



Voters to decide on \$28.7 million budget for 2021-22 school year

Proposed budget maintains programming; tax levy under ‘cap’

On Tuesday, May 18, Stillwater Central School District residents will vote on a proposed \$28,717,619 budget for the 2021-22 school year. The spending plan preserves existing programs and services, includes the purchase of three new school buses, and funds updates to carpeting, furnishings and paint in the elementary library. The vote will be held from 12-9 p.m. in the district auditorium.

Spending under the proposal would increase by 9.68% over the current-year budget. This includes previously voter-approved debt service payments associated with the recently completed capital project and a proposition to fund construction of a new concession stand.

“The proposed budget maintains programs and services in our schools while remaining fiscally responsible to district residents,” Superintendent Patricia Morris said. “Our priority remains to provide high quality programs for our students and innovative professional development opportunities for our staff. We will be able to do so within the proposed spending plan.”

District officials estimate that the school tax rates, which are the amount of taxes residents pay per \$1,000 of assessed property value, will increase by 2.06%. Final school tax rates are

set in August. *(See page 3 for more about the tax rates.)*

If voters approve the proposed budget, the tax levy—the total amount of money a school district can raise through property taxes—would increase by 4.36%. This increase is below Stillwater’s maximum allowable tax levy increase as determined by the state’s tax levy “cap” formula (4.66%).

On May 18, voters will elect four members to the Board of Education. Three seats are for three-year terms, and one will be a two-year term for a seat vacated early by a board member.

District residents will also vote on a proposed budget and trustees for the Stillwater Public Library. *(See page 5 for more information.)*



BUDGET VOTE AT-A-GLANCE

WHEN & WHERE:
TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2021
 12:00-9:00 P.M.
 STILLWATER AUDITORIUM

PROPOSED BUDGET

\$28,717,619

Spending Increase	Tax Levy Increase	Projected Tax Rate Increase
9.68%	4.36%	2.06%

PROJECTED TAX RATES			
	2020-21	2021-22*	% Change
Stillwater	\$14.69	\$14.99	2.06%
Saratoga	\$13.30	\$13.58	2.06%
Easton	\$582.38	\$594.37	2.06%
Schaghticoke	\$57.97	\$59.16	2.06%

*Tax rates are only estimates, and are per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Rates and % change calculations are rounded from six decimal places.

Letter to the community...

I am pleased to present the proposed 2021-22 school year budget that was adopted by the Stillwater Board of Education at our meeting on April 13, 2021. This year's budget, totaling approximately \$28.7 million, reflects and upholds the board-approved district goals.

This was certainly a challenging time to put together the budget for the school district, as we found ourselves in the midst of so much uncertainty with New York State's fiscal health and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board worked collaboratively with the administration toward achieving our educational goals and developing a budget that allows for the continuation of all district programs, services and initiatives, while also maintaining fiscal responsibility to the taxpayers. This year's budget continues to support our investment in our students and staff through academics and staffing, unique classroom programming, technology integration, professional development, extracurricular opportunities, continuation

of preventive maintenance programs, purchases of equipment and school buses, and the capital project.

The 2021-22 budget maintains all line items with increases only in salaries, employee benefits and debt service for the capital project. With the leadership of the Board of Education, and careful day-to-day financial management by our administration, along with the support of the community, the financial health of our district remains strong.

In the midst of COVID and having to close the school and go to remote learning, we were also able to move our capital project along faster than anticipated, and I am pleased to report that we are very close to completion. Once we are able to fully open our doors, our students will be able to enjoy the new arts wing with updated areas for music and drama. The parking lots and roadways have been repaved, and bus garage updates and renovations have been completed along with other miscellaneous items that were included in the project. We also were able to set money aside to replace

