



EAST ROCHESTER UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT School District News

Budget 2020

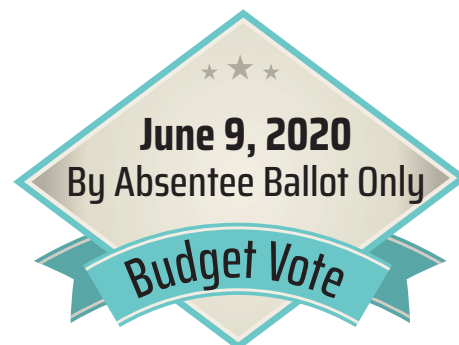
East Rochester adopts budget below allowable tax cap

Dear ER Community,

We are pleased to propose a 2020-21 budget that allows us to maintain the highest-quality programming for our students while being fiscally responsible to our taxpayers. Throughout the eight month budget development process, the District maintained a clear focus on our needs: continuing to vertically align our UPK-12 systems and implementing high-quality Tier 1 instruction. Through extensive analysis and careful consideration, the district was able to build a proposed spending plan to address these two critical components.

This year, we faced a significant budget gap due to the ongoing reductions in state aid, an increase in health insurance costs, limitations due to the NYS tax cap law, as well as the necessity to close down our economy due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the difficult financial times across the nation, and based on current conditions, our proposal is below the tax cap and maintains current programs and staffing districtwide.

Closing the gap to account for the reduction in revenues did not come without sacrifice. It is critical to note that in order to achieve our goal, all district staff agreed to forgo their contractual pay increase for the 2020-21 school year. This show of unity will allow us to maintain our sound academic programs, our small class sizes, current extracurricular and interscholastic activities all while continuing to work toward achieving our goals. This act of solidarity exemplifies the true professionalism and commitment our staff demonstrate in support of the success of our students and community.



Our Board of Education members and school district team used our mission, vision, and core values to guide these important budget decisions. The expenditure plan, which was presented to voters on May 26, includes a detailed explanation of the budget-to-budget increase of 3.37% and a proposed tax levy increase of 2.98%, which is 1.04% less than our 2020-21 tax cap maximum allowed by NYS. Our primary focus is on the students and we believe that the 2020-21 budget will allow for continued emphasis on helping them achieve excellence.

The community budget vote and Board election will take place on Tuesday, June 9. It is important to note this year will look much different than previous years. All voting will take place via absentee ballots. Each household will receive two absentee ballots, which must be returned to the district clerk no later than 5 p.m. on June 9. We encourage you to vote. It remains our pleasure to work with all members of our community on behalf of all students.

This newsletter is filled with information about the 2020-21 budget, along with a snapshot of the ER Advantage: what makes East Rochester Union Free School District a place for all learners to soar. On behalf of the East Rochester Board of Education and district staff, we thank you for your continued support and for helping us make ER S.O.A.R. We are ER!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Majewski Lesinski
Board of Education President

Richard G. Stutzman, Jr.
Interim Superintendent of Schools

Our District's Mission

The Mission of the East Rochester School District is to prepare students to be college and career ready and to provide a quality education in a safe environment where all students develop the abilities, attitudes and values necessary for responsible, productive citizenship.

Our Vision

The Vision of the East Rochester School District is that students will learn through the highest quality instruction which recognizes each student's strengths, talents, interests, learning styles and rates of learning, using developmentally appropriate methods.

Our Core Values

Students First:

Students are our first priority. We dedicate ourselves to holistic student development in a safe, nurturing environment.

Opportunity:

We provide every student equal access to strong academic programs, clubs, teams and events that enable students to reach their fullest potential.

Achievement:

Everyone can improve. We collaborate to learn, observe, measure and grow. We proudly celebrate achievements.

Responsibility:

We are all accountable to ourselves, to our students and to each other. Our shared responsibility is to be respectful.

Strength:

Together, we will accomplish excellence.

Inside this Special Budget Issue

- Estimated Expenditures/Revenues
- Tax Levy Data & Proposition Information
- District Statistics
- District Achievements
- Frequently Asked Questions

Three-Part Budget Summary

NYS requires school districts to present their budgets divided into three expenditure categories – administrative, program, and capital

Total Budget: \$29,433,954

Administrative **2019-20** **2020-21**
Amount: **\$3,355,042** **\$3,372,905**

Includes costs related to the Board of Education, central administration, business office, legal services, personnel, records management, public information, curriculum development and supervision, and employee benefits.

