



Enlarged City School District

# Budget 2020-2021 PROPOSAL

Each year, the school budget process becomes more and more difficult due to a number of factors that have affected the state, local, and national levels. This year is especially difficult due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the unknown effects on the state and local economy. The proposed 2020-21 budget has a modest 1.09% increase in the tax levy with a slight increase in the overall budget. The Board of Education kept the budget at the same level for the five previous years by using reserves. That practice is no longer an option as our reserves are dwindling. The only way to balance our expenses with revenue has been to reduce expenditures

across all areas of the budget as expenses continue to rise faster than revenue.

This year, we began this budget process with the goal of eliminating the use of reserve accounts to balance the budget. We accomplished that by cutting \$1.76 million in expenses and, as promised, balanced the budget without the use of reserves. While we reduced costs in all areas, we remained mindful of student needs. We are, after all, here to educate children in the most fiscally responsible manner possible.

Due to the governor's Executive Order, the school budget vote and election is being conducted using only absentee ballots. Please encourage everyone to take advantage of their right to vote. If you did not receive an absentee ballot, or need additional ballots, please call 758-4101. I want to thank the community for their continued support of our efforts, especially in these difficult times. Thank you!

Michael J. Hoose, Superintendent

**YOUR VOTE COUNTS.  
6.9.20  
VOTE BY ABSENTEE BALLOT**

Visit our website at [www.cortlandschools.org](http://www.cortlandschools.org)

1.2%  
BUDGET  
INCREASE

1.09%  
TAX LEVY  
INCREASE

## Budget Vote

by Absentee Ballot  
June 9, 2020



## At-A-Glance

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**PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING • DATE: Tuesday, May 26, 2020 • TIME: 6:30 p.m. Hosted on Zoom, Link on [www.cortlandschools.org](http://www.cortlandschools.org) •  
A meeting of the Board of Education to present the proposed 2020-21 budget to the public.**

## Proposition #1 – 2020-2021 Budget

That the Board of Education of the Cortland Enlarged City School District be authorized to expend the sums set forth in the amount of \$50,170,001 and to levy the necessary tax therefore.

**What this means:** This yearly budget \$50,170,001, meaning a 1.2% budget increase for 2020-2021 and a modest 1.09% tax levy increase.

## Proposition #2 – BUS PURCHASE



Shall the bond resolution adopted by the Board of Education of the Cortland Enlarged City School District on May 11, 2020 authorizing the acquisition of student transport vehicles, including all necessary furnishings, fixtures and equipment, and the expenditure of a total sum not to exceed \$529,000, which is estimated to be the total maximum cost thereof, and further authorizing the issuance of \$529,000 serial bonds to pay the cost thereof; providing that the sum of \$529,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable real property of such School District and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law; providing that, in anticipation of said tax, obligations of the School District, including installment purchase contracts, may be issued; pledging the faith and credit of said School District for the payment of the principal of and interest on said bonds; determining that the period of probable usefulness thereof and maximum maturity of the serial bonds therefor is five years; delegating the power to authorize and sell bond anticipation notes and to fix the details of and to sell serial bonds; containing an estoppel clause and providing for the publication of an estoppel notice, be approved?

If the proposition is approved, the district will replace student transportation vehicles, through a purchase program. The anticipated costs of \$529,000 is eligible for approximately \$464,760 in state aid reimbursement. Replacing older, heavily used vehicles that are utilized for student transport, the proposed purchases are part of a five year replacement plan designed to ensure our students are transported on buses that meet the latest safety standards. Eventually, the plan will preserve the resale value of our buses. All large buses are part of a warranty plan that will reduce parts purchases and repair expenses.

## Proposition #3 – STUDENT MEMBER TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Shall a High School Senior student who has attended the Cortland High School for at least two years be added to the Board of Education as an ex-officio student member as permitted by New York Education Law § 2502 (10)?

**What this means:** A High School Senior can be appointed to be a non-voting member of the Board of Education.

## Proposition #4 – SALE OF PARKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Shall the Board of Education be authorized to sell to the City of Cortland the building, grounds and improvements known as the former Parker Elementary School, being further known as Tax Map Parcel 86.49-01-02.000, containing 2.30 acres, and Tax Map Parcel 86.49-01.000 containing 0.33 acre for a purchase price of \$91,000?

The District is offering to sell the school to the City of Cortland for \$91. Essentially, the aid we are receiving as revenue will then only be reduced by \$91 (every dollar of the sale). New York State will reduce our building aid by one dollar for each dollar we receive in the sale.