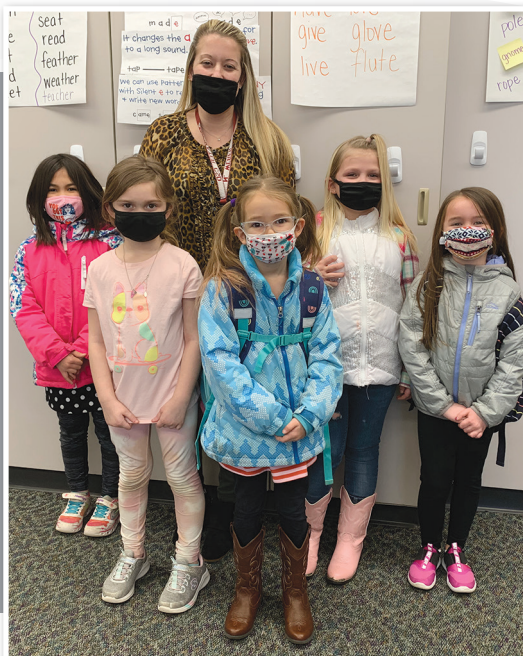
our wonderful turf field surface! Work on the turf field will begin this summer.

In my 25 years of serving on the Stillwater School Board, I have seen the district go through many challenging times, but I have found that with the support of the school community, we were able to work through them and come out stronger. COVID has certainly disrupted just about everything, and not just at school. While COVID has been challenging, it has also been a time for all of us to come together and rise as a school community. This year and last, we have seen students, teachers, parents and community members rise to the challenges put before them.

As is the case every year, we have much to be proud of and thankful for in our school district. During this time, the Board of Education is most grateful for how everyone has come together to ensure student growth and learning during a period of uncertainty. We thank you for your consistent support of your schools. Please come out and vote on Tuesday, May 18, from 12 noon to 9 p.m.

— Sincerely, Valerie Masterson, Board President

Stillwater Elementary teacher Nichole Weber, pictured here with some of her students, has earned National Board Certification, the highest mark of achievement for a K-12 educator. She joins colleagues Amy Carpenter, Julia Chesney, Rachel Fridholm, Kara Pitkin and Liz Retell in becoming an NBCT. Five more Stillwater teachers are working toward their certification.



Large rooms including cafeterias and gyms are being used for classes such as music and band to allow for safe social distancing.

BUDGET



Q What's different in the proposed budget?

A The 2021-22 budget proposal increases spending by \$2,535,641, or 9.68% over the current year. Much of that increase is driven by rising costs associated with salaries, employee pensions and benefits, as well as state and federal mandated programs and services. In addition, debt service payments associated with the recently completed capital project are set to begin next year and the budget includes funding for the construction of a new concession stand.

The district also plans to purchase three new school buses for \$350,000. However, no debt will be issued for this purchase.

TAXES

Q What is the difference between the tax levy and tax rate?

A The tax levy is the total amount of money a school district raises in taxes each year from all property owners in the district. Tax rates are calculated by dividing the total amount of the levy by the total taxable assessed value in a community. Tax rates are affected by changes in both municipal assessments and state equalization rates, which are determined in the summer. The tax rate is used to calculate each individual property tax bill.

Q How would the proposed budget affect my taxes?

A While the tax levy would increase by \$501,827 next year, total property assessments within the district are also growing, meaning there are more properties across which to distribute the tax levy. So, while the tax levy is increasing 4.36%, the projected tax rate increase is 2.06% because

there is more taxable value sharing that cost.

Actual tax rates are set in August. These rates are based on final property assessments (provided by each town) and equalization rates for each town, which are provided by the state Office of Real Property Services.

REVENUES

Q What is the district's maximum allowable tax levy?

A Under New York State law, the amount that the district can increase its tax levy is limited to a certain amount based on a tax levy limit calculation. Using a formula developed by the Office of the State Comptroller, Stillwater's 2021-22 maximum allowable tax levy limit is 4.66%. However, the proposed 2021-22 budget would increase the tax levy by 4.36%, or \$501,827, which is below what the law allows.

Q How does the Global Foundries PILOT affect the district's budget?

A The Global Foundries PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) continues to provide a guaranteed source of revenue for the district. The district is planning to receive \$1,500,000 through the PILOT in 2021-22. Although this is a decrease from the current year based on the terms of the agreement, the PILOT

continues to provide revenue that supports programs and services for students.