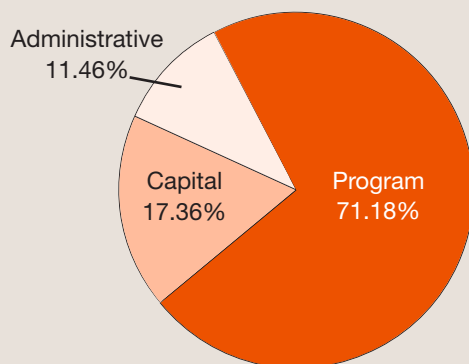
Program **2019-20** **2020-21**
Amount: **\$20,645,387** **\$20,951,018**

Includes other central services, instruction, district and contract transportation, lease of a school bus, community service, and employee benefits.

Capital **2019-20** **2020-21**
Amount: **\$4,473,228** **\$5,110,031**

Includes plant operation and maintenance, refund of taxes, debt service, and employee benefits.

Proposed 2020-21 Three-Part Budget



Three-Part Component Budget

	2019-20	2020-21
Total Budget	\$28,473,657	\$29,433,954
Administrative Component	\$3,355,042	\$3,372,905
Board of Education	64,134	65,297
Central Administration	229,449	231,618
Finance	781,367	798,994
Legal	72,000	71,727
Personnel	41,663	43,336
Records Management	9,000	9,062
Public Information	46,900	49,920
Other Special Items	335,500	341,649
Curriculum Development and Supervision	225,067	252,958
Supervision Regular School	615,469	607,519
Employee Benefits	933,993	900,825
Program Component	\$20,645,387	\$20,951,018
Other Central Services	186,713	180,021
Instruction	13,967,603	14,099,148
Other District Transportation	67,867	72,608
Lease of School Bus	23,000	23,000
Contract Transportation	900,693	919,914
Community Service	41,600	41,600
Employee Benefits	5,457,911	5,614,727
Capital Component	\$4,473,228	\$5,110,031
Plant Operation	1,421,486	1,421,486
Plant Maintenance	455,936	455,936
Refund of Taxes	50,000	50,000
Debt Service	2,042,910	2,042,910
Transfer to Capital (BOCES)	0	489,688
Employee Benefits	502,896	495,200

Year-to-Year Comparison

Category	2020-21 Proposed	2019-20 Adopted	\$ change	% change
Administration	\$3,372,905	\$3,355,042	\$17,863	.53
Program	20,951,018	20,645,387	301,631	1.48
Capital	5,110,031	4,473,228	636,802	14.24
Total Component Budget	\$29,433,954	\$28,473,657	\$960,297	3.37%

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APP

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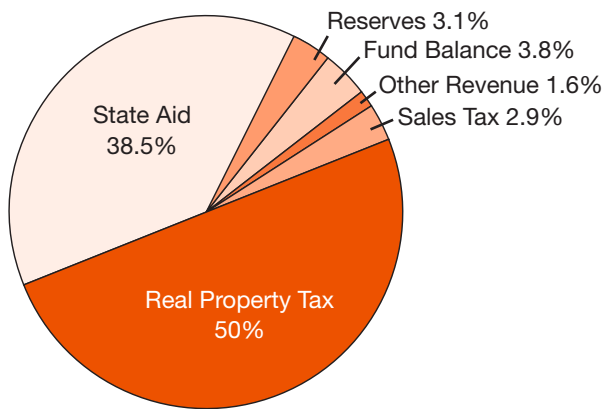


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Where does the money come from?

Estimated Revenues

Category	2020-21	2019-20	\$ change	% change
State Aid (BOCES, Building, Excess Cost)	\$11,344,513	\$11,385,714	(\$41,201)	-0.36%
Other (BOCES Rent, Interest, PILOTs)	482,000	367,000	115,000	31.34
Monroe County Sales Tax	850,000	850,000	0	0
Real Property Tax Levy	14,724,821	14,298,719	426,102	2.98
Reserves	908,674	1,172,224	(263,550)	-22.48
Appropriated Fund Balance	1,123,946	400,000	723,946	180.99
TOTAL	\$29,433,954	\$28,473,657	\$960,297	3.37%



Among the factors affecting the proposed budget and tax rate:

- Continuation of support for instructional programming, remediation, and mental health
- Increases in health insurance contributions
- Continued under-funding of Foundation Aid

How the district is keeping taxes down:

- Cooperative bidding for natural gas and electricity and taking advantage of current low rates
- Savings in transportation costs by partnering with another district
- Use of equipment, debt service, technology, and certain employee benefits reserves
- Closer analysis of individual line items in both revenue and expenditures
- Participation in the Urban-Suburban Transfer Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the budget-to-budget increase?

