



BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
1628 Quaker Road, Barker NY 14012

Annual Budget Vote – June 9, 2020 until 5:00 PM prevailing time

The Barker Central School District **Board of Education Annual Meeting and Election** has been changed from Tuesday, May 19, 2020 to **June 9, 2020** and will take place remotely by absentee ballot only.

Please note that at least one absentee ballot has been sent to the household. Instructions for completing the absentee ballots package will be included in the mailing. If your household needs an additional ballot(s) for qualified voters, please contact the District Clerk via email at meadie@barkercsd.net or by calling the District Office at 716-795-3832.

Absentee ballots must be received by the District on or before June 9, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. prevailing time.

A Letter from the Board of Education President, Randall B. Atwater

May 2020

Dear BCS district residents:

I write to you during a period of great stress and challenges for our families, communities, schools, states and nation. The Barker Central School administration and staff have worked tirelessly to make the best of a difficult situation and to serve the educational and nutritional needs of our students to the best of their ability with today's constraints.



While the future is cloudy in many ways, we have prepared a budget for the 2020-2021 school year as presented herein. Bottom line, the expenditure budget is down slightly (0.1%) from the current school year. The district continues to utilize the best possible budgeting practices to ensure we are spending taxpayer funds in ways that provide the greatest return for our students and community. Your school board and administration have designed a budget to continue the current instructional offerings for all of our students. If we made deeper cuts to our overall spending plan, we would have to eliminate offerings for students and/or drive up class sizes significantly.

The changes the district made for the current school year have resulted in increased efficiencies as planned. These changes include the single bus run and the unified district schedule and reduced staffing wherever feasible.

Our school tax levy for the 2020-2021 school year is proposed to increase by 2%, not including changes due to the power plant. While the numbers on the enclosed budget notice look much higher, this is due to the fact that the power plant is no longer projected to be on a PILOT and as such will return to the general tax levy. We do not know the exact impact upon the tax rates as that is completely dependent upon the changes to the power plant and how it is assessed. The final tax rates will not be available until the tax rolls are set and the levy is adopted in August. The BCS district still enjoys one of the lowest school tax rates in the Niagara/Orleans BOCES area.

No matter what, our main financial issue as we look forward is our revenues from the state. As you know, the power plant has now permanently shut down. While revenues from the plant have decreased steadily over the last 10 years, the aid we

received from the state has not changed significantly over the same time period and has certainly not replaced the lost revenue from the plant. As a result, we have needed to tap our reserves to balance the budget in recent years and next year is no exception. Due to this we have been advocating at the state level and Superintendent Reimer has met personally with numerous state legislators from across the state to ensure that they know who we are, what our issues are, and why fair distribution of state aid is so important. In the future we will be reaching out to all of our community to help with some of these advocacy efforts.

On a brighter note, we have begun work on a solar energy performance contract that has the potential to save the district \$65,000 per year in annual energy costs. This solar panel installation will be about two acres and will not be visible from the road. However, we anticipate that this solar project will nearly offset our annual electricity needs for the district. We are planning to have this system operational in less than a year from now.

Also, based on professional recommendations and input from the community, we are continuing to look at additional capital work that would provide greater energy savings by replacing and/or upgrading our heating, ventilation and cooling systems, and lighting throughout our campus. The school board and administration remain committed to the long-term maintenance, safety and suitability of our campus to provide the efficient sound educational environment our community expects and deserves.

District residents will vote on the following propositions this year

Proposition #1: BUDGET

Shall the Barker Central School District Board of Education, Niagara County, New York be authorized to spend the sum of \$17,254,712 in the total amount set forth in the proposed Budget during the 2020-2021 school year and to levy the necessary tax.

Proposition #2: BOARD MEMBERS - VOTE FOR TWO

You may vote for up to two (2) candidates. There are two (2) seats to be filled on the Board of Education for three-year terms beginning on July 1, 2020 and expiring on June 30, 2023.

The candidates who filed petitions are: Emily Gow, Francisco G. Meza Agüero, and John E. Sweeney, Jr.

Proposition #3: LIBRARY

Shall the funding for the Barker Public Library, which is raised by annual levy of a tax upon the taxable real property within the Barker Central School District be increased \$76,500.00 to \$78,030.00, an additional \$1,530.00.

Proposition #4: LIBRARY TRUSTEE MEMBERS - VOTE FOR ONE (1)

To elect 1 member of the Board of Trustees of the Barker Public Library for a 5 year term, commencing on June 2020. To succeed Roy Anderson whose term will expire on June 2020.

The candidate who filed a petition is: Brian Carmer

Qualifications of a Voter

You qualify as a voter if: you are a citizen of the United States; you have been a resident of the Barker Central School District for at least 30 days prior to the school budget vote and election held on May 21, 2019; you are at least eighteen (18) years of age; you are qualified to register for an election in accordance with Section 5-106 of the Election Law. In addition, you do not need to be a property owner to be eligible to vote.

Barker Central School Board of Education Candidate Bios

Emily Gow

My name is Emily Gow and I am seeking a position on the Barker Central School Board. I am a third generation Barker graduate, class of 2002. My husband Jordan Gow graduated from Barker, class of 1998. We have two daughters, Charlotte and Elanor, who are currently in 4th and 1st grade at Pratt Elementary.

After graduating Barker High School, I achieved my Bachelor's of Arts degree at SUNY University of Buffalo and attained my Master's of Arts Degree from City College of New York in New York City. I currently work as an AnswerBank Research Analyst at KeyBank focusing on problem resolution for branch operations.

