



UNATEGO

District Newsletter

www.unatego.org

Volume 37, Number 2

Budget Issue, May 2022

2022-2023 Proposed Budget Superintendent's Message on Behalf of the Unatego Board of Education

As I write this message, I look back on how far we have come since March 2020. Compared to the past two school years, 2021-2022 was a return to "near-normal." Other than a couple of days of fully remote operation, we were able to stay open for full-time in-person instruction all year. We had concerts, musicals, and full seasons of interscholastic athletics culminating in a MAC first—League Championships in the same season for both our Boys' and Girls' Basketball teams. Although we continue to employ layered mitigations to reduce the risk of in-school COVID exposure, we are planning on finishing this year as close to "normal" as possible, with our students looking forward to year-end events like field trips, concerts, the prom, and graduation. We are also looking forward to the start of the recently approved capital project.

We are truly grateful to the district voters for their support of the much-needed project last May and although at this time we are still awaiting final approval from the State Education Department, teams from the school have been meeting with architects and engineers regularly since last summer to finalize the scope and timing of construction over the next several years. All necessary paperwork and drawings for Phase One of the project have been submitted to the State Education Department, and we are awaiting approval which is expected sometime in June. Phase I work includes major renovations to the Jr-Sr High School Auditorium and locker rooms, new high-efficiency propane boilers and HVAC systems, and improvements to the athletic fields. Electrical and plumbing upgrades will be completed at Unatego Elementary, and a new lift installed at the Bus Garage. We are hoping to start some work in August 2022 and hope to have Phase I completed by the fall of 2023.

We remain committed to providing our students with a first-rate education while keeping costs to the community as low as possible. Although the above-

mentioned capital project will be completed at no local cost, many other expenses continue to rise. As I write this, inflation is running near 9% annually, and costs related to school operation are up substantially. Energy costs, particularly fuel oil, gasoline, and diesel fuel are rising, as are materials and supplies; health insurance costs are also up significantly. After three years of zero or near zero tax increases, we are asking voters to approve a budget for the school year with a 1.48% increase in the tax levy (well under our 2.7% cap) to help us meet our rising costs.

Please come out and vote on the 2022-23 school year budget and for a candidate to fill a school board seat on May 17th from noon until 9:00 p.m. at the District Office, located at the Jr-Sr High School. If you have any questions about the budget or any other school-related matter, you may contact me, Business Manager Patti Loker, or any board member.

Thank you for your support,
Dr. David S. Richards
Superintendent of Schools

PUBLIC HEARING

Monday, May 2, 2022

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

May 9, 2022 6:00 p.m. at the Jr-Sr High School

May 10, 2022 6:00 p.m. at the Unatego Elem. School

BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

12:00 Noon to 9:00 p.m.

Unatego Middle/High School

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT OPERATIONS

The financial support for district-operated programs and services are substantially derived from state sources and the property tax. The proposed tax levy increase is 1.48% for 2022-2023.

Object	2021-2022 Budget	2022-2023 Proposed Budget
NYS Aid	14,629,873	15,221,230
Property Tax Levy	7,420,915	7,530,745
Other Revenue	377,500	375,800
Use of Reserves	240,000	149,832
Fund Balance	625,000	525,000
Total Anticipated Revenues	\$ 23,293,288	\$ 23,802,607

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

3-Part Appropriations Summary			
Category	2021-22 Amount	2022-23 Amount	% of Budget
Administrative	\$3,040,221	\$3,089,514	13.0%
Program	\$16,512,636	\$16,782,933	70.5%
Capital	\$3,740,431	\$3,930,160	16.5%
Total	\$23,293,288	\$23,802,607	100%

Administrative: The Administrative component of the budget includes expenditures for central administrative and support salaries and related costs, Board of Education expenses, legal expenses, business office expenses, and insurance.

Program: The program component of the budget includes expenses relating to instruction, including salaries, benefits, textbooks, supplies, transportation, and athletics.

Capital: The Capital component of the budget includes custodial salaries and benefits, building maintenance costs and debt service costs.

COMPARISON OF PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

2021-2022 Budget	2022-2023 Proposed Budget	% Increase
\$23,293,288	\$23,802,607	2.19%

Object	2022-2023 Proposed Budget	2021-2022 Budget
Salaries	\$8,593,235	\$8,341,397
Benefits	5,821,391	5,669,667
Equipment	98,000	105,000
Contractual Items	1,286,743	1,359,391
Materials & Supplies	715,132	758,574
Tuition	213,000	249,000
Textbooks	47,823	46,000
BOCES Services	4,714,133	4,477,509
Debt Service	2,263,150	2,236,750
Inter-fund transfers	50,000	50,000
Total General Fund Expenditures	\$23,802,607	\$23,293,288

**ADDITIONAL BUDGET INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON
OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.UNATEGO.ORG**

BOARD CANDIDATES BIOGRAPHIES

One member for the Board of Education of the Unatego Central School District is to be elected for one three-year term most recently held by Jay McDermott whose term expires at this time. The candidate for this position is Jilene Nordberg.

Jilene Nordberg

My name is Jilene Nordberg, and I am running for the Unatego Central School Board of Education. I am a lifelong resident of Unadilla, where I currently live with my husband and two children. I graduated from Unatego in 2000. I received my Bachelor's Degree from Hartwick College and my Master's Degree and Certificate of Advanced Study in School Counseling from SUNY Oneonta. I have been a School Counselor at Afton Central School for the past 16 years.

I am excited about the opportunity to serve the Unatego students, parents, staff, and community members on the Board of Education. I believe that smaller districts like ours can offer a great education to our students, in addition to maintaining strong extracurricular and athletic programs. My sincere interest is in maintaining and creating opportunities for our students through creativity and thinking outside of the box. The past two years have been a great challenge for all of us, especially our young people, and they deserve the absolute best that we have to offer them. I look forward to being a representative for the community and the district that will always seek to put our students first. Thank you!

DISTRICT'S BOND RATING UPGRADED BY STANDARD AND POORS

Earlier this year, S&P Global Ratings issued a report announcing that the district's long-term and underlying bond rating was raised from A- to A.

According to the report, S&P recognized that the district had made meaningful positive changes after several years of negative operational results and excessive use of fund balance; these included conservative budgeting and closing a building. These changes resulted in successful positive operating results over the last five years which saw an increase in the district's available reserves.

The district's financial advisor, R.G. Timbs, Inc., estimated that the improved bond rating will save the district approximately \$215,000 over the life of the bonds used to help pay for the new capital project.

The full S&P report can be viewed on the District's website www.unatego.org.





Unatego Central School District
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Otego, New York 13825

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BOARD OF EDUCATION

James Salisbury, President
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 David Clapper
 Matthew Downey
 Janette Johnson
 Byron McMichael
 Cindy O'Hara

CURRENT RESIDENT OR

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. David S. Richards

ECRWSS

DISTRICT CLERK

Sheila Nolan

POSTAL PATRON

BUSINESS MANAGER

Patricia Loker

**Annual District Budget Vote, Election of Member
 to the Board of Education**

Unatego Jr./Sr. High School
2641 State Highway 7
Otego, NY

Tuesday, May 17, 2022
Hours of Voting: 12:00-9:00 p.m.

Voting Qualifications

For the May 17, 2022 Budget Referendum

In order to vote, a person must fulfill all of the following requirements:

1. Be a citizen of the United States.
2. Be at least 18 years of age.
3. Be a resident within the district for a period of at least 30 days preceding the meeting at which he/she offers to vote.

**Applications for absentee ballots may be obtained at the District Clerk's office
 from 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. The District Clerk can be contacted at 607-988-5038.**