Essentially we will receive the same revenue either from the sale proceeds or from NYS in building aid. Based on this information, selling the building for this amount makes sense for our tax payers and our community.



## Proposition #5 – CORTLAND FREE LIBRARY

Shall the Cortland Free Library tax previously approved by the voters of the District be increased from the current \$392,298 to \$401,024 beginning July 1, 2020, to be raised by a tax upon the taxable property of the District in each year for general library purposes and to continue from year to year until modified or repealed by a subsequent vote?

**What this means:** Funding for the library passes through the District but has no impact on school taxes or finances. The library determines the amount of the proposition.

# VOTING WITH ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Pursuant to Executive Order 202.26 issued by NYS Governor Andrew Cuomo on Friday May 1, the annual school budget vote and Board of Education election has been scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2020. All absentee ballots must be received by the Board of Education by 5 p.m. on June 9, 2020.

The qualified voters of the School District shall be entitled to vote exclusively by absentee ballot due to the prevalence and community spread of COVID-19. All qualified voters shall have access to an absentee ballot with a postage paid return envelope. A qualified voter is a US citizen, 18 years of age, a resident of the District for at least 30 days prior to the vote, and not disqualified by any reason set forth in NYS Election Law §5-106. Anyone who meets the definition of "qualified voter" but has not registered to vote, must do so to receive an absentee ballot. A qualified voter may register prior to the election. For information on how to register, contact the District Clerk.

## Auditorium Renovation Project

The transformation of our auditorium into a performing arts center is almost completed. The project was approved by voters in December of 2017 and work is just wrapping up this spring. Here are some highlights of the new space:

- The roof over the stage was raised over 15 feet to allow room for proper lighting and rigging.
- All of the seats were renovated and reinstalled.
- The interior ceiling was removed, reinforced, and replaced with a modern, acoustically and aesthetically superior design.
- The sound and lighting systems were upgraded and improved.
- The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems were replaced.
- A handicap-accessible seating section was established on one side of the auditorium.

## Barry Primary School Repointing Project

A small project is going on at Barry Primary School. The brick walls on the exterior of the building have shown weathering and aging. This summer, we will be repointing the mortar in between the bricks. This will repair the exterior walls and improve the structural integrity and appearance of the building. This work is being paid for with the State's \$100K annual project allowance. The 2020-2021 \$100K will be used for these repairs at Barry.

The number of students who graduated in June of 2019 from CECSD with an Associates Degree

14

## Mission Statement

CECSD values all community members as partners in creating a positive learning environment for all students. This environment prepares all students to reach their fullest potential in becoming life-long learners, and successful, contributing members of the society in which they live.

75%

of Cortland High School Varsity Athletic Teams, have over a 90% GPA, which qualifies them as a NYSPHSAA as "School of Excellence"



Budget Vote  
June 9, 2020  
Absentee Ballot

# Investing In Our Students' Futures



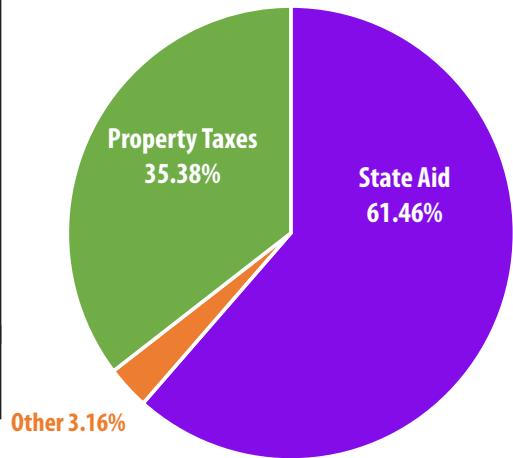
## How is the \$50,170,001 utilized?