As an Alumna of Barker and a proud parent of two hard-working students, I believe my understanding of the benefits of attending a small school as well as my passion for children and education, make me an asset to the school board. I grew up in the Village of Barker and decided Barker is the place I want my family to live and my daughters to attend school. I am great at creative problem resolution and very technically savvy. I enjoy bringing my video and tech skills to the school and being involved in the extracurriculars for students, including the elementary musical. I hope my ideas and unique perspective could lend to keeping Barker the great educational institute that it has always been while adapting to the challenges facing our school in a rapidly changing world.

Francisco G. Meza Agüero

My wife Sara Ray Meza and I moved to Barker eleven years ago in order to raise our four children in the Barker Central School District. Our children are Nathan (10th grade), Daniel (9th grade), and twins Matthew and Sara Elisa (6th grade). I first visited Barker in 1993-1994 when I was an AFS exchange student, living with a host family in Lyndonville. My wife Sara is a 1994 BCS graduate, with a long family history of Barker graduates on both sides of her family. We enjoy supporting school and community educational programs, including academics, sports, music, and the arts. We are pleased and proud to have our children educated at Barker Central School.

I attained a Master of Science in Forest Resources – Watershed Stewardship from the Pennsylvania State University and attended Iowa State University for further graduate studies in Water Resources–Environmental Science. I currently serve at the Niagara County Department of Health's Planning and Emergency Preparedness Division. Through this position, I have visited the high school physical education program at BCS to provide immediate emergency response training to students and staff.

I would be honored to contribute as a member of the Barker Central School Board of Education, so that our community and school stays safe and healthy, while providing a comprehensive education.

John E. Sweeney, Jr.

I am a 1978 graduate of Barker Central School and a 1980 graduate of Alfred Ag and Tech with a degree in Animal Husbandry. After graduation, I came home to work on the 110-year old family owned Maple View Dairy and am co-owner of the West Somerset Road farm. I am a member of the Upstate Niagara Milk Cooperative, the Niagara County Farm Bureau, Treasurer of the Barker Alumni Association, member of Cornell Cooperative Extension, Farm Bureau, Faith United Methodist Church, and co-leader of the 4-H Dairy Cattle program. My wife Deborah and I have three children that have graduated from Barker School.

With the challenges facing education today, I want to make certain every child receives the best education possible while balancing the fiscal responsibilities the position holds. My history with the system from being a Barker graduate to having my children experience a variety of programs, gives me a unique perspective on the board. I have seen that when today's youth are well-rounded individuals by participating in the arts, academics, athletics, and community service, they become the leaders of tomorrow. My dedication to the school and community, my leadership style, and my experience with a variety of people, make me an excellent candidate for re-election as a Board of Education member.

PLEASE NOTE: As prescribed by the Commission of Education, due to the postponement and timing of the Budget Vote & Election to June 9, 2020, as well as the Public Hearing on the budget (now scheduled for May 27, 2020 at 6:30 PM), the Budget Notice normally included as a portion of the budget information within the Spring Banner cannot be mailed until the day after the hearing. A copy is currently available, along with the 2020 – 2021 Tri-Component Budget on the BCS website under the Business Office section.

Barker Budget Proposal 2020 – 2021

BARKER BUDGET SUMMARY 2020-21				
REVENUES	2020-2021	2019-20	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
STATE AID	8,117,619	8,117,619	0	0.00%
TAX LEVY	6,362,081	4,494,687	1,867,394	41.55%
PILOT	30,059	1,809,999	-1,779,940	-98.34%
OTHER	360,500	383,060	-22,560	-5.89%
FUND BALANCE	2,384,453	2,466,981	-82,528	-3.35%
TOTAL REVENUES	17,254,712	17,272,346	-17,634	-0.10%

The Calculated Tax Levy Limit is \$ 6,441,107. The power plant will now be included in the tax rolls and will not have a PILOT payment. This results in an increase to the tax levy and a corresponding decrease in PILOT payments.

EXPENDITURES	2020-21	2019-2020	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
GENERAL SUPPORT	2,045,188	2,043,123	2,065	0.10%
INSTRUCTION	9,611,338	9,688,677	-77,339	-0.80%
PUPIL TRANSPORTATION	1,439,790	1,382,840	56,950	4.12%
COMMUNITY SERVICE	33,600	33,600	0	0.00%
INTERFUND TRANSFERS	120,000	125,000	-5,000	-4.00%
UNDISTRIBUTED	4,004,796	3,999,106	5,690	0.14%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	17,254,712	17,272,346	-17,634	-0.10%

The Interfund Transfers represent a Capital Outlay Project of \$ 100,000.

The District intends to upgrade the weight room as part of this Outlay Project.

Detailed Explanation of Categories

General Support consists of:

- Board of Education, Central Administration, Finance, Staff, and Special Items. This also includes Maintenance and Operation of Plant, (including all maintenance and grounds salaries, supplies & materials, and utilities) and Central Printing/Mailing and Central Data Processing.

Instruction consists of:

- Instructional Administration and Improvement (principal's salary and supply codes, curriculum development, research and planning, and professional development for all professional staff), Teaching Regular School (all regular school teaching salaries, supplies & materials, equipment, textbooks and BOCES services for regular students, including Occupational Education), School Library and Audiovisual, and Computer-Assisted Instruction (Technology), Attendance, Guidance, Health Services, Psychological Services, Extra-classroom Activities, Athletics and Special Education (teacher salaries, supplies & materials, textbooks, CSE and CPSE Committee expenses, contractual costs, private schools tuition, and BOCES special education costs).

Pupil Transportation consists of:

- All bussing and fuel.

Community Service consists of:

- Summer school and the summer recreation program.

Undistributed consists of:

- Employer contributions to the employees' retirement system and the teachers' retirement system, social security, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, health insurance and terminal leave payments. It also includes payments of principal and interest on school bond payments.