



School Budget for 2020-21
Volume IV, No. 4

Dear Community Members, Families & Staff:

We understand the turmoil that our community is experiencing right now. While we do not know what the Fall will bring, we are committed to preparing a 2020-21 school budget that continues to maintain the “Vestal-standard-of-excellence” education for our students, while being fiscally responsible to our taxpayers. Our primary focus is our students, and we believe that this budget adopted by the Board of Education on May 12 continues to build momentum and support the knowledge and skills needed for 21st-century learning.

As a District, this year’s triumphs included a 2019 National Blue Ribbon School, a National Merit Finalist, seven Commended Students, continued recognition by the music community, 24 students awarded Regional Scholastic Art Awards, four students awarded Scholastic Writing Awards, five schools identified as NYS Recognition Schools and four additional Vestal teachers selected as NYS Master Teachers!

Along with these merits came the unprecedented challenges brought on by the Coronavirus. The pandemic arrived quickly, and when we first were directed to close our school buildings in March, we did not realize it would be the last time we would see

Continued on page 3



2020 Best Communities for Music Education

For the fourth year in a row, Vestal Schools’ Music Program has been selected as one of the Best Communities for Music Education by The NAMM Foundation!

School Budget Vote

How to Vote: By Absentee Ballot

In accordance with Executive Order 202.26, absentee ballots will be mailed by the District to qualified voters at the end of May. If you believe you should have received an absentee ballot but did not, please contact the District Clerk at 757-2211 or district-clerk@vestal.k12.ny.us.

Ballots Due: By 5 p.m., June 9, 2020

Completed ballots must be received by the District Clerk by 5 p.m. on June 9 to be canvassed.

Budget Snapshot	
Total Budget	\$80,582,859
Budget Increase	\$2,197,607
Total Tax Levy	\$48,596,537
Levy Increase <i>(over current year)</i>	2.17%
Maximum Allowable Levy Limit	\$48,596,537
Student Enrollment <i>(2019-20)</i>	3,394
Student Enrollment <i>(Projected for 2020-21)</i>	3,394

School Board Candidates:

There are three seats open on the Vestal Board of Education for three-year terms expiring in June 2023, and there are three eligible candidates on the ballot for these seats:

Linda Daino Sylvia Place Tony Turnbull

Please see their profiles, beginning on page 10.

Individuals seeking candidacy for the School Board must be registered to vote in Vestal CSD elections. Due to social distancing mandates as a result of the Novel Coronavirus pandemic, there will be no minimum threshold of petition signatures required for individuals to be placed on the ballot. Candidates will be listed alphabetically.

Definition of Qualified Voter:

A person shall be entitled to vote in the District's 2020 Annual Meeting and Election who is:

1. A registered voter;
2. A citizen of the United States;
3. 18 years of age;
4. A resident within the District for a period of 30 days preceding June 9, 2020; and
5. No person shall have the right to register for or vote who would not be qualified to register for or vote in an election in accordance with the provisions of Section 5-106 of the Election Law.

Date of Budget Hearing:

6 p.m., Tuesday, May 26, 2020 via Zoom. See the District's website, www.vestal.k12.ny.us, for more information... The Zoom link will be posted on that date.

Questions?

Contact the District Clerk at 607-757-2211 or districtclerk@vestal.k12.ny.us

Photos on cover:

Row 1: Tioga Hills second-graders Hannah Purdy and Emma Passante with VHS sophomore Olivia Thomas on Red Ribbon Day; VMS sixth-graders Canyon Kalina, Anthony Mazzeo, Sam Ciaravino and Dominik Weston meet up during Orientation.

Row 2: GLE Reading Specialist Tammy Wanck lends a hand to Glenwood third-grader Aidan Ersan who, in turn, is helping Angelo, a Kindergarten student, with a project in the STEAM room; VMS seventh-grader Ryleigh Dando practices with the Vestal Marching Band in Hoover Stadium; Adrian, a Vestal Hills' Kindergarten, makes a new friend at Elderwood Village during his class' Thanksgiving visit.

Letter to Community Members *continued from cover*

our students in person this school year. On May 1, Governor Cuomo announced that all schools in New York State would remain closed through the end of the school year. We know that this decision has caused a great deal of concern and disappointment for our students, staff, and families.