	2019-20	2020-21
<b>INSTRUCTION</b>	\$26,153,083	\$26,410,741
<b>EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</b>	\$13,598,688	\$13,527,192
<b>OPERATIONS/MAINTENANCE</b>	\$2,817,048	\$2,765,501
<b>DEBT SERVICE/TRANSFERS</b>	\$4,439,524	\$4,893,146
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	\$1,159,203	\$1,193,794
<b>DISTRICT SUPPORT</b>	\$1,409,341	\$1,379,627
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$49,576,887</b>	<b>\$50,170,001</b>

## Sources of Revenue

	2019-20 Budget	2019-20 Percent	2020-21 Proposed	2020-21 Percent	Dollar Change
State Aid	\$29,702,387	60.0%	\$30,835,77	61.46%	\$1,133,384
Other Revenue	\$1,550,650	3.1%	\$1,583,150	3.16%	\$32,500
Reserves	\$764,171	1.5%	\$0	0.0%	-\$764,171
Property Taxes	\$17,559,679	35.4%	\$17,751,080	35.38%	\$191,401
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$49,576,887</b>		<b>\$50,170,001</b>		<b>\$593,114</b>

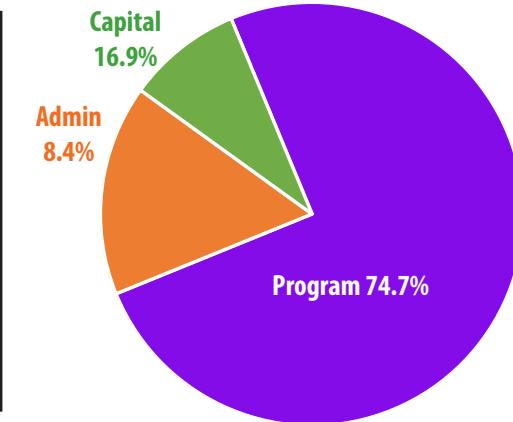
2020-21 Revenue Summary



## Three Part Budget Summary

	2019-20 Budget	2019-20 Percent	2020-21 Proposed	2020-21 Percent	Dollar Change
Administration	\$4,368,143	8.8%	\$4,227,971	8.4%	-\$140,172
Program	\$37,206,691	75.1%	\$37,454,236	74.7%	\$247,545
Capital	\$8,002,053	16.1%	\$8,487,794	16.9%	\$485,741
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$49,576,887</b>		<b>\$50,170,001</b>		<b>\$593,114</b>

2020-21 Spending Summary



## Reminder: Tax Bill Arrives by 9/1

Tax Bills will arrive by September 1, 2020. The first installment will need to be paid by September 30th and the second installment is due in February 2021. Most school districts begin tax collection as of September 1, 2020. This allows time to ensure the property tax rolls are available and the bills can be prepared.

## Q & A

### What happens if the budget is defeated?

If CECSD adopts a contingent budget, the budget will be reduced by \$191,401 for 2020-2021. The tax levy will remain the same as 2019-2020.

### What is the Three Part Budget composed of?

#### Three-Part Budget

School districts must, by law, divide their budgets into three parts: Administrative, Capital and Program. Each year districts must show how much each part has changed in relation to the whole budget. The three parts are as follows:

#### Administrative Budget Component

These expenditures include office and administrative costs, salaries and benefits for certified school administrators, legal fees, insurance, school board expenses, the business office, and recruitment.

#### Program Budget Component

This portion includes salaries and benefits of teachers and staff that directly work with students daily, such as instructional costs including supplies, technology, textbooks, co-curricular activities, athletics, and transportation.

#### Capital Budget Component

This includes all school bus purchases, debt service on buildings, tax certiorari and court-ordered costs, facility costs (including salaries and benefits of the custodial and maintenance staff), service contracts, maintenance supplies and equipment, and utilities.

#### What is a “tax levy limit” and is CECSD below its limit?

The tax levy limit is the highest allowable tax levy a school district can propose, for which only the approval of a simple majority of voters (50 percent plus one) is required. The limit is calculated using a multi-step formula that takes into account any allowable exclusions (such as pension costs and capital expenditures). Any proposed tax levy above this limit requires budget approval by a super majority of voters (60 percent). The CECSD Board of Education has proposed a budget that includes a tax levy below its limit. This requires passage by a simple majority of voters.

#### How is the tax levy different from a tax rate?

The tax levy is the total amount of money the District raises from local taxpayers. The tax rate is the amount of tax residents pay per \$1,000 of property value. The 2020-21 budget proposes a tax levy increase of 1.09%.

#### How is my tax bill calculated?

Individual tax bills are calculated using:

- The assessed value of each property
- Any applicable exemptions (e.g. current homeowner STAR)
- The current school tax rate

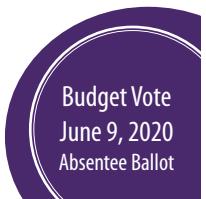
#### Example of a tax bill

If my property has an assessed value of \$70,000, and the projected tax rate is \$17.27 per \$1,000 of assessed value my tax bill will be approximately \$1,209 not including exemptions.

