

The Comet's Tale



SANDY CREEK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Congratulations to the Valedictorian and Salutatorian for the Class of 2024!

CLASS OF 2024


Hannah WHITE
VALEDICTORIAN



#UNIQUEINTHECREEK

CLASS OF 2024

Maddox PALMER
SALUTATORIAN



#UNIQUEINTHECREEK

Sandy Creek Cheer Team Crushes Competition all the way to States

The Sandy Creek Central School Cheer Team recently clinched third place in the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Competitive Cheerleading Championship, having earned their spot at the competition by previously dominating both the Frontier League and Sectionals.



The team first competed at the Frontier League Championship where they not only claimed the coveted title of Class D Frontier League Champions, but attained the highest score overall for Classes B, C and D, naming them the Grand Champions of the entire league. Their coach, Alicia Hall, was also awarded Coach of the Year, a prestigious honor voted on by every cheer coach in the league.

★ Their winning streak continued at sectionals where they emerged victorious as NYSPHSAA Section 3 Class D champions. This remarkable achievement earned them a well-deserved place in the state championships.

Coach Hall emphasized the challenge of competitive cheer competitions, "The teams have two minutes to perform a with no do-overs, second quarters or rescheduling. This means they have one shot to show up and nail the routine."

At states, the top five teams that place in the preliminary round advance to the finals giving them one more chance to perform their routine. Sandy Creek delivered flawless routines with zero deductions in both the preliminary round and finals, culminating in their impressive third-place finish overall.

Looking ahead, Coach Hall envisions a bright future and big things for the Sandy Creek cheer program stating, "It is my hope that this is just the tip of the iceberg, with ample potential and talent in this district to grow and continue a legacy."

Budget Hearing

Thursday, May 9, 2024
6 p.m.

Sandy Creek District Office Board Room

Budget Vote and Election

Tuesday, May 21, 2024
Noon to 8 p.m.

Sandy Creek District Office Board Room
(absentee and early voting ballots by request)

Board Vacancy

One (1) - Five (5) Year Term
Andrea Harris

Budget 2024

See Candidate Profile at www.sandycreekcsd.org/district/boe/surveys



sandycreekcsd.org

The Comet's Tale

Award-Winning Graphic Novelist Hosts Workshops at Sandy Creek Central Schools

Published graphic novelist Ira Marcks recently returned to his alma mater of Sandy Creek Central School District to host creative workshops for students of all ages.

Marcks graduated from Sandy Creek in 1999 and has gone on to become an award-winning graphic novelist.

According to the New York Times, "Ira Marcks has accomplished an unusual feat with this cinematic homage: He has produced a meta-graphic novel that manages to deconstruct a genre, pay tribute to it and keep the reader happily inside it all at the same time."

Marcks uses his expertise to introduce students to the world of graphic novels. For more than a decade he has visited schools to teach the elements of storytelling and provide hands-on lessons in designing expressive cartoon characters.

"I love having the chance to speak to students about cartooning," said Marcks. "My programs educate students to better understand comics while inspiring them to create their own."



Marcks' books are available at both SCCS libraries for students to check out and enjoy. To learn more about Marcks and his work, visit his website at iramarcks.com.

Sandy Creek Senior Receives Distinguished Local Award



Hannah White, a senior at Sandy Creek High School, joined an exclusive group of students from Central New York as a Syracuse.com 2023 Best and Brightest Award recipient.

All the applicants for Syracuse.com's

2023 Best and Brightest Award had admirable academic credentials that placed them at or near the top of their senior classes.

The winners of the contest, which was sponsored by Upstate Honda Dealers, were selected based on their activities, interests and accomplishments outside of their high school classrooms.

"Hannah is the valedictorian of her class and has outstanding character and work ethic," said her counselor Tanya VanOrnum. "After graduation she plans to study archeology technology and historical structures at the University of Rochester."

"I am so honored to have been selected to receive such a prestigious award," said White.

To learn more about the award, visit advancemedian.com/best-and-brightest.

Sandy Creek Fifth Grader Wins Esteemed Spelling Bee

Bronwyn McCarthy, a fifth grade student at Sandy Creek Elementary School, recently took first place in the local portion of the annual Post Standard Scripps National Spelling Bee.

