

# School Gram

KENMORE-TOWN OF TONAWANDA UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

## A New Start for Ken-Ton's Oldest School



Students at the former Kenmore Middle building, now officially reopened as Kenmore Junior/Senior High School

The historic school building at 155 Delaware Road in Kenmore is no longer Kenmore Middle School. The building, which has stood for nearly 100 years, has been given new life as an independent school once again and has returned to its original name: Kenmore Junior/Senior High School, or KJS for short.

Kenmore Middle School closed in 2016 as part of the "Scenario I" consolidation plan, though the

building continued to house various offices and programs including the district's innovative Big Picture Program. The Ken-Ton Big Picture Program began as a non-traditional high school program with a focus on small class advisories, internships, and project-based learning and it routinely has a graduation rate of 100%.

Because New York State no longer identified Kenmore Middle School as an independent school following the 2016 closure, Big

Picture students were considered to be enrolled at either Kenmore East or Kenmore West, and that's what would appear on their diploma. Beginning this year, however, that is no longer the case.

"Now, we are our own building, so our students are only enrolled here at Kenmore Junior/Senior High School," said Kevin Kruger, KJS Principal. "When they graduate, they will be a Kenmore Junior/Senior High graduate."

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## Budget Vote & Board Election: May 21, 2024

On Tuesday, May 21st, Ken-Ton School District residents will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed 2024-25 budget during the annual Budget Vote and Board of Education Election. Voting will take place from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, May 21st at Hoover Middle School (use the Sheridan Drive entrance). You can find detailed information regarding the proposed budget and propositions on our website at [www.ktufsd.org/budget](http://www.ktufsd.org/budget).

This was another difficult year for school districts with inflation continuing to be a challenge. Leading up to 2022, inflation had averaged only 1.58% per year over a 10-year period. Inflation spiked to 8% last year and, although it decreased this year, it has remained well above the historical average at more than 4%. Just as residents have seen significantly



Sabatino Cimato,  
Superintendent of  
Schools



Matthew Chimera,  
Board of Education  
President

higher costs for everyday expenses, school districts have seen increased prices for necessary expenditures such as instructional supplies, fuel, and utilities. Other factors included the increased cost of healthcare and contractual increases.

Through the hard work of our school and district administrators led by our finance team, we were able to balance the budget while preserving opportunities for students and ensuring the long-term financial stability of the district. We were able to accomplish this by continuing to identify ways to reduce costs and find savings wherever possible. Keeping the property tax levy at the tax cap was a major priority for the district because we are always mindful of the impact on taxpayers.

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### BUDGET VOTE & BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTION

7 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
Tuesday,  
May 21, 2024

Hoover Middle School,  
249 Thorncliff Road  
(use the Sheridan Drive entrance)

**Budget Information:**  
[www.ktufsd.org/budget](http://www.ktufsd.org/budget)

**Candidate Information:**  
[www.ktufsd.org/candidates](http://www.ktufsd.org/candidates)

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# POINTS OF PRIDE

*These are just some of the many achievements and accomplishments of students and staff over the past year.*

## STUDENTS:

- Artwork by Kenmore East student **Ava Valkwitch** won the Congressional Art Competition for the 26th Congressional District and was displayed at the U.S. Capitol.
- 3 students from Kenmore East (**Caspian Bara, Sriya Natarajan, and Nolan Vitko**) took part in Conference All-State, which represents the best musicians in NYS. Additionally, **33 students** took part in Area All-State (best in WNY) and **125 students** participated in All-County (best in Erie County).
- Kenmore West senior **Clare Day** earned a place in the National Shakespeare Competition semifinals at the Lincoln Center in NYC.
- Franklin Middle student **Jayden Gersitz** was presented the NYS Senate Liberty Medal for his role in responding to a medical emergency that occurred at a sporting event.
- Kenmore East senior **Anna Weinert** was accepted as a cellist into the Carnegie Hall Honors Performance Series String Orchestra in New York City.
- The **Kenmore East team** won 2nd place at the WNY Physics Olympics with 4 students finishing in the top 10. The **Kenmore West team** had an additional 2 students place in the top 10.
- Kenmore East students **Ali Qamachi and Jayce Schulte** earned a 2nd-place finish at the 2023 SUNY Erie Tech Wars.
- 3 students from the **Kenmore West team** placed in the top 5 at the regional DECA competition and 3 additional students placed in the top 10.
- **8 Kenmore East students** were featured at the Daemen University All High Art Exhibition and **6 Kenmore East students** were featured at the University at Buffalo 2024 WNY Regional High School Art Exhibition.
- Percussionist **Ian Saccomando** became the third Kenmore East student since 2019 to take part in the international Honors Performance Series, which took place in Sydney, Australia.



Ava Valkwitch



Ian Saccomando

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CLASS OF 2023

- **59% of graduates** earned at least one of the following designations: Advanced Regents Diploma, Advanced Regents Diploma with Honors, Technical Endorsement on their Regents Diploma, Seal of Civic Readiness, and Seal of Biliiteracy.
- **159 graduates** earned an Advanced Regents or Advanced Regents with Honors.
- **27 students** were candidates for the prestigious International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. IB students are accepted into some of the most selective colleges in the U.S. and can even begin college as sophomores.
- **65 students** earned a Technical Endorsement on their Regents Diploma for completing a Career & Technical Education Program, including many through the Kenmore East/Kenmore West Career Academies.
- **163 students** earned the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness.
- **64 students** earned the NYS Seal of Biliiteracy in French, German, or Spanish.



Scenes from the Kenmore East graduation (top photo) on June 24th, the Kenmore West graduation on June 24th, and the Big Picture Program graduation on June 16th.