Yet, our Golden Bear team of administrators, teachers, food service staff, bus drivers, IT techs, custodians and more stepped up to meet the challenges. With a very short turn-around, we committed to support our students' continuity of learning with online resources. We provided the technology for remote learning. And we fed those students who needed the continued nutritional support received through school meals. For the community, our middle school team provided meal kits for families who needed them. Our teachers and students sewed hundreds of masks for those on the front lines of this pandemic. Our school resource officers not only ferried Chromebooks and meals, but made wellness checks on our students and their families unable to leave their homes. We are so very proud of each and every one who has gone above and beyond to make a difficult situation bearable!

Next comes the process of safely moving forward, together. Budgeting is a year-round process. Our team of educators, along with our School Board, are very committed to making careful decisions that take student programs and staffing levels into consideration when building our budgets. As always, this budget considers the needs of all of our stakeholders, and we are excited about the great opportunities we are able to provide our students. As a community, you have been very supportive of our efforts to make our classrooms safe and well-equipped so that our students are engaged and enthusiastic about learning.

As indicated on page 2, our Budget Hearing will be conducted virtually on Tuesday, May 26. It will begin at 6 p.m., and further information on how to "attend" will be provided on the District website. The annual School Budget Vote and Board of Education Election will occur by absentee ballot, and completed ballots are due back by June 9. Once again, thank you for your patience, understanding and flexibility during this challenge. We will get through this together, and we hope you and your families stay well!

Sincerely,



Mario Nunes
School Board President



Jeffrey J. Ahearn
Superintendent



From the top; School Resource Officers T.J. Serkiz, Michelle Tuetken and Conor Talbut made the initial deliveries of Chromebooks to Vestal students. Please note, this photo was taken before new guidance was issued regarding the use of facemasks.

Ingrid Peters, VHS Food Service, and Deb Peterson, GLE Food Service, prepare to hand out Grab & Go meals on April 22. As of May 15, over 54,000 meals have been distributed since March 16.

Grace Yoon (shown), along with Daniel and Seoyeon Park, have made and donated about 1,100 masks to area nursing homes! Photo courtesy of Bora Kim.

School bus drivers Tammy Harman and Walt Schlundt helped deliver 1,100 Chromebooks lent to students for remote learning during this closure.

PROP 1

Proposition 1 is for the approval of the proposed 2020-21 spending plan in the amount of **\$80,252,859**. The Commissioner of Education issued Regulation 170.8, which requires all school districts in New York State to present their budget information in accordance with a prescribed format. This newsletter follows that format, showing the total proposed expenditure budget in three parts - *Program, Administrative and Capital* components.

In addition, school districts are required to provide an estimate of debt service payments and an estimate of New York State aid displayed as a percentage of the proposed expenditure budget. On the following pages, you will find the school district's proposed 2020-21 expenditure budget presented in accordance with this regulation.

Program - 74.4%

Budget Function	Description	2019-20 Budget	Proposed 2020-21 Budget
Instructional	Program funding	\$37,784,892	\$39,137,743
Health Services	Health services, including school nurses.	\$ 537,571	\$ 560,727
Pupil Transportation	Costs for student transportation (except buses; see Proposition #2, page 9.)	\$ 2,316,152	\$ 2,507,847
Legal	Fees associated with student services.	\$ 33,167	\$ 34,139
Employee Benefits	Retirement, Social Security, Workers Compensation, insurance, etc. for instructional and support staff.	\$17,036,845	\$17,615,374
Interfund Transfers		\$ 201,000	\$ 101,000
Total		\$57,909,627	\$59,956,830

Capital - 15.4%

The Capital component supports and maintains the district's physical infrastructure.

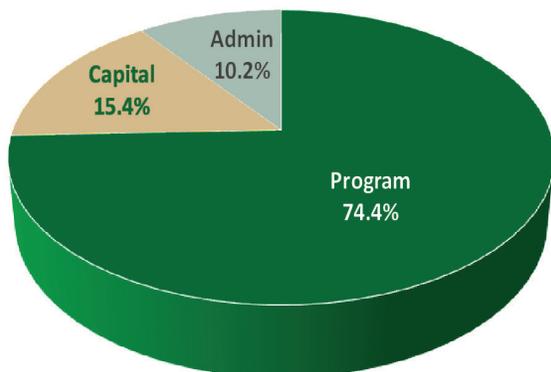
Budget Function	Description	2019-20 Budget	Proposed 2020-21 Budget
Operation of Plant	Includes salaries, utilities, environmental programs, furniture replacement and trash removal.	\$4,796,961	\$4,762,597
Employee Benefits	Retirement, Social Security, Workers Compensation, insurance, etc. for custodial and maintenance staff.	\$1,301,921	\$1,328,319
Debt Service	Principal and interest for school district debt and borrowing.	\$5,746,104	\$6,207,955
Interfund Transfers		\$ 576,000	\$ 100,000
Total		\$12,420,986	\$12,398,871