McCarthy competed against 13 other students spanning grades four through eight, all selected based on a previous written competition. Friends and family were able to attend the event, which showcased the remarkable talent and commitment of every contestant.



Second place went to sixth grader Adam Landphere, third place went to fifth grader Joshua Wart and fourth place went to fourth grader Byrnn Perkins. The remaining contestants were fourth graders Lucas Oak and Emerson Spencer; fifth grader Kendra Friot; sixth graders Adam Henain, Gabe Wall, Caleb Peck and Leah Bristol; seventh graders Jasper Wart and Alex Garvin; and eighth grader Alyssa Campbell.

The top four finishers will move on to the next round of competition, hoping to advance and compete this May for the National Scripps Cup.

The National Spelling Bee began in 1925 when nine newspapers joined together to host a local spelling contest. In the past 99 years the competition has grown, boasting over 200 regional partners worldwide.

The Post Standard is the official 2024 Scripps National Spelling Bee Regional Partner, giving local students and schools from Cayuga, Cortland, Madison and Oswego counties the opportunity to participate in America's longest-running educational competition.

For more information about the competition, please visit spellingbee.com



A Letter from the Superintendent

Sandy Creek Community,

Each academic year is filled with challenges, successes, changes, and much more, and the 2023-2024 school year has had its share. One large challenge has been developing the 2024-2025 school budget that incorporates the needs of the students, staff, and community members. Our goals are always to provide robust programming for our students while being fiscally responsible to our community members. However, this has been very challenging with a budget gap of more than \$1 million which is due primarily from the loss of federal and state funding.

Over the last three years, Sandy Creek Central School has been able to provide added programming and heightened staffing due to the impact of funds stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we anticipate there will be changes with programs due to the reduction of funding. Looking at the 2024-2025 school year, we will be putting a critical lens on after-school and summer programs that were funded by the additional revenue stream. Furthermore, we will critically analyze staffing losses due to attrition to determine if it is necessary to rehire in order to maintain current programming.

In preparing for the 2024-2025 school year, you will be voting for an expenditure plan on May 21, 2024. Collaboratively, the Board of Education and administration have developed a budget that considers our current financial situation with anticipated changes. Financially, the district is in a position to maintain most staffing levels and most programs, but will need to adjust spending for some programs due to the loss of revenues. Each year, the cost of operating the school increases due to factors outside of the district's control. There are continuous increases in salaries, insurances, and the supplies and equipment necessary to operate the district. In addition to the increased operating cost, we are under the impression that New York State funding will not be what we anticipated. As a result, we will be asking for support regarding a 2.17% tax increase for the 2024-2025 school year.

We thank the community for their continued support and understanding as we work to provide educational opportunities for our students. Have a great spring, and we look forward to seeing you at the budget vote!

Sincerely,

Kevin Seymour
Superintendent of Schools



Paw-dorable visitors from All Creatures Big and Small Pet Rescue recently showed up at our elementary school to gather donations collected by student council!

Congratulations to our First-Place Battle of the Books Teams!

Battle of the Books is a fun incentive competition for students in grades 3-12 where they read books, form teams and test their knowledge of the books they have read.

Grades 3 + 4: Gabriel Vasquez, James Babel, Julia McGrath and Eva McGrath

Grade 5: Bronwyn McCarthy, Elise Cranker and Caroline Casler

Grades 6- 8: Claire Willson, Phoebe Preston, Gabriel Wall and Finn Connors

Grades 9-12: Ryan Landphere, Margaret Wallace, Kylie-ann Blodgett and Leia Wall

Thank you to the staff members who took time out of their busy schedules to compete against the students in a bonus competition!



The Comet's Tale

Proposition #1:

Shall the proposed budget of \$27,088,722 for the Sandy Creek Central School District, Oswego County, New York as recommended by the Board of Education for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, be adopted and shall the Board of Education be authorized to levy the necessary tax therefor?