- The **Kenmore West Wind Ensemble, Blue Devil Big Band, and Symphonic Band** all won 1st place in their respective divisions at the Darien Lake Music Competition. The Blue Devil Big Band won several additional distinctions including the Grand Judges Award.
- Kenmore East students **Hari Balakrishnan, Ivan Rivera, and David Rubrecht** won 2nd place in the Junior Achievement of WNY Live Stock Market Challenge.
- 4 elementary school students (**Jack Cave** and **Natalie Cave** from Lindbergh, **Hailey Scholl** from Franklin, and **Aria Biddle** from Edison) were winners in the Buffalo-Toronto Public Media PBS KIDS Writers Contest.
- Kenmore West student **Gaia Godinho** was celebrated for earning the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest honor presented by the Girl Scouts.
- **24 Spanish language students** studied in Spain through this year's world language exchange partnership.

# POINTS OF PRIDE



Kenmore/Grand Island/Lockport Girls Ice Hockey

## TEAMS & ATHLETES:

- The **Kenmore/Grand Island/Lockport Girls Ice Hockey** team won its 8th Section VI Championship in 13 years.
- Swimmer **Amelia MacKinnon** was the Section VI champion in the 50 freestyle and the NFL champion in both the 100 and 200 freestyle, qualifying for the NYS meet for the 2nd year in a row.
- **Kenmore East Boys Ice Hockey** won the Section VI Championship.
- **Kenmore West Unified Bowling** won the Section VI Championship.
- The combined **Kenmore Boys Bowling** team won the Section VI Championship.
- **Kenmore West Girls Varsity Basketball** won the NFL Championship.
- Swimmers **Rowan Riley, Alex Schuler, Dominik Engel, and Brady Garcia** won the NFL championship in the 200 medley and 400 free relay. Brady was also the NFL champion in the 200 and 500 freestyle and Alex was also the NFL champion in the 100 backstroke.
- Senior **Aniyah Mungo** of the Kenmore West Indoor Track Team won the Section VI Championship in the 300 meters.
- Last spring, the Kenmore East Track and Field Team produced 3 individual sectional champions: **Henry Morris** (400m hurdles), **Sidney Morris** (outdoor 800m and indoor 1000m) and **Daniel Reinhart** (outdoor pole vault).
- **27 Kenmore East and Kenmore West athletes** in the Class of 2023 signed their intent to compete at the college level.



Kenmore East Boys Ice Hockey



Kenmore Boys Bowling

- Kenmore West student **Matthew Lansing** was drafted by the Erie Otters of the Ontario Hockey League.
- Kenmore West High School junior **Jack Johnson** was selected to represent Section VI on the NYS Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.



Matthew Lansing

## STAFF, SCHOOLS & DISTRICT:

- Superintendent **Sabatino Cimato**, Director of Facilities **Tim Ames**, Kenmore West Technology Teacher **Kevin Day**, and Franklin Cook Manager **Maria Marano** received the WNY Education Service Council Award of Excellence.
- The Ken-Ton Board of Education (President **Matthew Chimera**, Vice President **Todd Marquardt**, and Trustees **Paul Spors, Karen Whitelaw, and Lee Ann Vogt**) and Superintendent **Sabatino Cimato** received the Erie County Association of School Boards Diana R. Miller Service to Education Award. It was the 1st time this award was presented to an entire board and superintendent.
- For the 14th year in a row, the **Ken-Ton School District** was named a national Best Community for Music Education.
- **Franklin Middle** was 1 of only 18 schools in NYS to be named a National PTA School of Excellence for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years.
- Director of K-12 Education **Anne Martell** received the inaugural Community Partnership Award from the UB Office of Educator Preparation.
- Health teacher **Julie Hodge** was named NYS Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance Western Zone Health Teacher of the Year.
- Academies Coordinator **Nancy Pray** was awarded the Niagara Frontier Industry Education Council 2024 Commitment to Education Award.
- Music teacher **Patrick Towey** was named Chorus Master for Buffalo Opera Unlimited's production of "La Bohème."
- Hoover Middle teacher **Melisa Dettbarn** was selected for the crew of the JOIDES, an advanced marine research vessel, on a journey from Iceland to Amsterdam for the International Ocean Discovery Program.
- Board President **Matthew Chimera** and Vice President **Todd Marquardt** earned the Erie County Association of School Boards Shining Star Award and Trustee **Paul Spors** earned the Rising Star Award. President Chimera also earned the NYS School Boards Association Board Member Mastery Award and was inducted into the NYS Softball Hall of Fame.



Melisa Dettbarn

# District Launches Bus Driver Training Program

*Free Program Covers All Costs & Provides Support Such as Childcare Stipends, Benchmark Incentives*

The Ken-Ton School District has been awarded a one-year \$249,808 grant by the NYS Department of Labor (NYSDOL) Unemployed/Underemployed Worker Training Program to create a first-of-its-kind free school bus driver training program. The grant will be implemented by Ken-Ton’s Adult & Community Education Department and will address the ongoing bus driver shortage, which has affected school districts throughout Western New York and the nation.

The new Ken-Ton School District Class B School Bus Driver Training Program will include six six-week sessions, each with a goal of 12 licensed drivers for a total of 72 over the course of the year. The program will not only provide the free training necessary to become licensed and prepared for a career as a bus driver, it will also remove barriers by providing other supportive services such as permit/license fees, fingerprinting costs, childcare stipends, and benchmark incentives for successful licensing.

“As a district, we have worked extremely hard to attract bus drivers, from signing/referral bonuses and hosting hiring events to comprehensive training and licensing support for candidates,” said Superintendent Sabatino Cimato. “Although these efforts have helped us mitigate the bus driver shortage here in Ken-Ton, this situation continues to challenge our ability to offer the best possible transportation services for our students and families.”

“Transportation is a key part of ensuring that our children are able to receive a quality education,” said NYSDOL Commissioner Roberta Reardon. “The Department proudly supports this innovative program, which will improve access to learning opportunities for those looking to become bus drivers, an occupation that is in high demand statewide.”

The Ken-Ton School District Adult & Community Education Department, which is among the largest operations of its kind in WNY, operates programs in a multitude of areas including community education, adult English as a Second Language, GED preparation, and workforce development. The goal of the department is to offer additional opportunities in the greater Ken-Ton community that extend beyond the traditional K-12 framework.

