 146 entrance and then bear left. Gowana is on the right. Follow the signs to the entrance of the polling place.

What's on the ballot?

Proposition 1

A \$206,611,477 million budget for 2023-24 that includes a spending increase of 6.31% (\$12,255,425). The proposed budget is a tax levy of 2.72% which is below the New York State tax cap levy limit. The estimated true value tax rate would increase by an estimated 0.70%. A property value estimated at \$300,000 would see an estimated tax bill increase of \$32.

Proposition 2

\$55 million Capital Project to renovate 5 Maxwell Drive facility into an Early Learning Center using \$3 million dollars in reserve funds, a 30-year bonding spread for the smoothing of debt, and approximately \$25 million in State Building Aid, it is estimated that the tax impact of this project will be approximately twenty-five cents (\$0.25) per thousand of tax assessed value per year.

Proposition 3

Purchase four electric buses, one level 3 charger, and five standard buses to replace aging buses. The purchase cost for all of the items will not exceed \$2,450,646.

Proposition 4

Two seats on the seven-member Board of Education are up for election. Each seat carries a three-year term. The incumbents are Naomi Hoffman and Gusta Miller. The incumbents are running unopposed.