The budget-to-budget spending difference is a 3.37% increase. This increase includes a one-time transfer to the capital fund for East Rochester's portion of a board approved \$22 million BOCES capital project which is offset by BOCES aid. This transfer did not contribute to the budget gap. Without this transfer, the budget-to-budget increase is 1.9%.

Why is the tax levy projected to increase by 2.98%? The district adheres to the New York State guidelines for determining our allowable tax levy limit. This year, the 11-element formula indicated that our maximum allowable levy limit is 4.02%. We continue to strive to strike a balanced approach, looking long-term to balance the budget through reduction of expenditures, use of reserves and the tax levy. The proposed tax levy increase is 2.98% which is below the allowable levy limit in order to keep tax rates as reasonable as possible given the current economic environment.

Were any spending reductions made to the proposed 2020-21 budget during the development process?

Yes. Initially, the district had to close a gap of approximately \$1.3 million due to an overall decrease in state aid while having increases relating to mandated salary and benefits costs. The pandemic widened our gap due to further reductions of state aid, a projected loss in sales tax revenue and dwindling interest and earnings. Reductions in salaries and related benefits were made across all areas of the district. Specifically, one full-time instructional position and one full-time non-instructional position were made vacant and will not be filled next school year.

Additionally, two full-time non-instructional positions will also be reduced. Finally, in an unprecedented act of unity, the entire school district faculty and staff agreed to a salary pause for the 2020-21 school year.

What happens if the budget isn't approved by the public?

Per NYS law, School Boards can submit a budget to the voters no more than twice before a contingent budget must be implemented. If the proposed budget is defeated once, the Board may conduct a re-vote or go straight to a contingent budget. NYS law requires that a contingent budget not include certain non-ordinary contingent expenses AND that the new budget must have a tax levy that is not greater than the previous year's tax levy. The Board of Education is charged with determining a contingent budget. A contingent budget would result in a budget gap of approximately \$500,000, requiring a reduction in services and programs.



School Budget Notice

	Budget Adopted for the 2019-20 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2020-21 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2020-21 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$28,473,657	\$29,433,954	\$29,007,852
Increase/Decrease for the 2020-21 School Year		960,297	534,195
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		3.37 %	1.88%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.81 %	
A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$14,298,719	\$14,724,821	
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)	\$14,298,719	\$14,724,821	\$14,298,719
F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$0	\$0	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$14,298,719	\$14,724,821	
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)	\$14,298,719	\$14,724,821	
I. Difference: (G - H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$3,355,042	\$3,372,905	\$3,310,533
Program Component	\$20,645,387	\$20,951,018	\$20,622,288
Capital Component	\$4,473,229	\$5,110,031	\$5,075,031

*If a school district budget is defeated twice, state law requires a Board of Education to adopt a contingent budget based on certain criteria, which include teachers' salaries and ordinary contingent expenses subject to a cap on the administrative portion of the budget, with no increase in the tax levy over the prior year.

Ordinary contingent expenses are defined by the Board of Education as necessary to operate and maintain school buildings and the educational program; preserve the district property; and ensure the health and safety of students and staff. Expenditures such as new and replacement equipment and salary increases for certain employees in some cases would be eliminated.

(*) The contingency budget for the 2020-21 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated, was calculated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law and in accordance with Chapter 97 of the Laws of 2011.



What is STAR?

According to the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance, there are two types of STAR exemptions:

Basic STAR

- Available to owner-occupied, primary residences where the resident owners' and their spouses income is less than \$500,000
- Exempts the first \$30,000 of the full value of a home from school taxes

Enhanced STAR

- Provides an increased benefit for the primary residences of senior citizens (ages 65 and older) with qualifying incomes
- If you receive the Basic or Enhanced STAR exemption, the amount of your savings is listed on the bill and is used to decrease the amount you owe