“One of our biggest priorities as a department is increasing opportunities for adult learners in our community,” said Director of Adult & Community Education Liza Acanfora. “This project is an example of how local school districts can work in partnership with New York State to find creative ways to address pressing needs within our workforce and provide career



## TRAINING PROGRAM INCLUDES:

- 6 weeks of free instruction
- Driving experience
- Guidance through the entire application process
- Permit/license fees
- Fingerprinting costs
- Childcare stipends
- Benchmark incentives

*Learn more at [www.ktufsd.org/drivers](http://www.ktufsd.org/drivers)*

## BENEFITS OF BECOMING A DRIVER:

- Competitive wages
- Signing bonus of up to \$1,000
- NYS retirement pension
- Sick days/holidays
- Family-friendly hours
- Summers off
- Split schedule (provides time for midday errands)
- The opportunity to play a vital role in children’s education!

opportunities for the unemployed or underemployed.”

Bus drivers are one of the most important roles in K-12 education. Every child’s education depends upon their ability to get to and from school safely. Bus drivers are also the first school staff that students see each day and the last they see before returning home. Ken-Ton is a prime destination for prospective bus drivers, offering competitive wages, a signing bonus of up to \$1,000, NYS retirement pension, sick days/holidays, a split schedule (providing time for midday errands), family-

friendly hours, and summers off. For more information on becoming a bus driver in Ken-Ton, visit [www.ktufsd.org/drivers](http://www.ktufsd.org/drivers).

“This new program will create a seamless pipeline for anyone to become a bus driver, which is an extremely rewarding profession,” said Director of Transportation Graham Violino.

The District was grateful to receive letters of support from Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, New York State Assemblyman William Conrad, SUNY Erie, the Ken-Ton Chamber of Commerce, and Catholic Charities as part of the application process.

# Students & Staff Leave Mark on Aqua Lane Park

Students in the Ken-Ton School District are continuing to make a positive difference for one of the Town of Tonawanda's greatest treasures: Aqua Lane Park.

Aqua Lane Park is located on River Road along the shoreline of the Niagara River. Through the park runs the Niagara River Greenway Shoreline Trail, a paved pathway which runs along Lake Erie and the Niagara River. The Niagara River Greenway, a non-profit organization dedicated to restoring and improving access to the Niagara River, operates this trail and has given partner organizations the opportunity to "adopt" and maintain sections of it. Through this initiative, the Ken-Ton School District adopted the section between Aqua Lane Park and the Erie County Water Authority. During the school year, students and staff regularly come together and devote their Saturday to picking up trash at Aqua Lane Park and cleaning up this section of trail to ensure it remains in excellent condition.

Students and staff are positively impacting the park in other ways as well. Each year, Ken-Ton students compete in the Environmental Ambassador Summit, an event organized by the Niagara River Greenway, where teams from local high schools present proposals to improve green space in the zip codes affected by the former Tonawanda Coke Plant. Last year, students from the Kenmore West Environmental Club under the leadership of former club advisor Denise Amato worked with Lisa Davidson, Instructional Support Specialist for Gr. K-12 Science, to present a proposal to install viewfinders and signage along the shoreline. The goal was to increase awareness of three small islands situated in the Niagara River and the important role they play for many different species of birds.

The islands go by different names but are commonly referred to as Strawberry, Tern, and Motor Island. They are located between



Students and staff devote a Saturday to cleaning up the Niagara River Greenway Shoreline Trail at Aqua Lane Park.

the Town of Tonawanda and the southern tip of Grand Island. The group's goal was to allow students and visitors to the park to learn about the different species of migratory birds that live and nest on these islands such as Bald Eagles, Great Egrets, Common Terns, and Great Blue Herons.

An effort has been underway to make this a reality. Lisa and her family set out to raise \$6,000 to install the signage and viewfinders at Aqua Lane Park, which is located right across the water from these islands and is a perfect place to observe wildlife there. She teamed up with the Rotary Club of Kenmore to hold a meat raffle in December to support this effort. She also partnered with Michelle Lockett from the Niagara River Greenway and the organization's graphic design artist, Sonia Merkel, as well as the Town of Tonawanda to design the signage and install the signs and viewfinders. This work is expected to be completed in the coming months.

## Kenmore West Natatorium Named for Former Coach Robert Pufpaff

The Kenmore West High School Natatorium officially has a new name.

At the May 2023 Budget Vote and Board of Education election, voters approved a proposal to name the natatorium in honor of longtime Kenmore West swimming coach Robert Pufpaff. On Friday, January 5th, school and district administrators gathered together with friends, family, and former athletes of Mr. Pufpaff for a renaming ceremony to make it official.

Mr. Pufpaff coached the Kenmore West Swimming and Diving team for 30 seasons, winning nearly 400 meets in the process. He helped lead the Blue Devils to six league championships, including back-to-back-to-back titles starting in 1997. The student athletes he coached included four All-Americans and eight honorable-mention All-Americans. He was also a Kenmore West art teacher for 37 years and was one of the initial coaches and founding members of the Tonawanda Titans, which is in its 51st year as a program.

Mr. Pufpaff is a graduate of Maryvale High School and was inducted into the Kenmore West



Former Kenmore West swimming coach Robert Pufpaff is celebrated as the Kenmore West natatorium is named in his honor.

Athletic Hall of Fame in 2006. He is also a member of the Western New York Softball Hall of Fame.

The proposal was advanced by Kenmore West alumni who were members of the Kenmore West Swimming and Diving Team under Pufpaff's leadership. The proposal was the first to be considered under the Ken-Ton School District's new naming procedure and was approved by the Naming Committee, Board of Education, and community last year.



## Showing Support for PE Teacher Kelly Strong

In January, 26Shirts released a special limited edition T-shirt to show support for Lindbergh Elementary physical education teacher Kelly Strong, who has been undergoing treatment for advanced mantle cell lymphoma. On March 4th, Lindbergh students and staff came together for a special assembly to show their support with many staff wearing their "Kelly Strong" T-shirts. During the assembly, Kelly surprised students and staff by coming to the assembly and updating them on her progress. 26Shirts founder Del Reid presented a donation from the company with proceeds from the T-shirt sales to assist Kelly's family with medical expenses. Staff across the district also showed their support by wearing their T-shirts during the March 8th Superintendent Conference Day.