PROGRAM COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	2023-2024	2024-2025
Curriculum, Administration & Planning	Includes all costs associated with staff development and costs directly associated with instruction	\$742,626	\$718,687
Regular School	All costs associated with Instruction, Library & Media, and Computer Technologies	\$6,496,800	\$ 6,569,258
Special Education Programming	All costs associated with the Education of Students with disabilities/handicapping conditions	\$2,200,750	\$2,272,261
Special Schools	All costs associated with BOCES Occupational Education and Summer School	\$1,340,000	\$ 1,310,964
Student Services	All costs associated with Guidance Services, Co-Curricular Activities, Interscholastic Sports, Transportation, School Food Service, and Census	\$2,578,115	\$2,706,189
Employee Benefits	All employee benefit costs associated with above program component salaries	\$6,038,941	\$6,313,929
TOTAL PROGRAM		\$19,397,232	\$19,891,288

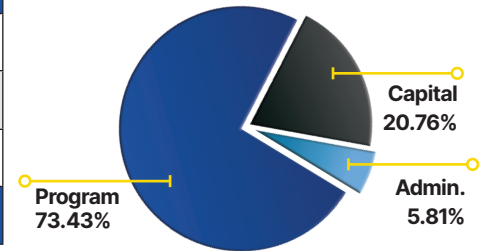


CAPITAL COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	2023-2024	2024-2025
Special Item	Refunds of Real Property Taxes – Prior years	\$5,000	\$5,000
Operation of Plant	All costs associated with operating district buildings, including cleaning, utilities costs, and BOCES capital charges	\$1,366,925	\$1,452,317
Maintenance of Plant	All costs associated with maintaining district buildings and property	\$661,500	\$664,500
Transportation	Includes the purchase of (2) two large diesel buses, (1) one small gasoline bus, and (1) one gasoline SUV	\$520,789	\$543,440
Debt Service	Includes the principal and interest costs for the past capital project and fiscal agent fees	\$2,036,126	\$2,111,599
Employee Benefits	All employee benefit costs associated with above capital component salaries	\$709,234	\$745,591
Interfund Transfer	Interfund transfer to the Capital fund 24-25: exterior masonry	\$100,000	\$100,000
TOTAL CAPITAL		\$5,399,574	\$5,622,447



ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	2023-2024	2024-2025
Board of Education	All costs associated with the Board of Education, District Clerk and Elections	\$84,050	\$78,770
Central Administration	All costs associated with the Superintendent's Office	\$200,000	\$199,950
Regular School Supervision	All costs associated with the Supervision of Curriculum, Principals, Supervision of Handicap, and Computer Instruction	\$167,774	\$202,940
Finance	All costs associated with the Business Office, Auditing, District Treasurer, Tax Collection, and Liability Insurance	\$342,270	\$296,138
BOCES Administrative Costs	BOCES administrative and capital budgets, printing and planning	\$393,582	\$393,889
Employee Benefits	All employee benefit costs associated with above administrative component salaries	\$401,848	\$403,300
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE		\$1,589,524	\$1,574,987

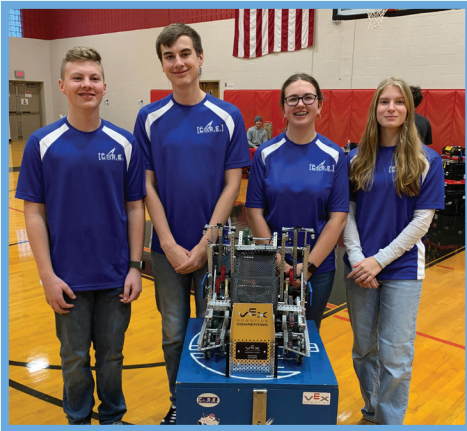
BUDGET COMPONENTS	2023-2024	2024-2025	% OF TOTAL BUDGET
Program	\$19,397,232	\$19,891,288	73.43%
Capital	\$5,399,574	\$5,622,447	20.76%
Administrative	\$1,589,524	\$1,574,987	5.81%
TOTAL BUDGET	\$26,386,330	\$27,088,722	100%