Under the Budget Proposed
for the 2020-21 school year

Estimated Basic STAR
Exemption Savings¹

\$775

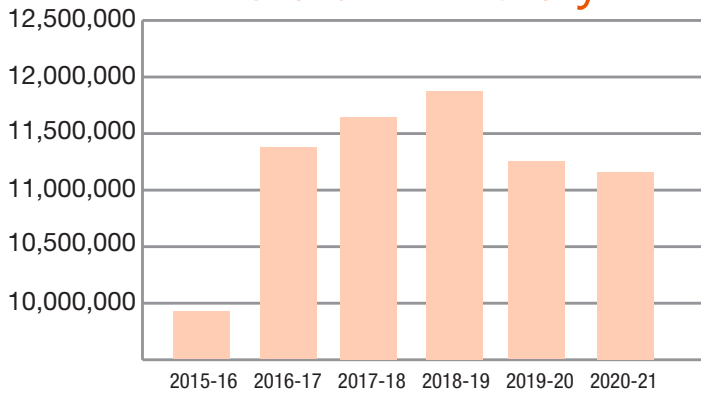
Estimated Enhanced
STAR exemption savings

\$1,701

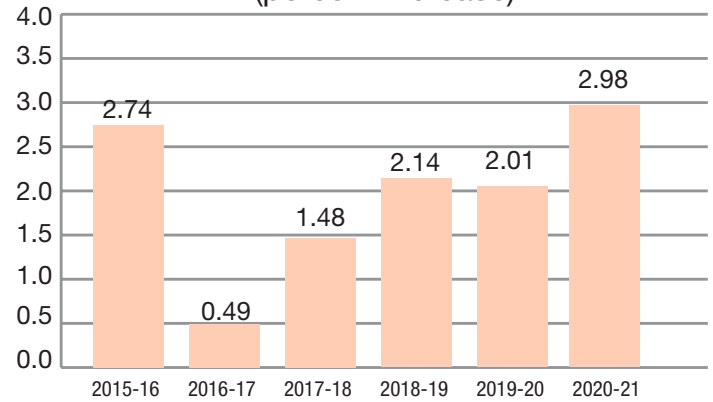
¹The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by the section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2020-21 by the qualified voters of the East Rochester Union Free School District, Monroe County, New York, will be held on Tuesday, June 9. All voting will take place via absentee ballots. Each household will receive two absentee ballots which must be returned to the District Clerk no later than 5 p.m. on June 9. By law, any ballots received after 5 p.m. cannot be accepted, regardless of postmark date.

(Budgeted) State Aid History



Tax Levy Change History (percent increase)



Enrollment And Staffing

	PK-12 In-District	Outside Placements	Total Public Enrollment	Private and Home-School	TOTAL	Faculty	Staff	Administrators	TOTAL
2016-17	1,009	46	1,055	103	1,158	117.6	89	11	217.6
2017-18	1,005	46	1,051	103	1,154	114.6	89	11	214.6
2018-19	1,009	46	1,055	103	1,158	114	85	11	210
2019-20	1,013	46	1,059	124	1,183	109.6	83	12	204.6
2020-21 (projected)	1,023	48	1,071	124	1,195	108.6	80	12	200.6

General Fund Budget

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the East Rochester Union Free School District be authorized, during the 2020-21 school year, to expend the sum of \$29,433,954, the amount determined necessary to operate the educational and support programs of the District, as presented at the Annual District Meeting, and to levy the necessary tax therefore.





Board Of Education

Two candidates are running for two open board seats. The three-year term expires June 30, 2023.



Mrs. Jennifer Majewski Lesinski

Residence: Lives in Pittsford with husband, Dan, and two children (tenth-grader Sam and Sarah, Class of 2018 graduate)

Education and employment: Salutatorian of the East Rochester High School Class of 1989; earned a bachelor's degree in English, with a minor in Spanish, cum laude, from SUNY Geneseo in December 1992 and a master's

of business administration in marketing from the University of Rochester's Simon School in 1997; employed as vice-president of marketing for St. John's Senior Services (prior to that was employed by YMCA of Greater Rochester for two years as vice-president of marketing and mission advancement, and Hillside Family of Agencies for 14 years as marketing coordinator, manager, and director). Also serves as an adjunct professor in the School of Business at Roberts Wesleyan College, annually teaching a graduate level course in Public Relations for its Masters in Strategic Marketing Program.

Community involvement: East Rochester Union Free School District Board member since July 2014 (Vice President, 2016-2018; and President since July 2018); served on the Elementary Site-Based Team (also known as the Shared Decision-Making Team) for 2 years; member of PTA and formerly, the Special Education PTA; parishioner at St. Jerome's Church; current board member of Epilepsy-Pralid, Inc.; former board member of Rochester Hearing & Speech Center, Westside YMCA, Rochester Area Marketing Association, and Leadership Rochester; volunteers with CauseWave Partners (formerly the Ad Council of Rochester), consulting in communications for area nonprofits.