# Board of Education & Superintendent Honored by ECASB

The Ken-Ton School District was proud to learn that the five members of its Board of Education (President Matthew Chimera, Vice President Todd Marquardt, Trustee Paul Spors, Trustee Karen Whitelaw, and Trustee Lee Ann Vogt) and Superintendent of Schools Sabatino Cimato will be awarded the Erie County Association of School Boards (ECASB) Diana R. Miller Service to Education Award. This is the first time an entire Board of Education and Superintendent have received this honor.

ECASB is a non-profit organization that provides support such as training, advocacy, and other services for school boards throughout Erie County. The Diana R. Miller Service to Education Award was established in 1981 and is given in

honor of the late Diana Miller, a longtime school board member in the Lancaster Central School District who also served as ECASB President. The award is given to individuals who have contributed to the betterment of education and assisted ECASB in its mission of supporting school districts and boards of education in Erie County.

To see all five Board of Education members and the Superintendent recognized with this award, and the fact that they are the first full Board of Education and Superintendent to receive this distinction, is a tremendous honor for the Ken-Ton School District. The Board of Education members and Superintendent Cimato will receive their award at the ECASB Awards Dinner in June.



Top row, from left, President Matthew Chimera, Trustee Paul Spors, and Superintendent Sabatino Cimato. Bottom row, from left, Trustee Karen Whitelaw, Vice President Todd Marquardt, and Trustee Lee Ann Vogt.

# All Students Now Eligible to Receive Free Breakfast & Lunch

During the summer, the Ken-Ton School District was excited to announce that all Gr. K-12 students are now eligible to receive free breakfast/lunch meals. Thanks to the hard work of the district Food Service Department led by Director Kim Roll and Assistant Director Kristin Kryszczuk, all schools are now designated as CEP (Community Eligibility Provision) schools for the very first time. Until then, only five of the district's 10 schools were designated as CEP schools and students at the remaining five buildings whose families were not already eligible for free/reduced-price lunch had to pay full price for meals. This is no longer the case.

The district was able to provide free breakfast/lunch for all students during the COVID-19 pandemic, but this expired at the



Students enjoy lunch at Hoover Elementary School.

start of the 2022-23 school year. There were proposals to make meals free for all students across New York State, though these were not ultimately adopted. The Food Service Department immediately took steps to apply and secure the CEP designation for all schools district-wide and this application was approved in June.

All families are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. It has been demonstrated that students who have access to nutritious meals perform better in school. The Food Service Department works hard to provide delicious and nutritious meals for students every day. The staff prides itself on providing a diverse selection of options that students enjoy, incorporating fresh locally-grown fruits/vegetables whenever possible.

# Innovative Lessons Unveiled at Future Ready Product Showcase

On Thursday, February 29th, a group of teachers demonstrated innovative projects as part of the second annual Ken-Ton School District Future Ready Project Showcase. The event was the culmination of months of hard work by 11 teachers who participated in the Future Ready Project Design Team this year. These talented educators spent several weeks developing innovative instructional activities incorporating technology, engineering, or computer science topics that can be replicated in elementary/middle school classrooms everywhere in order to inspire students to become "future ready."

The program was supported by the NYS Education Department Smart Start Program. Nine Ken-Ton teachers along with two from the Tonawanda City School District (TCSD) participated. They were led

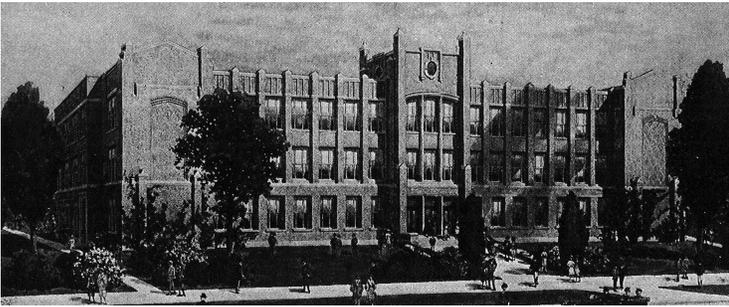
by Ken-Ton's Director of K-12 Education Anne Martell, who coordinated the initiative, and Instructional Support Specialists for Technology, who provided programming support in the classroom. The 11 educators engaged in professional development and then came up with their own ideas for unique classroom activities that leverage instructional technology to engage students in critical thinking and collaborative learning.

Through the Smart Start program, the teachers received grant support to help bring their ideas to life in their own classrooms. The Future Ready Project Showcase provided the opportunity to demonstrate these activities outside of the classroom environment for the very first time. Teachers also showcased their project design process, materials/supplies used, and student outcomes.



Ken-Ton teachers unveil their proposals at the 2nd annual Future Ready Project Showcase.

This program was just one small part of a five-year \$1.1 million grant through the Smart Start Program.



At left, the original artist's rendering of Kenmore Junior/Senior High School published by the district in 1923. At right, an aerial image of Kenmore shows the newly constructed school building before it was expanded, doubling its size.

# Kenmore Junior/Senior High to Celebrate 100th Anniversary

Continued from Page 1

In recent years, the Big Picture Program has been so successful that the district has expanded it to include seventh grade and has doubled each grade level cohort, from 15 to 30 students. The district has also launched other secondary programming at KJS including the equally innovative Crossroads Academy. This program, which is led by KJS Assistant Principal Danielle Frye, is designed for students who are not on track to meet NYS graduation requirements. The instructional framework provides flexibility through both in-person instruction and an online credit recovery platform. It has a maximum enrollment of 30 students and its goal is empowering all to find success and graduate.

Kenmore Junior/Senior High houses other programs as well, including the district's thriving Adult and Community Education programs and Staff Development Center. It's also home to the Community Room, where Board of Education meetings take place.

The expansion of the Big Picture Program and the creation of Crossroads Academy not only brought more students to the building, but it also made it a junior/senior high school just as it was when it opened in 1924. The district submitted an application to NYS to officially reopen the school with Kenmore Junior/Senior High as its new name and this application was approved in June 2023.