PROJECTED REVENUES	2023-2024	2024-2025
Other Tax Items Collected Interest and Penalties on Real Property Taxes and Pilots (Payments in lieu of taxes)	\$33,568	\$33,568
Uses of Money and Property Interest Earnings and Commissions	\$29,250	\$ 49,250
Sale of Property and Compensation for Loss Sales of Surplus and Lost Item reimbursements	\$15,000	\$15,000
Refund of Prior Year's Expenditures-BOCES and Other Sources BOCES contracted services expenses from prior year	\$255,000	\$ 193,058
Miscellaneous Other unclassified revenues, gifts and donations	\$0	\$0
State and Federal Aid NYS Education Aid, Federal Medicaid Reimbursement	\$18,321,280	\$ 18,146,265
Interfund Transfers and Uses of Reserves Transfers from the Debt Service Fund and other employee benefits reserves	\$271,536	\$ 418,867
Appropriated Fund Balance Fund balance for use in the upcoming year	\$185,000	\$ 798,894
Estimated Tax Levy Estimated amount of Tax Levy	\$7,275,696	\$ 7,433,820
TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUES	\$26,386,330	\$27,088,722

The Comet's Tale

SCCS Co.R.E Team earns fifth Design Award on the road to VEX Robotics World Championship



The Sandy Creek Central School District is proudly sending its Comet Robotic Engineering (Co.R.E.) Team to Dallas, Texas, for the largest robotics competition in the world, the VEX Robotics World Championship.

Charles Worden, team mentor

Co.R.E team members Skylar Clark, Hannah White, Simon Preston and Micah Burns secured their ticket to this year's world championship by beating out 55 other teams for the coveted Design Award at the New York State VEX Competition in Queensbury. Remarkably, this was their fifth design award of the season.

John DeGone, the team's coach and SCCS middle and high school technology teacher, expressed his admiration, stating, "To win a Design Award at one competition against 22-55 other teams is impressive, but to win five Design Awards in a single season is unprecedented."



and district LAN technician, pointed out that this marks the sixth appearance at a world championship for the school's robotics team since 2016. "Although they come from a relatively small school district, our exceptional students have proven year after year that they can hold their own and are a force to be reckoned with," he said.

Presented by the Robotics Education & Competition Foundation, the VEX Robotics Competition is the largest and fastest growing middle and high school robotics program globally, with more than 20,000 teams from 50 countries playing in over 1,700 competitions worldwide. Notably, VEX robotics championships have garnered attention from prominent networks like ESPN.

Each year, participants are presented with an engineering challenge in the form of a game. Students are then tasked with designing, building and programming a working robot to play against other teams at local and statewide tournaments, hoping to place or receive a judged award to advance.

Teams vying for the Design Award must submit their engineer's notebook for review and participate in a face-to-face interview with judges. The award is presented to a single team each tournament that demonstrates a professional approach to the design process, exceptional team organization, project and time management, and the ability to produce a quality robot with minimal adult assistance.

"It is truly amazing to watch a team of high-school students strategize, implement a plan and then build a working robot completely from scratch," said DeGone, emphasizing why he continues to coach SCCS Co.R.E. teams. "It has been an honor to coach Clark, White, Preston and Burns, who have all shown a consistent display of commitment, dedication and teamwork while continuing to exceed my expectations."

SCCS Co.R.E. headed to the world championship in late April. For more information visit their website at sandycreeksd.org/robotics. For updates on their journey and to show your support, follow their Facebook page at facebook.com/core34000.

SCCS Drama Club Wows Audiences During Spring Musical

Under the direction of Director Brandie Norton and Musical Director Jackie Hobbs, drama club members put on a fantastic and entertaining show called "Kilroy Was Here."

The patriotic musical comedy takes place in a 1940s U.S.O. and salutes the brave men and women serving in the military.





School Bus Driver Appreciation Day was April 23. Thank you to our bus drivers for keeping our students safe when they travel!

Local Veterans Honored During Annual Voices of Democracy Essay Contest

Three Sandy Creek High School students read their Voices of Democracy (VOD) essays in front of the student body, staff and members of the local Cable Trail VFW Post 8535 during an assembly in November.

VOD is a program created by the national Veterans of Foreign Wars organization, providing high school students with the unique opportunity to express themselves in regard to democratic and patriotic-themed essays.

Students compete by writing and recording an audio essay. The 2023-2024 theme was, "What are the greatest attributes of our Democracy?"

According to the VFW website, "Each year, nearly 25,000 ninth through 12th grade students from across the country enter to win their share of more than \$1 million in educational scholarships and incentives awarded through the program."