Comments: It is an honor and privilege to seek a third term for membership on the East Rochester Union Free School District Board of Education. These past six years while I have served in partnership with fellow board members, faculty, and staff, we have helped lead East Rochester through times of both growth and challenge; adding new programs that have strengthened our district's position as a 21st century learning institution; making tough decisions with the goal of future fiscal viability for the district, all the while keeping the interests of students and families at the forefront of our decision-making. As a proud graduate of East Rochester, mother of one current ER student and one graduate, and the daughter of John Majewski, who taught in ER for more than 30 years, I am historically rooted and deeply invested in this community and its school district. School board members play a significant role within the school system. Through my many years of volunteer board service and professional work experience in area nonprofits, I understand the importance of fiscal management and protecting organizational viability for future generations. If re-elected to continue my representation of the interests of community members, parents, and students, I would be humbled and greatly moved to continue the foundation of educational commitment and excellence on which the 'Home of Champions' was built – and the example by which I was raised. I have fond memories of my time in East Rochester schools and the holistic approach to education this special community offers. I have chosen to raise my family here because of the opportunities this district provides its students – from state-winning sports teams, to enriching music and arts programming, to high-quality academics, and support for special education services. I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve the families of ER as their children build memories for years to come.

ER Senior Wins Princeton Prize for Race Relations

East Rochester High School Senior Chantel McCrea has been honored by Princeton University for her dedication and work toward racial equity in the East Rochester community. McCrea and family gathered outside the high school on March 26 to be surprised to learn she is one of only 28 high school students in the country to be selected as a Princeton Prize in Race Relations winner.

Principal Dr. Casey van Harssel nominated McCrea in recognition of her leadership and vision of the Diversity Ambassadors and their influence on the East Rochester School and community. In addition, her work has influenced districts all around NYS through her video shared as part of a work session at the annual SAANY conference.

As founding member of East Rochester High School's Diversity Ambassadors, McCrea and her group have reached several hundred area students and teachers. Her work has fostered community-wide self awareness while generating positivity and understanding. Following a districtwide climate survey that revealed race-related tensions among students, teachers and families that had previously been unacknowledged, and inspired by the

book, "The Hate You Give" by Angie Thomas, McCrea initiated a series of student- staff roundtables with candid discussions and sustained dialogue on race and difficult racial issues.

In addition, McCrea has participated in faculty meetings that discussed aspects of cultural responsiveness, one as a student panelist and one as a co-facilitator, alongside a college professor, using the sustained dialogue protocol. In addition, McCrea came into school on her day off to co-facilitate two sustained dialogue workshops as part of a professional learning opportunity for staff across grades UPK-12.

Dr. van Harssel said, "Over these last two years, I have had a front-row seat to the evolution of Chantel cultivating her leadership style and voice...While being able to quantify Chantel's impact on East Rochester's shift in cultural responsiveness may be difficult, I can say with 100% certainty that we would not be where we currently are on the journey without Chantel's leadership, drive and passion."

Recipients receive an award of \$1,000 and an all-expenses-paid trip to a Symposium on Race at Princeton University, where they meet



and engage with other Prize winners from across the country. Unfortunately, this year's symposium, which was to be held in April, was canceled due to the coronavirus situation.

McCrea has been accepted to her "dream school," Northwestern, where she plans to study political science and legal studies.

"It feels amazing to be recognized for something I am passionate about and I am thankful for the opportunities and friends I have made through the work have done," McCrea said. "Most of all though, I am thrilled to be able to make a change and inspire others to fight for marginalized communities to stop being treated as though we are dispensable by the country that was built at our expense."

★ District achievements: a return on your investment ★

East Rochester provides an exemplary education for our students. Throughout the year we celebrate student success in academics, arts and athletics through our website, news and social media and this school district newsletter. Here are a few highlights from the 2019-20 school year:

Academics:

- K-5 average class size: 17 students
- Curriculum alignment in K-5 literacy
- ER Elementary School staff celebration outstanding reading growth for K-5 students
- Primary Project through the Children's Institute helps support social and emotional needs of students through play
- 10 Advanced Placement courses
- 56 enrolled in Advanced Placement courses
- 44% of the Class of 2019 earned a Regents Diploma
- 31% of the Class of 2019 earned a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation
- 14% of the Class of 2018 earned a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation with Honors
- 34 juniors and seniors enrolled in EMCC Career and Technical Education programs
- 64 students serviced in Summer Learning Academy

Visual and Performing Arts:

- More than one third of students in grades 3-12 are in a performing ensemble and, of those, the average student is involved in two performing ensembles
- Successful production of "Into the Woods, Jr." by the Middle Level Academy
- Annual East Rochester Percussion Showcase featured ensembles from ER, Eastridge, Victor and the Eastman School of Music
- Annual Kaleidoscope Concert brought together all of our grades 6-12 student-musicians for a sampling of our music program
- Artwork of ER's talented student artists continues to be showcased in local art shows

Athletics:

- For an extended period of time, the ER boys Soccer team was ranked #1 in NYS and captured the Section V Class C Championship
- Five East Rochester Varsity Sports Teams were recognized as NYSPHSAA Scholar-Athlete teams
- A number of individual athletes won Section V Championships and competed for State Championships including recognition at Regional and State levels for Samantha Lewis, Michael Raschiatore, Cam Chambers, Jennalisse Gomez, TJ Swagler and Seamus Costello



East Rochester Union Free School District has been named to CollegeBoard's AP® District Honor Roll. ER is one of 250 school districts, and just 12 in New York, to be honored by the College Board with placement on the 10th Annual AP® District Honor Roll.

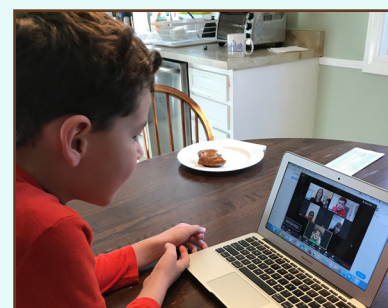
East Rochester Jr./Sr. High School is one of the best in the nation according to the annual U.S. News & World Report's 2020 Best High Schools Rankings released in April. The publication evaluated more than 17,700 public high schools across the country. According to the report, East Rochester Jr./Sr. High School ranked 3,884 on the list of best schools in the country, 338 out of 1,217 schools in New York state and 27 out of 75 schools in the Rochester, NY metro area.

Students engage in at-home learning

March 13 marked the final day students and staff spent together within the walls of the East Rochester Union Free School District for the school year. The COVID-19 pandemic, which closed schools for the remainder of the academic year, required faculty and staff to pull together to create new ways to offer instruction and maintain connections to students and families.

In the initial phase of the transition to remote learning, the aim was to support review of previous concepts and content. Over time, the aim was to deepen student skill and understanding by introducing new learning designed around the most essential standards at each grade level, subject, and content area. The district approached this learning with a focus on equity and access for all students. In fact, faculty and staff looked for ways to provide learning materials to students in their preferred modality by providing online and print resources. The district even provided 1:1 devices to all students.

"Although academics remain a focus, faculty and staff have committed to supporting the social and emotional needs of our students and families above all else through regular check-ins via email, phone calls, and video conferencing," said Interim Superintendent Richard G. Stutzman. "The faculty and staff have gone far above and beyond the call of duty and have shown unwavering commitment to our students and families during these unprecedented times."





**East Rochester Union Free
School District**

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www.erschools.org

Board Of Education

Jennifer Majewski Lesinski, President
Vincent Antonicelli, Vice-President
Patrick Flanagan
Tim Henry
Matt Hogan

Richard G. Stutzman
Interim Superintendent of Schools

Staci SanSoucie
School Business Administrator

Roberta Bilinski
District Treasurer

Kristen Adler
District Clerk and Secretary to
the Superintendent

Mary Prusak
Communication Specialist



Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Pittsford, N.Y.
Permit No. 36

*****ECRWSS
Resident

Your Vote Counts!

Voter qualifications

In order to vote on Tuesday, June 9 you must be:

- a United States citizen
- at least 18 years of age and
- a resident of the East Rochester Union Free School District for at least 30 days before the vote

Voters do not have to own property, have children in school or be registered with the Monroe County Board of Elections in order to vote. You may be asked to provide identification to validate your ERUFSD address.

Absentee ballots

All district residents will vote via absentee ballot on June 9, 2020. Two absentee ballots will be mailed to each household between May 22 and June 1. If a household requires additional ballots, please contact the District Clerk. All ballots must be returned to the district clerk no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9. By law, any ballots received after 5 p.m. cannot be accepted, regardless of postmark date.

Tax installment plan

Taxpayers can pay their school taxes in three equal installments due on or before Sept. 15, Oct. 15 and Nov. 15. The county charges a 0.2% service fee for each installment period.

For more information

A detailed budget is available for all residents seeking more information. Questions can be directed to School Business Administrator Staci SanSoucie at 248-6308.