A chemistry class led by instructor Carl Baisch in 1924

Kenmore Junior/Senior High School is the oldest building owned and operated by the district. In the early 1920s, the young Village of Kenmore was growing at an extremely rapid pace and the district's only school at the time, Kenmore High School (which served both elementary and secondary students) was filled to

capacity. At the time, district enrollment had increased from less than 250 to nearly 1,000 students over the previous 10 years with even greater growth predicted on the horizon. On January 15th, 1923, residents gathered at Village Hall to approve the construction of a new school building at a total cost of \$495,000. It was planned by the firm of Franklyn and William Kidd, prominent architects who designed numerous historically significant buildings in the region including Buffalo's Rand Building.

"Care has been taken to plan a building adapted for wide school and community use which will be an incalculable asset to the community, and one in which Kenmore will take ever increasing pride," the district stated at the time in a communication to the public entitled "A Square Deal to the Children of Kenmore." "We believe that this prosperous community can afford to provide as good advantages for our children as neighboring villages and cities are doing for their children and from conversations with parents and taxpayers, we believe the proposed plan will meet with your approval."

The building opened in 1924. The old Kenmore High School

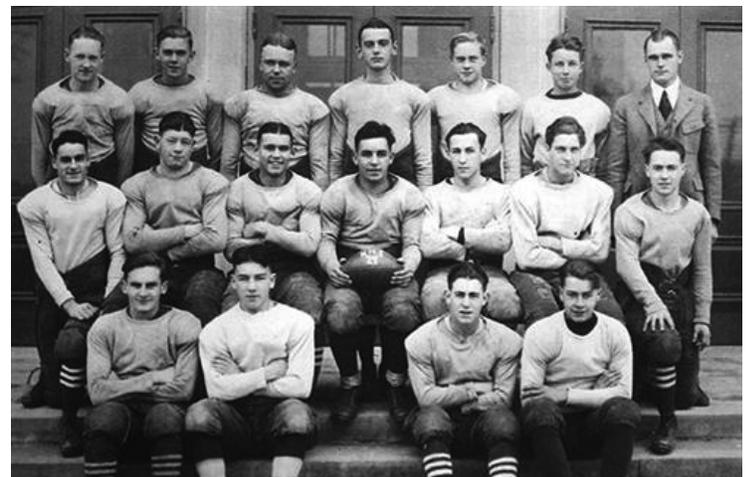
building down the street became George Washington Elementary, which still stands today as part of a multi-use facility. The Crosby Field athletic complex was also constructed during this time on the same plot of land. Crosby Field was named after Lt. Harry E. Crosby, one of two Kenmore residents who died fighting in World War I a decade earlier. This provided a new home for the school's extremely successful football team, which was undefeated the same year the school opened.

The new school was a magnificent addition to the prosperous Village of Kenmore and soon became the center of the community. As enrollment continued to increase during the Roaring Twenties, Kenmore Junior/Senior High underwent significant expansion, doubling its size. The building was eventually renamed Kenmore Junior High School when a new building for Gr. 10-12 students, now Kenmore West, opened up the street in 1940. It was later renamed Kenmore Middle School in the 1980s when 6th grade was added and 9th grade moved to the high schools. It continued under this name even after the building officially closed in 2016.

For decades, all Ken-Ton students walked these halls for at least their 7th-through-9th-grade education. The earliest students and faculty of Kenmore Junior/Senior High gave rise to the district's rich traditions and legacy which were carried on at Kenmore West and, eventually, at Kenmore East as well. The traditions and legacy of the building will be celebrated this fall which will mark Kenmore Junior/Senior High's 100th anniversary.



The Kenmore Junior/Senior High School marching band in 1938 under the direction of Carl Hann



Kenmore High School's undefeated football team in 1924, the year Kenmore Junior/Senior High School opened

**SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

**Bookmobile Visits Edison During Library Construction**



At Edison Elementary, Library Media Specialist Dan Gattuso worked hard to provide access to books as ongoing construction work necessitated the temporary shutdown of the library beginning last May. He traveled from class to class providing students with reading materials and coordinated visits by the Buffalo & Erie

County Public Library Bookmobile so students could continue checking out books. The library reopened in February with significant improvements including new flooring, ceiling, presentation board, and bookshelves.

**Franklin 4th-Graders Make a Difference in the Community**

A group of fourth graders at Franklin Elementary are making a difference in the community. The group is called K-Kids and it focuses on collaboration, leadership skills, and good character. The club is busy throughout the year serving as the school's hallway Safety Patrol and supporting local events and organizations. They meet twice a month before school to plan and implement various initiatives such as making Veterans Day posters, creating tokens of appreciation for staff, supporting the Ken-Ton Meals on Wheels, and fundraising for the annual Jerry Starr SleepOut.



**Linde Secures \$5K Grant for Holmes Mentor Partnership**



Earlier this year, representatives from Linde presented Holmes Elementary with a \$5,000 grant secured through the national company to support its long-standing Mentor Program partnership with the school. Linde, one of the town's largest employers, is an industrial gas manufacturer located near the school. For

approximately 25 years, Holmes students have been mentored after school by Linde staff. During the check presentation ceremony, five students were treated to a live demonstration of a Rubens tube which showed how sound waves can impact fire.

**Hoover Elementary Hosts 'Science Fun Festival'**

Kindergarten students at Hoover Elementary had a wonderful time at this year's "Science Fun Festival" implemented in partnership with the Buffalo Museum of Science. The festival correlated with a weather unit the school had begun implementing through BOCES4Science. The four stations were Liquid Nitrogen (water cycle/clouds), Van De Graff (static/thunderstorms), Animal Adaptations (climate), and Sailing Cars (wind). Students had a wonderful time moving from station to station and augmenting their understanding of various weather-related concepts.