Administrative - 10.2%

Budget Function	Description	2019-20 Budget	Proposed 2020-21 Budget
Board of Education	Expenses for the school board, district clerk, election supplies and services.	\$ 42,144	\$ 42,383
Chief School Administrator	Salaries for superintendent and clerical staff, as well as supplies, memberships and conferences.	\$ 236,186	\$ 244,805
Business	Salaries for assistant superintendent for finance, operations & personnel, as well as administrative costs, public information and records management.	\$1,738,421	\$1,788,421
Personnel	Salaries for personnel office staff, as well as legal services, supplies, equipment, contractual and BOCES services.	\$ 404,802	\$ 413,059
Central Services	Data processing/computer services, BOCES data processing, central receiving, printing and mailings.	\$1,163,732	\$1,276,255
Curriculum Development and Supervision	Salaries for assistant superintendent for instruction, instructional building administrators, coordinators, directors and clerical support.	\$2,465,618	\$2,437,990
Employee Benefits	Retirement, Social Security, Workers' Compensation, insurance, etc. for administrative and support staff.	\$2,003,736	\$2,024,245
Total		\$8,054,639	\$8,227,158

Summary of Expenditures

Budget Component	2019-20 Budget	2020-21 Proposed Budget	Difference
Program	\$57,909,627	\$59,956,830	\$2,047,203
Capital	\$12,420,986	\$12,398,871	(\$22,115)
Administrative	\$ 8,054,639	\$ 8,227,158	\$172,519
TOTAL:	\$78,385,252	\$80,582,859	\$2,197,607



Estimated New York State Aid as a percentage of Expenditure Budget = **33.3%**

Revenues

	2019-20 Budget	2020-21 Proposed Budget
Fund Balance for Property Tax Reductions	\$ 1,976,000	\$ 1,500,000
Real Property Tax (Includes STAR)	\$47,564,180	\$48,596,537
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$ 1,212,758	\$ 1,451,050
State Aid	\$26,019,534	\$26,837,538
Other Revenue	\$ 1,612,780	\$ 1,460,982
Appropriated Use of Reserves	-	\$ 736,752
TOTAL	\$78,385,252	\$80,582,859

Small Capital Improvement Project

Replacement of Building Controls at Vestal High School.
 This small capital project will not exceed \$100,000.



Property Tax Report Card

New York State law and the New York State Commissioner’s regulations require that school districts across the state develop a Property Tax Report Card. It must be submitted to the New York State Education Department, as well as made available to the public. Additional information on the School Budget, including the Property Tax Report Card, can be found on the Budget Information web page of our district website: <http://www.vestal.stier.org/BudgetInformation.aspx>.

School District Budget Notice

New York State law and the NYS Commissioner’s regulations also require that school districts mail a School District Budget Notice to all qualified voters in the school district after the Budget Hearing, but no later than six (6) days prior to the school budget vote. The regulations do not provide authorization to school districts to include explanations of the information on the notice. To provide you with a better understanding of the School District Budget Notice, a preview is included on page 7. This Six-Day Notice postcard will be mailed to you before the school budget vote on June 9, 2020.



The Basic School Tax Relief (STAR) Exemption is authorized by Sect. 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

Impact of STAR Exemption on School Taxes

	BASIC STAR	ENHANCED STAR
<i>2019-20 School Tax</i>	\$1,576	\$ 868
<i>2020-21 School Tax</i>	\$1,625	\$ 917
<i>Increase/Decrease</i>	\$ 49	\$ 49
See www.orps.state.ny.us for more information.		