VOTING

Q Why is there a vote for the Stillwater Public Library on the ballot?

A On May 18, residents will vote on a separate proposition to approve the Stillwater Public Library budget and elect trustees. This is separate from the school district's budget. The library is seeking to increase its budget from \$296,900 in 2020-21 to \$309,400, to support and maintain services. This money will be collected by the district and then forwarded to the library. The Stillwater Public Library has the same service boundary as the school district, however the library is not governed by the district.

Q What happens if the budget is not approved?

A Under New York State law, if the school budget is defeated, the Board of Education typically has two options: put the same or a modified budget up for another vote on the third Tuesday in June, or immediately adopt a contingent budget. If residents defeat the proposed budget during a second vote, the Board must adopt a contingent budget.

TAX RATES

Town of	2020 Rate Per \$1,000 Assessed Value	2021 Rate Per \$1,000 Assessed Value	*2022 Rate Per \$1,000 Assessed Value
Stillwater	\$14.29	\$14.69	\$14.99
Saratoga	\$12.93	\$13.30	\$13.58
Easton	\$610.12	\$582.38	\$594.37
Schaghticoke	\$57.74	\$57.97	\$59.16

* The tax rates projected for next year are only estimates. The estimated tax rates do not reflect any STAR or other tax exemptions that may reduce individual tax bills. This chart reflects projected tax rates based on the anticipated growth in property assessments.

CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATES

Track and turf field, bleacher and doors project approved

On March 24, 2021, Stillwater residents voted 109 to 27 to approve the district's proposal to improve the track and turf field surfaces and middle school gym bleachers and doors. The capital project will result in no tax increase. The majority of its \$1.3 million cost will be paid for using funds already approved by district residents in 2018 and reserved for this use, with the remainder coming from the district's fund balance.

"We thank Stillwater residents for supporting the project, which will help us address current needs while providing a safer environment for our students and the community members who use our facilities," Superintendent Patricia Morris said. "The approved project will also allow us to have our fields and facilities ready and in good shape for the fall 2021 athletics season."

Phase 2 project updates better serve students, community

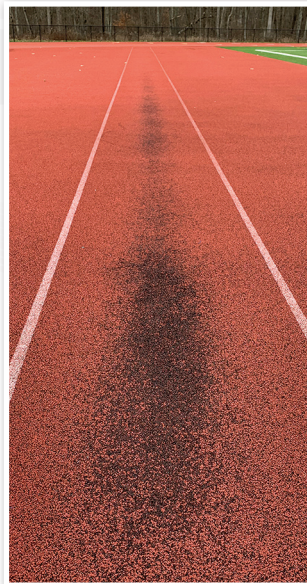
Updates and improvements to the auditorium made during phase 2 of last year's capital project are benefiting students, staff and the school community. They include a new entry to the auditorium wing and stage area and improvements to the rigging and fly systems, lighting and sound, curtains, seats and air conditioning. Students are learning and practicing in an up-to-date, modern space, and the community will experience the upgrades during upcoming district events.

Phase 2 also authorized the construction of a concrete pad at the high school for future improvements to the district's athletic facilities.

Estimated Revenues: Where the money comes from

	2020-21	2021-22	Change
Real Property Taxes and STAR	\$11,518,614	\$12,020,441	\$501,827
Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$1,700,000	\$1,500,000	-\$200,000
Interest and Penalties on Property Taxes	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
Tuition Students, Non-Resident	\$0	\$0	\$0
Admissions	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Charges for Services	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$0
Interest and Earnings	\$150,000	\$80,000	-\$70,000
Medicare Retiree Drug Subsidy	\$40,000	\$45,000	\$5,000
Refund BOCES Services Approved	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$0
Miscellaneous	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
State Aid	\$10,773,364	\$12,147,178	\$1,373,814
Other Federal Aid	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$0
Federal Medicaid Aid	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0
Transfer from Debt Service	\$275,000	\$275,000	\$0
Revenue Subtotal	\$24,631,978	\$26,242,619	\$1,610,641
Fund Balance Applied	\$1,550,000	\$2,475,000	\$925,000
TOTAL Revenues (including Fund Balance)	\$26,181,978	\$28,717,619	\$2,535,641

Auditorium updates include a Midas sound system and replacement rigging, fly and lighting systems, curtains, seats and air conditioning.