Formula:

$$(\text{Tax rate/thousand}) \times \text{assessed value} \\ (\$17.27/\$1,000) \times \$70,000 = \$1,209$$

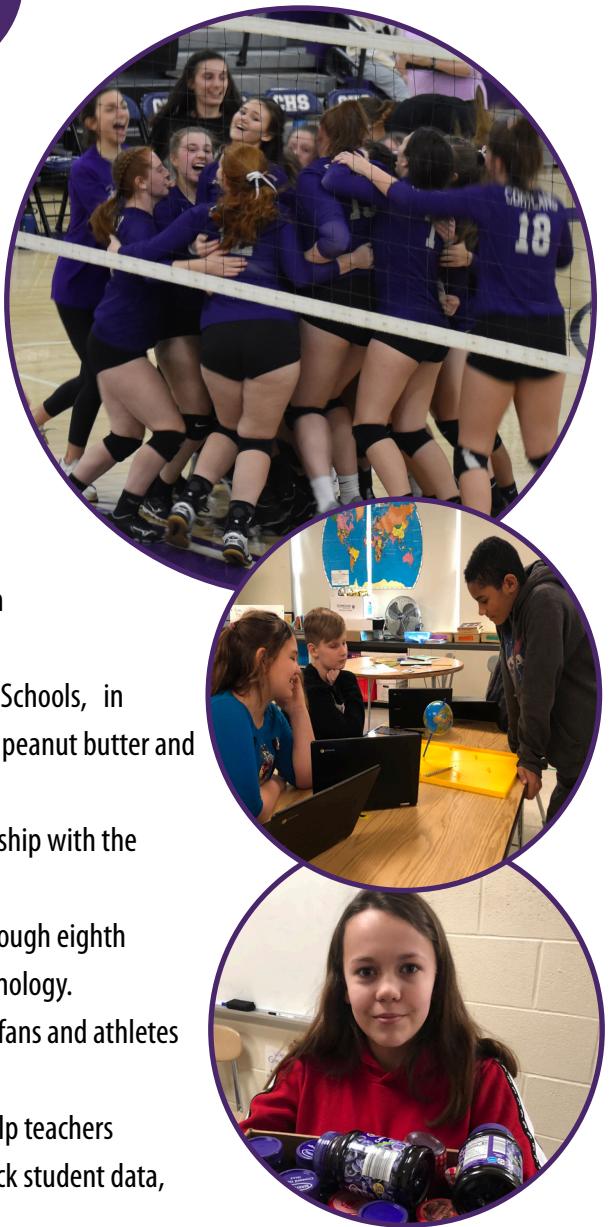
Over 75% of K-6  
students participate  
in band, chorus and  
orchestra!



# DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

## District Highlights

1. This is the second year all students, grades K-12, have breakfast and lunch provided for them due to the District's participation in the Community Eligibility Program.
2. The Auditorium Project is on schedule to be finished on time. After decades of performing in an obsolete and dated space, our students will now have access to perform in a state of the art performance space.
3. The character education program, The Positivity Project, has been implemented in all schools across the District.
4. For the first time in nearly 30 years, the Varsity Girls Volleyball team won the Section III Class A Championship in February.
5. Students at Barry Primary, Smith Intermediate and Randall Middle Schools, in collaboration with Cortland Kiwanis Club, collected over 300 jars of peanut butter and jelly to donate to local food pantries.
6. The high school journalism class publishes the CHS Voice in partnership with the Cortland Standard.
7. Aging laptops have been replaced with Chromebooks in second through eighth grade in order to ensure our students have adequate access to technology.
8. Wifi has been expanded beyond the classroom to include access to fans and athletes in the stadium and the exteriors of all schools.
9. Instructional Coaches were implemented at our K-6 buildings to help teachers follow the framework of our guaranteed and viable curriculum, track student data, and implement and improve teaching practices.
10. The Harmony Bridge program is in its third year at the Junior High and High School. The JH and HS Bands take their musical skills to the community and bring joy to the elderly population in senior care facilities.



## STAY CONNECTED

### FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR, CECSD will utilize several ways to keep in touch!

**SchoolTool** -- schooltool is a program that allows students and parents online access to personalized information about a student's academic program and progress. From student attendance to report cards and progress reports, schooltool will allow for better communication from school to home.