VFW Post Commander Frank Manchester announced the winners after the essays were read. Senior Skylar Clark took first place, followed by Leia Wall in second and Hannah White in third. All three participants received cash and other prizes, with Clark moving onto the next round of competition.

Guests of honor included VFW member Stephen Gove; Auxiliary members Peggy Manchester, Nola Gove, James and Sandra Comstock, Stuart and Denise Yerdon; and special community guests Navy Veteran Bob Brown and his wife Robin. Board of Education member Heidi Metott represented her son Joe who is currently serving in the Air Force.

Veterans and SCCS employees Fred Baird, Matt White, Todd Sullivan, Nick Vann and Robert Ferguson were also highlighted during the assembly. Ferguson has advised the annual VOD competition since 2006, stating "I am proud to have a connection with both the students and a great organization such as the VFW at this level."



Family Fun Night!

• SCIENCE • TECHNOLOGY • ENGINEERING • ARTS • MATH •

Tuesday, May 21



5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Sandy Creek Elementary

FREE DINNER

(Little Caesars pizza & cookies)
served from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Students who attend are entered in a drawing for prizes

Student Artwork will be on display

Math & Movement Mats

5th Grade Science Fair Projects

Coding with Mr. Parish



SANDY CREEK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 248
124 Salisbury St.
Sandy Creek, NY 13145
Phone: 315-387-3445
Fax: 315-387-2196
District Office: Ext. 1510
Business Office: Ext. 1510
Elementary: Ext. 1110
Middle School/High School: Ext. 1910
Nurses' Office: Ext. 1501
Transportation: Ext. 3330



Kevin Seymour
Superintendent of Schools

Cora Harvey
Business Administrator



Board of Education:

John Shelmidine
President

Joseph Hathway
Vice-President



Kevin Halsey
Andrea Harris
John Macklen
Heidi Metott
Michele Warner



Timothy Filiatrault
Principal
Elementary School

Steven Newcombe
Principal
Middle/High School



Amy Howard-McCormack
Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Data

James Hunt
Assistant Principal
Athletic Director

The Sandy Creek Central School District in accordance with the Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and does not discriminate on the basis of sex or handicap in the educational programs or activities it operates. This includes recruitment and employment of employees; pay and benefits; counseling services for students; access by students to educational programs, courses and activities. The District's Title IX Compliance Coordinator is Cora Harvey (124 Salisbury Street, Sandy Creek, NY 13145 | 315-387-3445).

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Overall Budget Proposal Required Format

	Budget Adopted for the 2023-24 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2024-25 School Year*
Total budgeted amount (not including separate propositions)	\$ 26,386,330	\$27,088,722	\$26,262,614
Increase/decrease for the 2024-25 school year		\$702,392	-\$123,716
Percentage increase/decrease in proposed budget		2.66%	-.47%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.12%	
A. Proposed tax levy to support the total budgeted amount	\$7,275,696	\$7,433,820	
B. Levy to support library debt, if applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for non-excludable propositions, if applicable**	\$0	\$0	
D. Total tax cap reserve amount used to reduce current year levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total proposed school year tax levy (A + B + C - D)	\$7,275,696	\$7,433,820	\$7,275,696
F. Permissible exclusions to the school tax levy limit	\$405,345	\$349,392	
G. School tax levy limit, excluding levy for permissible exclusions	\$6,870,351	\$7,084,428	
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)	\$6,870,351	\$7,084,428	
I. Difference: (G - H); (Negative value requires 60.0% voter approval) See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative component	\$1,589,524	\$1,574,987	\$1,574,987
Program component	\$19,397,232	\$19,891,288	\$19,225,180
Capital component	\$5,399,574	\$5,622,447	\$5,462,447

* Should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law, the Board of Education may re-vote or adopt a contingency budget. A contingency budget would require a reduction of \$826,108 from the proposed 2024-25 budget. Items considered for removal include: school transportation vehicles, instructional and non-instructional equipment, and the \$100,000 capital outlay project for needed facility improvements.

Budget 2024

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings: Budget Proposed for the 2024-2025 School Year

Basic STAR Tax Savings:
\$380

¹The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law



sandycreeksd.org