Replacement of worn track and turf field surfaces will begin this summer.

Middle school bleachers and doors will also be replaced, all to provide safer facilities for the school community.



Estimated Expenditures: Where the money goes

ADMINISTRATIVE (9.7% of total budget)	2020-21	2021-22	Change
Board of Education	\$31,654	\$14,939	-\$16,715
Central Administration	\$245,524	\$251,281	\$5,757
Finance	\$433,364	\$435,288	\$1,924
Staff	\$131,575	\$134,575	\$3,000
Central Data Processing	\$169,000	\$179,000	\$10,000
Special Items	\$298,750	\$303,750	\$5,000
Curriculum Development and Supervision	\$829,313	\$852,160	\$22,847
Employee Benefits	\$597,875	\$616,875	\$19,000
Subtotal	\$2,737,055	\$2,787,868	\$50,813
PROGRAM (68.3% of total budget)	2020-21	2021-22	Change
Program Legal Fees	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0
In-Service Training	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$0
Teaching - Regular School	\$6,806,186	\$7,188,286	\$382,100
Programs for Students with Disabilities	\$2,850,399	\$2,926,451	\$76,052
Career and Technical Education	\$450,000	\$485,000	\$35,000
Teaching – Special Schools	\$49,600	\$49,600	\$0
Instructional Media	\$745,766	\$765,379	\$19,613
Pupil Services	\$1,174,608	\$1,248,438	\$73,830
Pupil Transportation	\$1,260,889	\$1,304,997	\$44,108
Employee Benefits	\$5,308,938	\$5,440,187	\$131,249
Transfer to Federal Fund	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0
Subtotal	\$18,851,386	\$19,613,338	\$761,952
CAPITAL (22% of total budget)	2020-21	2021-22	Change
Central Services	\$1,509,470	\$1,642,220	\$132,750
Special Items	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
Bus Purchases	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$0
Employee Benefits	\$326,937	\$336,688	\$9,751
Debt Service	\$2,297,130	\$3,477,505	\$1,180,375
Transfer to Capital Fund	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$400,000
Subtotal	\$4,593,537	\$6,316,413	\$1,722,876
TOTAL Expenditures	\$26,181,978	\$28,717,619	\$2,535,641

Winter is gone, but the kindness continues. Our kindergartners earned an opportunity to go snowshoeing in February by collecting the most food for the Backpack Program. Stillwater Elementary is a Kindness Certified School.



PROPOSITIONS & BOE ELECTION

Concession stand proposition

Community members will vote on a separate proposition to authorize the district to construct a concession stand at Stillwater High School, including site work and installation, at a total estimated cost not to exceed \$375,000. The proposition would allow the district to draw from its unrestricted fund balance to cover this cost.

Public Library proposition

Community members also will vote on a proposition requested by and for the Stillwater Public Library to raise \$309,400, separate and apart from the annual School District budget, to support, maintain and fund the operating budget of the library. This money will be collected by the district and then forwarded to the library. The Stillwater Public Library has the same service boundary as the school district, however the library is not governed by the district. Voters will also be asked to elect three members to the library's Board of Trustees for at-large terms running from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024.

Board election

There are four open seats on the Board of Education. Three are "at-large" seats for three-year terms from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2024, and one is for a two-year term, from May 19, 2021, to June 30, 2023, to fill a seat vacated early by a board member. The three persons receiving the three highest number of votes will be elected to the three-year terms, and the person receiving the fourth highest number of votes will serve the two-year term. At the time this publication went to print, the final slate of candidates was not yet available.