**SchoolMessenger** -- SchoolMessenger will allow CECSD and all of the schools within the District to send messages via phone and email to parents and staff, allowing you to stay up to date on school events, emergency situations, closings and delays, etc. Only parents, guardians, or anyone who is designated as an emergency point of contact will receive these notifications.

**Twitter, Facebook & Instagram**-- We will continue to use twitter, facebook and instagram to update the community on exciting things that are happening at CECSD. Our twitter accounts are: @CECSDistrict, @CECSD\_Athletics, @CECSD\_Music, @CECSD\_Theatre, @CECSD\_Art, @CECSD\_HS, @CECSD\_JH, @CECSD\_Randall, and @CECSD\_Smith, and @CECSD\_Barry. Our instagram accounts are: @CECSDistrict and @CECSD\_SH

# MEET THE BOARD OF ED CANDIDATES

The following candidates have submitted their names to run for one of two seats up for election on the CECSD Board of Education. For more information about the Board of Education, please visit our website at [www.cortlandschools.org/BOE](http://www.cortlandschools.org/BOE).



**Janet Griffin**— I have lived my entire life in the City of Cortland. I attended primary, secondary, and college in this community. I began substitute teaching in the Cortland Enlarged City School District in 1974. In 1976, I began my full time career at Randall Elementary School, teaching second grade and retired from there in 2008. I then worked part-time at the Cortland Junior Senior High School in Drop-Out Prevention. I left there in 2011 to become a school board member. I have been a member of the Board for the past nine years, serving as its Vice President for 3 years and the President for 3 years. As we enter school in the fall of 2020 we will be working with a new Superintendent. I would like to help in their transition to Cortland. I would truly appreciate your vote on June 9th.

**Doreen Hettich-Atkins**— My name is Doreen Hettich-Atkins and I've been a resident of the Cortland School District since 2009. I'm a single parent with 2 children: a 14 year-old currently in the junior high and a 2019 graduate. I work at Ithaca College as a senior administrator in the Division of Student Affairs and Campus Life. I have a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania and a Masters degree in psycho-educational processes from Temple University. I've also completed coursework toward a PhD in higher education administration from the University of Pennsylvania.

I'm excited to be considered for a position on the Board of Education. I've been involved with the district as a member of the task force charged with creating a guidance curriculum. In a previous district I was involved with the Board of Education on the community budget committee. My goal in running for school board is to work with the district to continue to improve school services and offerings for all members of the community, particularly those who may be underrepresented in this community (students and families of color, low income students and families, single parent families, and students with disabilities). I believe the school district does a fabulous job supporting the high achieving students and I would like to see us broaden that focus to ensure that all students are supported so that they can achieve their highest potential. Thank you for your consideration of my candidacy.



**Lori Megivern**— My goals, as an elected voice on the CECSD Board of Education, are to increase community pride by regaining Cortland's status as a premier NYS school district. I want the District's spending to be respectful of our financial realities, now more than ever. I would also like to ensure the school board is accessible to community members and their suggestions, and one way to do this is to continue to have meetings be accessible digitally.

**Lauren Mossotti-Kline**— As a Cortland resident of over 20 years and a parent of three school-aged children, I'm quite familiar with the school district at nearly every grade level. Growing up the daughter of a school teacher, I learned very early on to respect the significant roles educators play in all our lives. I've always approached my children's education in partnership with their teachers, recognizing it takes many of us to impact growing minds in a positive way. In recent years, I've engaged members of Cortland School's administration as well as the entire school board when I have had concerns or questions. Even in the best of circumstances, I believe we are better off exploring possibilities than settling for the status quo. When we challenge one another, we learn different points of view, develop empathy and understanding and engage in a conversation that helps us to grow – just like our students. Professionally, I am a writer and fundraising and communications consultant. I've both led and participated on many boards and firmly believe in the importance and power of clear and consistent communication, informing stakeholders and encouraging thoughtful dialogue that results in concrete action steps. While I recognize the path ahead for public education is uncertain during this time of pandemic, I am confident that as a member of the School Board I will serve as a dedicated voice for our community.



Budget Vote  
June 9, 2020  
Absentee Ballot

**Cortland Enlarged City School District**

Board of Education

1 Valley View Dr.

Cortland, NY 13045-3297

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
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Syracuse, NY  
Permit #4238

## BUDGET VOTE • June 9, 2020 • Absentee Ballot

### Vote by Absentee Ballot

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