School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted - 2019-20 School Year	Proposed Budget - 2020-21 School Year	Contingency Budget - 2020-21 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount; <i>Not including separate propositions</i>	\$78,385,252	\$80,582,859	\$79,550,502
Increase/Decrease for the 2019-20 School Year		\$ 2,197,607	\$ 1,165,250
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		2.80%	1.49%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.81%	
A) Proposed Tax Levy to support the Total Budgeted Amount, net of reserve	\$47,564,180	\$48,596,537	
B) Levy to support Library Debt, <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	N/A	
C) Levy for Non-excludable Propositions, <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	N/A	
D) Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount used to reduce Current Year Levy	N/A	N/A	
E) Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$47,564,180	\$48,596,537	\$47,564,180
F) Total Permissible Exclusions to the Tax Levy Limit	\$1,316,029	\$1,709,166	
G) School Tax Levy Limit, excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$47,074,600	\$46,887,371	
H) Total Proposed School Year, Tax Levy, excluding Levy to support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$46,248,151	\$46,887,371	
I) Difference: (G - H; Negative value requires 60% voter approval. See below regarding separate propositions.)	\$826,449	\$ 0	
Administrative Component	\$8,054,639	\$8,227,158	\$8,136,998
Program Component	\$57,909,627	\$59,956,830	\$59,304,688
Capital Component	\$12,420,986	\$12,398,871	\$12,108,816

*The statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2020-21 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated, pursuant to Sect. 2023 of the Education Law. The proposed contingency budget contains reductions for non-contingent items including equipment, the capital outlay project, as well as administrative and program expenses.

Estimated BASIC STAR Exemption Savings ¹	List Separate Propositions not included in the Total Budgeted Amount ²	
\$676	Description	Amount
	Purchase of Buses	\$920,150
¹ The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by Sect. 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.	² Tax Levy associated with educational transportation services' propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements.	

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2020-21 by the qualified voters of the Vestal Central School District, Broome and Tioga Counties, New York, will be held in said district on Tuesday, June 9, 2020.

*** Pursuant to Executive Order No. 202.26, all voting will be done by Absentee Ballot. ***

Completed ballots must be returned to the Vestal District Clerk by 5 p.m. on June 9 to be canvassed.

PROP 2



School Bus Purchase

The second proposition appearing on the June 9, 2020, ballot would authorize the Vestal Board of Education to issue bonds to cover the costs associated with the purchase of school buses. Four 70-passenger buses and two 35-passenger buses with wheelchair lift are scheduled for replacement in 2020-21. Specifically, Proposition #2 on the ballot will state:

Shall the following resolution be adopted, to wit:

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Vestal Central School District, Broome and Tioga Counties, New York, is hereby authorized to pay the cost of the purchase of school buses, including incidental expenses in connection therewith, at a maximum estimated cost not to exceed \$920,150 and that said amount, or so much thereof may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of said School District and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law; and, in anticipation of such tax, obligations of said School District shall be issued.

Vestal CSD's replacement schedule for vehicles is designed to allow for maximum return on the expense for a school bus. Large buses are replaced every 10 or 11 years; smaller buses, every five to eight years. School buses are maintained in strict compliance with the Department of Transportation's guidelines, and with applicable laws and regulations. In addition, the District receives State aid on the purchase of new buses; the anticipated amount of NYS aid is \$552,090.

New York State spreads the state-aid payments over five fiscal years so that only one-fifth of the earned aid is received in a given year. Thus, the District finances school bus purchases over five years in order to match the expenditure with the NYS aid. Proposition #2 is presented to voters for their consideration so that the School Board may issue the necessary bonds to finance school bus purchases. For further information, please contact the School District's Business Office at 607-757-2204.

Well-Grounded Methods Grow Student Success

Building the academic foundation for our students begins early with support from District math and literacy specialists, Calkins Reading & Writing units, and other learning plans designed to reach all students at their level of proficiency. Just one benchmark that demonstrates our students' success is proficiency assessments in English Language Arts and Math for grades 3 - 8. Looking at the results from 2019, Vestal students had a proficiency rate of 57% on ELA assessments, while Broome County averaged a rate of 38%. Likewise, on the 2019 Math assessments, Vestal students had a proficiency rate of 63%, with Broome County at 42%.



Celebrations like Reader Man and Kindergarten Reading Parades grow our youngest students' literacy skills.