School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2020-21 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2021-22 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2021-22 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$26,181,978	\$28,717,619	\$27,705,276
Increase/Decrease for the 2021-22 School Year		\$2,535,641	\$1,523,298
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		9.68%	5.82%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.23%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$11,518,614	\$12,020,441	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	N/A	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	N/A	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	N/A	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C – D)	\$11,518,614	\$12,020,441	\$11,518,614
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$846,879	\$858,252	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$11,719,026	\$12,055,898	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$11,518,614	\$12,020,441	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$200,412	\$35,457	
Administrative Component	\$2,737,055	\$2,787,868	\$2,787,868
Program Component	\$18,851,386	\$19,613,338	\$19,550,995
Capital Component	\$4,593,537	\$6,316,413	\$5,366,413

*If voters do not approve the proposed 2021-22 budget within two votes, the Board must adopt a contingent budget, which limits the property tax levy increase to zero percent, with no exclusions. The tax levy would need to be reduced by \$501,827. Deliberations would center around using fund balance, finding additional revenue, and reducing expenditures. Reductions to be considered would include non-mandated courses, athletics and extracurricular activities. The above represents one possible scenario available to the district.

** 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
		\$0
		\$0
		\$0

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2021-22 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$471
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1. The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law. The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2021-22 by the qualified voters of the Stillwater Central School District, Saratoga County, New York, will be held at the Stillwater Central School District Auditorium in said district on Tuesday, May 18, 2021, between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., prevailing time, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by digital machine.

A report of tax exemptions, showing how much of the total assessed value on the final assessment roll or rolls used in the budgetary process is exempt from taxation, is annexed to the budget document, which is available on the district website at www.scsd.org and in the district's business office at 1068 Hudson Avenue, Stillwater, NY 12170.

Celebrating our TOP SENIORS

Congratulations to Kiersten Conroy, who has been named the Stillwater Class of 2021 valedictorian, and Teya Staie, who has been named salutatorian.

Class of 2021 Valedictorian Kiersten Conroy

Kiersten is an accomplished student who's been involved in many activities during her time at Stillwater, including Varsity Club, Key Club, National Honor Society, yearbook committee, varsity soccer, indoor and outdoor varsity track and field, varsity cross country and link crew leadership program, where she was commissioner. She also served as a Spanish tutor and volunteered outside of school as an intern for Elise Stefanik's Congressional campaign.



When asked what she likes best about Stillwater, she said the sense of community and how everyone supports each other. She said what she will miss most about Stillwater are "many of the teachers who were personally invested in my success and helped me in every way they could."

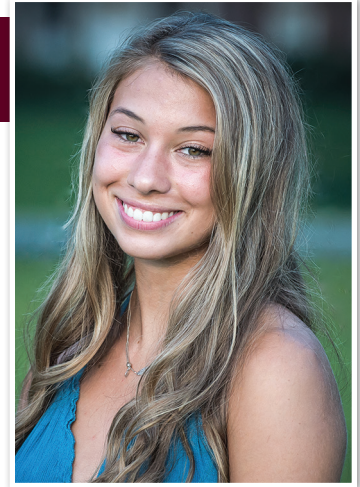
"I would like to thank my teachers, specifically Mrs. Cook, Mr. West, Mr. McClements and Mr. Godfrey, who have helped and encouraged me on this path," Kiersten said. "I would also like to give my biggest thanks to my family, who have taught me to never settle and always pushed me to be my best while also celebrating my accomplishments. And lastly, I would like to thank the healthy competition between myself and the salutatorian, Teya Staie, that has pushed us both to be the best we can be."

In the fall Kiersten plans to attend either the University of Rochester or Quinnipiac University to major in biomedical sciences. She will study toward a future profession in anesthesiology or neurology.

When asked what advice she would offer to fellow Stillwater students, Kiersten said, "The biggest piece of advice I can give is to push yourself with challenging classes, but also to ask for help whenever you need it. Teachers want you to succeed, and they will help you do your best."

Class of 2021 Salutatorian Teya Staie

Teya has been an achiever in the classroom and on the athletic field during her time at Stillwater, where she served as class secretary, National Honor Society member, varsity soccer team captain, and member of the link crew leadership program and varsity indoor/outdoor track team.



When asked what she likes best about Stillwater, she said, "I liked how involved the community is and how everyone is so close and supportive of one another. We are all one big family!"