**Mobile Planetarium Visits Lindbergh to Educate About Eclipse**



In the weeks leading up to the much-anticipated solar eclipse, Lindbergh Elementary invited the Buffalo Museum of Science to bring its mobile planetarium to teach first-grade students the basics about the once-in-a-lifetime event. Students learned about what happens during an eclipse, what it would look like in outer

space, and the special glasses needed to observe it safely. Students also had the opportunity to observe the rotation of the earth as day turned into night as well as being able to identify the Big Dipper, Jupiter, and Venus in the night sky.

**Franklin Middle Students Take Part in NASA Collaboration**



Franklin Middle students recently took part in an exciting program sponsored by NASA called the GLOBE program (short for Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment), a unique collaboration that brings together student scientists from around the world. Students entered meteorological readings

into a NASA database such as temperature and other atmospheric conditions such as cloud cover. Best of all, NASA was able to verify all the measurements taken by our students using data from satellites.

**King Arthur Baking Company Visits Hoover Middle**

Hoover Middle seventh-grade students were given a very special treat earlier this year thanks to a visit by the King Arthur Baking Company arranged by FACS (Family and Consumer Sciences) teacher Carol Glor. All seventh-grade students gathered together in the auditorium to watch Leanne Reynolds, the company's Bake for Good Program coordinator, make delicious home-made bread from scratch. Best of all, each student went home with a kit containing all the ingredients they'd need to make two loaves (one to enjoy and one to share) plus step-by-step instructions so they could do it at home.



**County Executive Visits KJS to Teach About Local Government**



The Big Picture Program at Kenmore Junior/Senior High recently welcomed County Executive Mark Poloncarz to educate students about county government. It was made possible by senior Jonathan Hassan who took it upon himself to reach out to Poloncarz's office as the class was learning about local government. During

his visit, Poloncarz explained the differences between federal, state, and local government and how it impacts people's lives. He also discussed how important it is for students to get involved in local government and make their voices heard.

**KE Dance Club Offers Opportunities for Students of All Abilities**

A club operating at Kenmore East High School has been giving students of all abilities the chance to showcase their talents through dancing. It's called Dance Club and, with more than two dozen members, it continues to grow. The group is dedicated to giving students of all abilities opportunities to have fun, get active, make friends, and showcase their talents. They perform at a range of events including public performances such as its amazing annual recital which took place on February 7th in the gym. Dance Club is just one of many ways Kenmore East promotes a culture of unity, encouragement, and inclusion.



**KW Girls Leadership Academy Mentors Elementary Students**



Students at Hoover Elementary have new friends and mentors thanks to the Kenmore West High School Girls Leadership Academy (GLA). The GLA consists of 11 Kenmore West students who provide mentoring, support, and friendship to younger students. Over an eight-week period, academy members spent time

with second-grade students at Hoover Elementary to teach how to spread kindness and express gratitude through various activities. The GLA has assisted participating students in building their leadership skills and pursuing community service projects.

PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTAL CAPITAL PROJECT

**NO TAX IMPACT (WILL BE FUNDED ENTIRELY THROUGH THE CAPITAL PROJECT RESERVE)**

During the May 21, 2024 Budget Vote and Board of Education Election, residents will have the opportunity to vote on a proposed \$8.5 million supplemental capital project. This supplemental project would be funded entirely from the district's Capital Reserve, which can only be used for capital improvement purposes. This means it would have **zero impact on property taxes**. This supplemental project is designed to address capital priorities that have not been able to be addressed in the current project due to inflation.

Since 2021, construction work has been taking place throughout the district as part of the ongoing Capital Project. Like many

school districts throughout the country, historic inflation has limited the amount of work that can be completed within the voter-approved Capital Project budget. Construction costs increased 28.3% in the span of just two years, which would be the equivalent of \$21.2 million for the \$75 million project. To put that into perspective, the two schools slated for the final phase of the project (Kenmore East and Lindbergh Elementary) were originally budgeted for a combined \$15.1 million, so the cost increases from inflation would have been enough to eliminate all work at both buildings.

Through the great work of district administrators and construction partners,

much of the scheduled work will be able to be completed, though certain components had to be removed from the project. The district remains committed to addressing as many priorities as possible and that is what this supplemental project is designed to do.

Once again, this \$8.5 million supplemental project will be funded entirely from the Capital Reserve Fund (which can only be used for capital improvement purposes) and will have **zero impact on property taxes**. This work will also be eligible for NYS Building Aid and it is the district's goal to maximize aidability to ensure that as much funding returns to the district as possible.

**The Supplemental Capital Project Will Address the Following Priorities:**



A renovated single point of entry with a new vestibule and a restructured main office layout at Lindbergh Elementary to enhance security and provide an improved customer service experience



The replacement of the roof at Kenmore East High School, which is a major health/safety priority



The installation of hundreds of cameras to ensure sufficient coverage in all buildings for enhanced safety/security



Continued upgrades to PA and door access systems for enhanced safety/security



New directional LED lighting (which is designed to minimize the impact on neighbors) to facilitate night games for expanded sports scheduling options

**Construction Work Continues to Transform District Facilities**

All across the district, ongoing construction work is resulting in significant improvements to schools and programs. The ongoing Capital Project, which was approved by voters in February 2020, is addressing critical needs in all schools and enhancing safety/security for students.

Construction began in June 2021 and will continue in overlapping phases. The current phase of construction began last year and encompasses significant work at Edison Elementary and the Hoover Complex. The final phase of construction encompasses work at Lindbergh Elementary and Kenmore East.

Highlights of this work include:

- More secured entrances (single points of entry) at schools for enhanced security
- New drinking water pipes at all schools to improve water quality
- A new adaptive playground located outside the Hoover Complex (completed in 2022)
- At Kenmore West, a beautiful new entrance and a redesigned parking lot and pick-up/drop-off loop, as well as upgrades to the old gymnasium (completed in 2023)
- At Kenmore East, a new multi-use



artificial turf athletic field (completed in 2022), as well as a new bus loop and a beautiful new entrance

- At Edison Elementary, a new bus loop and pick-up/drop-off lane to address traffic/safety concerns during arrival and dismissal, as well as a classroom addition to address a critical need for classroom space
- At Hoover Elementary, a new pick-up/drop-off loop to address traffic/safety concerns during arrival and dismissal, as well as a classroom addition to address a critical need for classroom space

For updates and more information, visit [www.ktufsd.org/CapitalProject](http://www.ktufsd.org/CapitalProject).