Class of 2020's Valedictorian & Salutatorian

Congratulations to this year's Valedictorian Dora Donacik and Salutatorian Catherine Deskur. They have worked hard to rise to the top of a highly competitive graduating class. With GPAs of 102-plus, less than 2 points separate them from the tenth-ranking student. Between them, they have taken 26 AP and/or IB courses during their high school careers.

A Scholar Certificate candidate who will be receiving a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation with Honors, Dora Donacik is co-captain of the Chemistry Magic Show team, plays clarinet in the Vestal Marching Band and VHS Wind Ensemble, and has participated in Odyssey of the Mind for 11 years. Dora is also a member of the National Honor Society, Drama Club, Vestal Voices, Vestellas, and has performed in all four high school musicals. A Girl Scout for 12 years currently working on her Gold Award project, Dora is headed to Cornell University's College of Arts & Sciences in the fall!



Dora Donacik, Valedictorian



Catherine Deskur, Salutatorian

"My parents' support was definitely the most significant factor that helped me meet all of my academic and extracurricular goals," said Dora. "They helped me prioritize between schoolwork, extracurriculars and social commitments." She added, "Every one of my teachers this year has been incredibly supportive as well, especially with the school closure. They are understanding, flexible and committed to making sure we still get the most out of our education."

Catherine Deskur is also a Vestal Scholar Certificate candidate. She has been active in Chemistry Magic Show, Mathletes, Odyssey of the Mind, NetSci Research, Science Olympiad, Student Government, Teen Jazz Project, Tiger-Tronics and the VHS Mentor Program. Catherine works as a bassist at the Binghamton Philharmonic, and in the community she has participated in Girl Scouts. "My parents have definitely had the greatest impact on helping me meet my goals," shared Catherine. "They provided me with continuous support and guidance and have been my biggest fans since the very beginning."

Catherine will be attending Harvard University and The New England Conservatory through a dual degree program to study computer science and double-bass performance. We wish both Dora and Catherine the best in their future studies!

SAT Scores

Class Year	Vestal	NYS	NATL
Evidence-based Reading & Writing			
2017	577	531	538
2018	598	534	536
2019	584	531	531
SAT Math			
2017	582	528	533
2018	609	534	531
2019	599	533	528
2019 Combined	1183	1064	1059
Means	3549	3191	3197
3-yr Avg.	1183	1064	1066

Regents Diploma Results

Vestal High School continues to have a high number of students achieving the Regents Diploma, Regents with Honors and Regents with Advanced Designation. Here are the results for the Class of 2019:

Regents.....	25%
Regents w/ Honors.....	0.7%
Regents Adv. Designation....	49%
Regents Adv. w/ Honors.....	20%
Local.....	3.5%
SACC/CDOS.....	0.7%

IB/AP Numbers

With both International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement courses available, Vestal presents more avenues for our students to succeed...

And more students are choosing IB and AP classes at Vestal High School. During the 2018-19 school year, 63 percent of seniors and 62 percent of juniors took at least one IB or AP course.

2020 School Board Election

There are three seats open on the Vestal Board of Education for three-year terms expiring in June 2023, and there are three eligible candidates on the ballot for these seats.

Questions for School Board Candidates:

- 1) Do you feel the new State & Federal changes in public education will have a positive or negative impact? How? Why?
- 2) What is your vision of education in this community?
- 3) What is the most important responsibility of a Board member?
- 4) What do you see as the major challenges facing our school district, and how would you attempt to solve them?



Linda Daino

Mrs. Linda Daino has been a Vestal resident for 7 years and has served on the School Board since 2014. She is the School Board liaison to Tioga Hills Elementary School and attends school functions as a grandparent. With Bachelor degrees in Nursing and Elementary Education from Keuka College and Cedarville College, Mrs. Daino has served as a substitute teacher in the Horseheads School District and also worked for the Chemung County Health Department and Office for Aging as a Registered Nurse. She is a hospice volunteer and also a member of the Vestal Senior Citizen Club.

Linda's son and daughter-in-law are both Vestal Central School District teachers, and her two granddaughters attend Vestal Schools.