When asked what she will miss most about her home school district, Teya said, "I will definitely miss playing soccer for Stillwater the most. I will also miss my teachers and my classmates that I've grown up with."

"I would like to thank my parents and sibling for pushing me to do my best and always being supportive, my teachers for always being there for me and giving me their time when I needed extra help (Mrs. Cook especially), and my teammates and coaches for helping to make me the player I am today."

Teya, who plans to major in nursing, is still undecided which college she will attend this fall, but said she's leaning toward Clemson University. After college, she plans on working as a travel nurse for a couple of years and then eventually becoming a surgical physician assistant or an acute care nurse practitioner.

When asked what advice she would offer to fellow Stillwater students, Teya said, "Time really does go by fast, so cherish every moment you have, because it's going to be over before you know it. Set goals for yourself and work as hard as you can until you achieve them. In five years you aren't going to remember the silly things that seem like the end of the world while you are living it, so just let them go and do what makes you happy and don't apologize for it."



Class of 2021

TOP 10 STUDENTS

The Stillwater Central School District Class of 2021 top 10 students were named on March 31. Congratulations to Kiersten Conroy (Valedictorian), Teya Staie (Salutatorian), Tyler Juliano, Amanda Lambiase, Tyler Paffen, Emma Brown, Caroline Farnan, Luca Rapisarda, Abigail Reeves, and Sydney Frank and Marley Mueller (tied for tenth). Superintendent Morris notified the students and celebrated their accomplishment with cake pops (for the Pop Ten!), via safe social distancing and a remote Google meeting.

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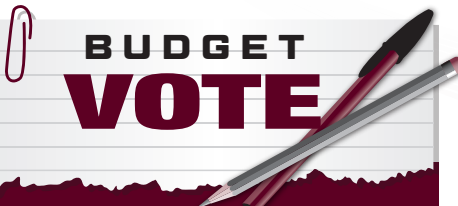
SUPERINTENDENT

Patricia Morris

Editor: Monique Jacobs

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BUDGET VOTE

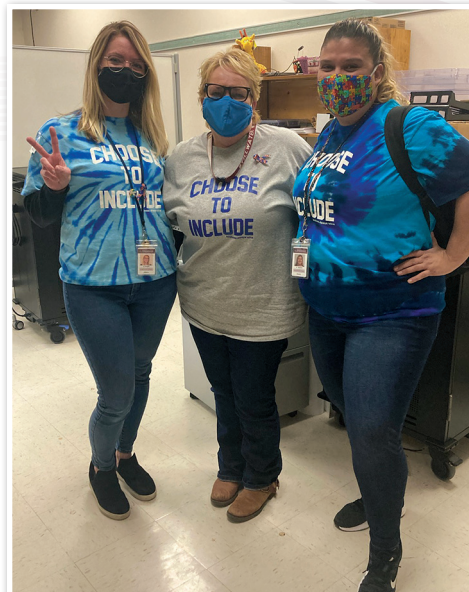
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30	31					

School Budget Vote & Board of Education Election:

Tuesday, May 18, 2021
12:00-9:00 p.m.
Stillwater Auditorium

What's on the ballot?

- ✓ Proposed \$28,717,619 budget for the 2021-22 school year.
- ✓ Proposed construction of a concession stand at the high school at a cost not to exceed \$375,000.
- ✓ Elect four (4) members to the Board of Education.
- ✓ Proposed \$309,400 budget for the Stillwater Public Library and election of trustees for the library.



"Choose to include everyone, because kindness always wins!"
was not only the theme of Autism Awareness/Inclusion of Differences Month, observed in April, but is a mission embraced by Stillwater staff and faculty, including from left, Danielle Wright, Marla Scarchilli and Karina Ramirez.

Absentee Ballot Information

All completed absentee ballots must be received by the district no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 18, 2021, in order to be counted.

VOTER QUALIFICATIONS

To vote, you must be:

- ✓ A resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.
- ✓ 18 years of age or older.
- ✓ A citizen of the United States.
- ✓ Registered with either the school district or the county Board of Elections.

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