Clockwise, from top left, the new Kenmore West entrance; the new Edison vestibule; and construction work inside the Hoover addition.

**BUDGET INFORMATION**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Budget	\$191,678,603	Tax Levy	\$95,859,713
Budget Increase	\$5,642,889	Tax Levy Increase	\$2,528,613
Budget-to-Budget % Increase	3.03%	Tax Levy % Increase	2.71%
Fund Balance & Reserve Use	\$7,438,105	Estimated Increase (\$100K Full Market Value House)	\$12.70/month

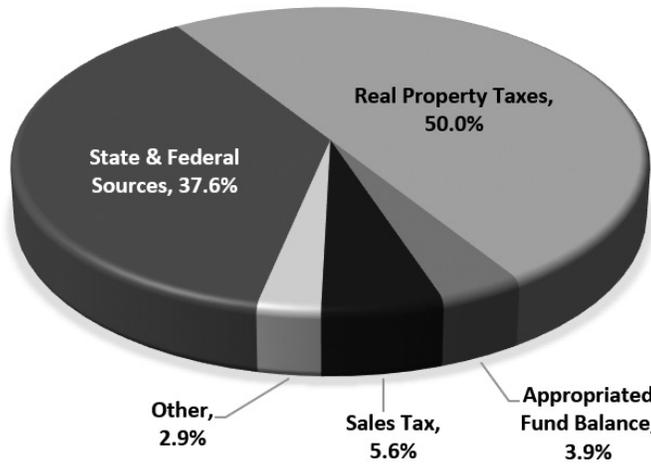
**2024-25 REVENUE COMPARISON**

	<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	<b>2024-25 Budget</b>	<b>2024-25 Increase</b>
<b>State &amp; Federal Sources</b>	\$69,364,401	\$72,086,985	\$2,722,584
<b>Real Property Taxes</b>	\$93,331,100	\$95,859,713	\$2,528,613
<b>Appropriated Fund Balance</b>	\$8,032,413	\$7,438,105	-\$594,308
<b>Sales Tax</b>	\$10,250,000	\$10,700,000	\$450,000
<b>Other</b>	\$5,057,800	\$5,593,800	\$536,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$186,035,714	\$191,678,603	\$5,642,889

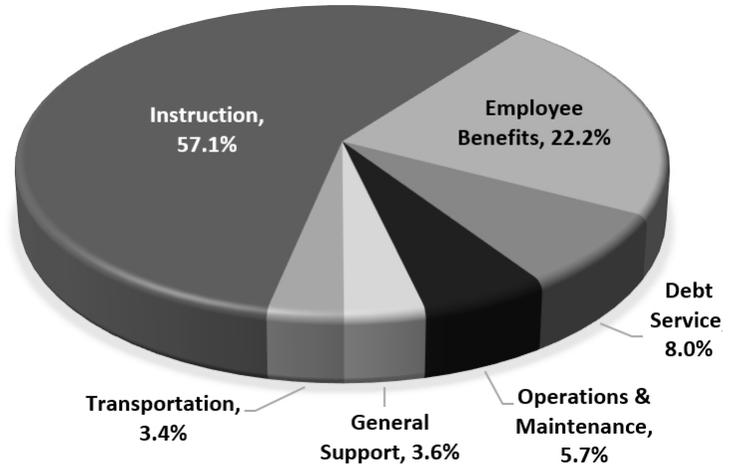
**2024-25 EXPENDITURE COMPARISON**

	<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	<b>2024-25 Budget</b>	<b>2024-25 Increase</b>
<b>General Support</b>	\$7,225,595	\$6,926,075	-\$299,520
<b>Operations &amp; Maint.</b>	\$10,802,245	\$11,009,425	\$207,180
<b>Instruction</b>	\$105,656,210	\$109,374,687	\$3,718,477
<b>Transportation</b>	\$6,525,023	\$6,532,776	\$7,753
<b>Employee Benefits</b>	\$40,565,423	\$42,561,942	\$1,996,519
<b>Debt Service</b>	\$15,261,218	\$15,273,698	\$12,480
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$186,035,714	\$191,678,603	\$5,642,889

**2024-25 REVENUE COMPARISON**



**2024-25 EXPENDITURE COMPARISON**



**VOTING INFORMATION**

**Voter Qualifications:**

- Voters must be a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age or older, and a resident of the district for 30 days prior to the vote.
- Those who are not registered to vote will need to complete an affidavit confirming that they are a qualified voter.
- Photo identification and proof of citizenship, age, and residency are required for those who are not registered.

**Early Mail/Absentee Ballot Information:**

- Contact the District Clerk at (716) 874-8400 ext. 20342 for an early mail or absentee ballot application. Those on the permanent absentee ballot list do not need to apply for an absentee ballot. Applications must be received no later than seven days prior to May 21, 2024. Early mail/absentee ballots must arrive no later than 5 p.m. the day of the vote on May 21, 2024.



BUDGET INFORMATION

Proposed Budget Preserves Opportunities for Students

Continued from Page 1

The proposed budget also preserves valuable investments that have been made in recent years such as the expansion of the extremely successful Big Picture Program and Crossroads Academy and it continues our focus on safety, security, and technology.

The budget will be the first proposition residents will be asked to vote on. Residents will also vote on a proposed \$8.5 million supplemental Capital Project. This project will be funded entirely through our Capital Reserve funds, which can only be used for capital improvement purposes, having zero impact on property taxes. The goal of this project is to address priorities that were not able to be completed in our ongoing Capital Project due to inflation. We witnessed construction costs increase 28.3% in the span of just two years, which

limited the amount of work that can be completed within the current Capital Project budget. Through the great work of our team, we will still be able to complete much of the scheduled work, though certain components had to be removed from the project. This proposed \$8.5 million supplemental project will address some of these components using Capital Reserve funds. This includes a renovated secured single point of entry and restructured main office layout at Lindbergh Elementary, the replacement of the Kenmore East roof, continued district-wide camera installation, upgrades to PA and door access systems, and new directional LED lighting at the Kenmore East athletic fields. This work will be eligible for NYS Building Aid and it is our goal to maximize aidability to ensure that as much funding returns to the district

as possible.