- 1) I feel recent changes promote a "one size fits all" mentality. Whether we're talking about curriculum mandates or even state testing, these changes have a direct impact on our children and how they learn and thrive. We need to promote and foster excellence in all our students, who are incredible individuals with varied strengths and talents. We need to be acutely aware of how these changes are addressed to ensure continued success for all our children.
- 2) My vision for our District is to have well-rounded students who become productive members of our society. Our District will provide students with an evolving curriculum that meets the diverse needs of all our students. Our District will continue to be committed to high standards working together with our community.
- 3) The most important responsibility is making sure the voices and needs of community stakeholders are heard. Board members are elected to a community service, a service that asks them to work with one another to enact sound educational practices. That means being well-informed and proactive in regard to Federal, State and local economic, legislative and public education issues. The Board, as a representative organization, needs to listen to and work with all the stakeholders.
- 4) Economic constraints, reductions coming in State aid and Albany asking students, parents and teachers to do more with less are consistent challenges for school districts all over NY. Our District has tried to survive many of these challenges, but not without reductions in resources for students and the loss of staff, which has a negative impact on all of us. As a Board, we need to work with local businesses, citizens and neighboring communities to petition State representatives and legislators to fight for what is best for our students and our communities, especially in regard to tax reform, unfunded mandates and challenges related to the current pandemic.

Mrs. Sylvia Place has been a Vestal resident for 55 years, and has strong ties to the school district. She taught Vestal students in grades 7 - 11 for 36 years, and her daughter has taught in Vestal for 26 years. With a degree in American History from SUNY Potsdam, as well as graduate work at Binghamton University and training at Cornell University, Mrs. Place helped implement the accelerated program in Social Studies. She also served on the committee which fostered the transition of the District's junior high to a team-based Middle School. Her commitment to Vestal has continued after retirement as she has served on the School Board for six years. A believer in lifelong learning, Mrs. Place attended training sessions in Lake Placid and the NYS School Board Association's annual conference in New York City. She has worked for the Boy Scouts of America as a merit badge counselor, and she is a member of the Vestal United Methodist Church, the Vestal Historical Society, the Vestal Middle School PTO and the PEO. Both her son and daughter attended and graduated from Vestal Schools.



Sylvia Place

- 1) Unfunded mandates severely impact education. Existing programs may have to be dropped to meet state demands. State and Federal decisions during the COVID-19 Pandemic have left many unanswered questions that will need strong local leadership to respond in the best interest of all district shareholders.
- 2) Education is highly valued in this community. Our demographic has changed, and more needs to be done for the students with emotional and socio-emotional challenges, such as counseling. We will continue to provide excellent instructions and opportunities for all of Vestal's diverse student population.
- 3) A school board member has a commitment to be fiscally responsible to the voters and to maintain the reputation that Vestal has for academic excellence. Board members need to listen to their constituents' concerns and direct individuals to the proper channels. A board member must show concern for all students and maintain positive interactions with other board members.

Answers continued on insert



Tony Turnbull

Mr. Tony Turnbull has been a resident of the Vestal Central School District for 28 years and has served on the School Board since 2014. With a BS in Psychology and a Masters degree in Education, he taught in the Vestal Central School District from 1978 until he retired in 2013. In addition to serving on the Vestal Board of Education, he also is on the Vestal Honors Diploma Committee and the Learning Resource Center Committee for the District. Mr. Turnbull is very involved in our community - as a volunteer for the Special Olympics and the Broome Developmental Center, as a member for the Broome County Ethnic Festival Committee and the Educational Resource Committee at Hillel Academy, and as past president and current treasurer for the Scottish Society of the Twin Tiers.

In addition to having been a Vestal Middle School teacher, Mr. Turnbull was also a Vestal parent. His son, David, graduated from Vestal High School in 2001.

1) After serving on the Vestal Board of Education for the previous six years, the obligatory use of standardized testing, especially within the elementary grades, to illustrate if the District is achieving its mandates, neither gives a complete picture of the Vestal School District, nor addresses the goals sustained by our District's policies to continue student achievement. These mandated requirements must be balanced by continuing to challenge, foster, support and invest in our students through meaningful and current curricula which are best suited for the individual needs of our children. We must ensure, for example, that creativity, synthesis of information, and the "joy of learning," along with the arts and sports, are not "drowned" in a "sea of standardized testing." Our District continues to make great strides to personalize education for all students within our District.

Vestal Central School District's School Board Candidates

Continued from page 11



Sylvia Place

What do you see as the major obstacles or challenges facing our school and how would you attempt to solve them?

