

## **Clarence Bee Article – April 2021**

### **Clarence School District 2021-22 Budget**

Each April the Clarence School Board adopts the proposed budget for the next school year, which is then voted on by the community one month later. School budget adoption is one of the most demanding jobs a board takes on. The choices are difficult, and in the end, it boils down to maintaining a balance between protecting the core programs of a school district and respecting the impact of local property tax increases on the community. This year the process has been more certain because of school aid increases in the New York State budget and federal stimulus funds.

The Board of Education started the budget construction process for the 2021-22 school year with two goals, protect or enhance the core district programs and create a budget at the level of the tax cap. The \$89.5 million budget adopted on April 22<sup>nd</sup> met both of those goals.

The proposed budget will fully fund all core programs. We were able to balance the budget with an increase in school aid from New York State.

There are two major sources of school funding on the revenue side of the budget, property taxes and state School Aid. The recommended tax levy increase for 2021-22 is 2.97 percent, which is at the tax cap level. Tax levy increases in Clarence have been traditionally very low and the estimated increase for 2021-22 on a home valued at \$200,000 is \$54.

The district is also scheduled to receive grant dollars from the federal Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) and the American Rescue Plan (ARAP). The funds can be utilized over a four-year period to address learning loss and social/emotional needs through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. The plan for using the grant funds will be finalized by July 1, 2021.

The traditional proposition to finance purchasing ten replacement buses is on the ballot as are two seats for the Board of Education. Please look for our Annual Report to the Community, that will be mailed in a couple of weeks.

The budget vote will be held in-person on May 18, 2021, at the Clarence High School gymnasium. Polls are open from 7 am to 9 pm. Community members can request an absentee ballot for COVID-related or other reasons. The absentee ballot application is posted on our website.