Residents will have the opportunity to vote on a third proposition, a proposal to rename the Kenmore East High School natatorium after former Kenmore East swimming coach Lee Herbst. This proposal was considered as part of our new facility naming procedure and was recommended by the Naming Committee and approved by the Board of Education. Residents will also vote on candidates for Board of Education. You can find information about the candidates at [www.ktufsd.org/candidates](http://www.ktufsd.org/candidates).

You can find additional details on the proposed 2024-25 budget and propositions online at [www.ktufsd.org/budget](http://www.ktufsd.org/budget). We encourage everyone to learn about the budget and vote on Tuesday, May 21st. As always, thank you for your continued support for the students of our district.

WHAT VOTERS WILL SEE ON THE BALLOT

Proposition 1: Proposed 2024-2025 Budget (funds all district-operated public schools/educational programs as well as services provided for all non-public/private schools located in the district as required by law).

PROPOSITION NO. 1: 2024-2025 BUDGET

RESOLVED, that the basic budget of \$191,678,603 for the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025 as presented by the Board of Education, is hereby approved and adopted and the required funds therefore are hereby appropriated and the necessary real property taxes required shall be raised by a tax on the taxable property in the District to be levied and collected as required by law.

Yes No

Proposition 2: Proposed \$8.5 million supplemental Capital Project funded through the Capital Improvements Reserve Fund (no tax impact). See Page 9 for details.

PROPOSITION NO. 2: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT 2024

RESOLVED, that (a) the Board of Education (the "Board") of the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District, Erie County, New York (the "District") is hereby authorized to undertake a "Capital Improvements Project, 2024" (the "Project") consisting of the reconstruction, rehabilitation and renovation, in part, and the construction of improvements and upgrades to various District buildings and facilities (and the sites thereof) to implement various health, safety, accessibility and Code compliance measures and various other measures that are included and generally described in (but are not to be limited by) the Project Plan that was referred to in the public notice of the vote on this Proposition, and to expend or apply toward the Project, to fully fund it, the entire balance in the District's Capital Improvements Reserve Fund, 2016 (which stood at \$8,566,777 when last calculated on June 30, 2023, with such figure to be modestly increased by the amount of additional interest that will be accrued in such Fund through June 30, 2024), with such Fund then to be terminated, and with the District thus not having to borrow any monies or impose any additional taxes for the financing of the Project.

AND FURTHER NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that an Environmental Assessment Form has been completed for all of the anticipated work involved in the Project, which constitutes an Unlisted action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA"), a thorough review of the Project's potential environmental impacts has been undertaken, it has been found that the Project will not result in a significant adverse impact on the environment, and a reasoned elaboration of the SEQRA review and findings has been provided in a Negative Declaration.

Yes No

Proposition 3: Proposal to rename the Kenmore East High School natatorium after former Varsity Coach Lee Herbst (approved by the Naming Committee and Board of Education).

PROPOSITION NO. 3: RENAME THE KENMORE EAST HIGH SCHOOL NATATORIUM "THE LEE HERBST NATATORIUM"

WHEREAS, pursuant to Policy 31.11, the Board of Education of the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District established procedures for the naming of District facilities; and in accordance with such procedures, a committee was formed to consider a request to change the name of the Kenmore East Natatorium;

and upon careful and thorough consideration in accordance with such procedures, the committee has recommended that the Kenmore East Natatorium be renamed "The Lee Herbst Natatorium" to reflect the service of former swimming Coach Lee Herbst;

and in order to rename the Kenmore East Natatorium, the procedures require the Board of Education, by a supermajority vote, to support the submission of the proposition to the District voters;

and the procedures also require District voters to approve the proposition to rename the facility; and therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District is hereby authorized to rename the Kenmore East Natatorium, "The Lee Herbst Natatorium."

Yes No

Board of Education Candidates: Vote for 1

Frederick Floss

Budget/proposition information at [www.ktufsd.org/budget](http://www.ktufsd.org/budget) & candidate information at [www.ktufsd.org/candidates](http://www.ktufsd.org/candidates)



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 Lee Ann Vogt, Trustee

**Sabatino Cimato,**  
 Superintendent of Schools

**\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSEDDM**  
**RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER**

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 a weekly update from  
 Superintendent Sabatino  
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**Budget Vote & Board of Education Election: 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at Hoover Middle School**

<b>Overall Budget Proposal</b>	<b>Budget Adopted for the 2023-24 School Year</b>	<b>Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year</b>	<b>Contingency Budget for the 2024-25 School Year*</b>
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$186,035,714	\$191,678,603	\$189,149,990
Increase/Decrease for the 2024-25 School Year		\$5,642,889	\$3,114,276
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		3.03%	1.67%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.12%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$93,331,100	\$95,859,713	
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)	\$93,331,100	\$95,859,713	\$93,331,100
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$925,000	\$3,112,444	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$92,406,100	\$92,770,224	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$92,406,100	\$92,747,269	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$22,955	
Administrative Component	\$17,826,625	\$18,414,878	\$18,185,199
Program Component	\$139,491,140	\$144,207,243	\$142,406,585
Capital Component	\$28,717,949	\$29,056,482	\$28,558,206

**Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2024-25 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.**

The Board of Education will review the expenditure budget and make decisions on those items to be included based on Education Law Section 2023. The tax levy increase would be \$0 through cuts to programs and staff (including non-contingent items that would have to be removed in accordance with New York State Law).

**\*\*List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)**

Description	Amount
Capital Project Proposition	\$8,566,777

	<b>Under the Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year</b>
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup>	\$496

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2024-2025 by the qualified voters of the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District, Erie County, New York, will be held at Herbert Hoover Middle School in said district on Tuesday, May 21, 2024 between the hours of 7:00am and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the Herbert Hoover Middle School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

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