4) School budgets and finances are always difficult. New sources of revenue need to be explored. Plans need to be made to encourage industry to come to Vestal in order to widen the tax base. Parents and educators should contact local representatives by making phone calls and writing letters in support of education.

What is your vision for education in this community?

As the Board of Education, Administration, and Faculty/Staff endeavor to continue improving Vestal's tradition of excellence in education, we must, together as a community, ensure that every student fulfill his or her capabilities in a rapidly changing and increasingly technologically world-based society. In order to accomplish this vision, the District must continue to organize, study and update the technological tools at all educational levels, improve the analytical and interpretive skills and capabilities needed by students, faculty and/or administrators in order that students may benefit from future successes at their selected colleges, jobs or professions. It is our responsibility as a District to provide to all students, the educational, emotional and physical confidence they will need to fulfill their chosen vocation in life, promote involvement in their community as participating citizens, and to provide the necessary tools they may rely on for attaining immediate and future goals. We have a solemn responsibility to every child in our District to enable their successes in a well-rounded and "future-focused" educational environment.

Tony Turnbull



What is the most important responsibility of a Board member?

The most important responsibility of a Vestal School Board member is to work tirelessly to maximize the education of our students within the framework of the educational and economic factors established by our local community, which must necessarily and realistically, include Federal and State funding. To do this, the District and Board must maintain a crucial balance of financial resources, diligent in the responsible use and benefits of taxpayer funds, coupled with those resources received from State and Federal funding. Vestal, as a fiscally stable and thriving District has continued to maintain a successful fiscal rating in the Broome-Tioga area, however, this rating limits our State aid, and will challenge the Board to use responsible fiscal financial policies to meet the varied necessities of our students and schools. It is my job as a Board member to have an open-door policy, to discuss with any Vestal taxpayers, their general or specific concerns with the present difficult economic environment, the critical management of our resources, and to expand our District into one of the most vibrant and significant educational foundations in the Broome-Tioga community.

What do you see as the major challenges facing our school and how would you attempt to solve them?

The two major obstacles challenging our District today are: (1) non-funded state and federal mandates and fiscal budget planning that is affected by shrinking financial aide from each of these legislative bodies, and (2) maximizing the present and future funding to ensure quality educational services expected by Vestal's citizens, which may help to promote business opportunities within our area. These two obstacles combine to increase pressures on staff and administrators, but much more on the local taxpayer, whose concerns within a difficult economic environment are clearly recognized. As a six-year member of the Vestal Board of Education, I plan to diligently continue to review budget items, to ensure that these expenditures are utilized in the most efficient way possible, to maintain fiscal solvency. It is imperative the Board of Education continue to engage the State Government with precise and undisputed information in order to affect change at the legislative level, increase funding to the District, and alleviate a portion of the tax burden on the local taxpayer.



Vestal
Central
School
District

201 Main Street
Vestal, NY 13850

Board of Education

Mario Nunes, President
John Hroncich, Vice President
Mark Browning
Linda Daino
Lynne Majewski
Dinno Nistico
Christina Pierce
Sylvia Place
Anthony Turnbull

Superintendent of Schools

Jeffrey J. Ahearn
superintendent@vestal.k12.ny.us
607-757-2241

Public Information Coordinator

Regina M. Felice
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607-757-2205

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PAID
Permit No. 18
Norwich, New York 13815

Current Resident or

**ECRWSS
Postal Patron**

Timeline for the 2020 Annual Vote:

Absentee Ballots mailed at the end of May 2020.

Budget Hearing will take place via Zoom beginning at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, May 26. See the District website on that date for the Zoom link.

School Budget Vote and Board of Education Election will take place by absentee ballot. Completed ballots must be returned to the District Clerk by 5 p.m., June 9, 2020, to be canvassed.

Definition of a Qualified Voter -

A U.S. Citizen, 18 years of age, and a resident of the District for 30 days prior to June 9, 2020.

If you have questions, please contact the District Clerk at 607-757-2211 or districtclerk@vestal.k12.ny.us



Fire Inspection Reports

Please note that the annual fire inspection for 2019-20 of all Vestal Central School District buildings for fire hazards, which might endanger the lives of students, teachers and employees therein, has been completed as of February 2020. This report is available for review in the Vestal Central School District's administration building, 201 Main Street, Vestal, NY.

For more information, please contact Joseph Loretz at 757-2231 or jfloretz@vestal.k12.ny.us.