



Mustang Musings

MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Budget Issue 2019

Voters to Decide on \$10.59 Million Budget

On Tuesday, May 21, MCS residents will head to the polls to vote on the proposed \$10.59 million budget for the 2019-2020 school year. Polls will be open from noon to 8:00 p.m. in the school lobby.

Overall spending will be increased by approximately 3.59 percent in the proposed budget, and if approved, the tax levy would increase by less than two percent. Despite final tax rates not being set until August, however, it seems likely that the actual tax rates will increase by approximately 1.76 percent.

District to Stay Within Tax Cap

Due in large part to increases in salaries and benefits, an increase to our debt service for the project that we just completed, the inclusion of a capital outlay project, and the addition of an elementary teacher the overall budget is increasing by \$366,867 or 3.59%. In spite of the 3.59% increase to the budget, increases in state aid and an increase in our use of our fund balance will enable the district to remain in compliance with the New York State tax cap regulations.

Many people assume that the tax cap which was placed on school districts and municipalities in 2012 is limited to a two percent increase, however, this isn't true. A complicated formula is used to determine each school district's tax cap. With a tax base growth factor of only 1.0045, the district's tax cap is 2.51% which equates to an increase to the overall tax levy of \$75,375. If the district elected to go with a tax levy

In addition to voting on the budget, voters will also be selecting two seats on the Board of Education.

VOTE



increase greater than 2.51%, we would have needed a super-majority (66%) positive vote for the budget to pass.

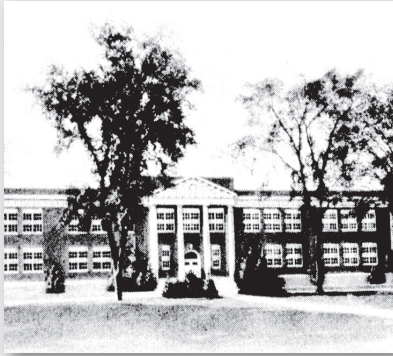
The board understands that the community values the quality education that the students of Morris receive and want to see that it is maintained. The Board also recognizes that many of our community members are struggling financially and that the taxpayers expect the Board to remain fiscally conservative. In the latest fiscal accountability summary that the state

released, MCS spent \$9,973 dollars per pupil for instructional expenditures in comparison to \$11,093 per pupil that similar high needs, rural school districts spent. In comparison, our cost per pupil disbursements was less than the \$12,692 per pupil instructional expenditures average of all other school districts in the state. As a result of focusing our budget process on the needs of our students as well as the expectations of our community, the board is proposing a small tax levy increase and one that stays within our tax cap.

Morris Continues to be Short-Changed Promised State Aid

In 2007, New York State revised the foundation aid formula for school districts across the state. This was in response to the "fiscal inequality highlighted by the Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit" that was brought against the state of New York. This revision, according to Governor Spitzer, was meant to "ensure that each district receives sufficient State and Local resources to meet state learning standards."

This revision to the state foundation aid had barely begun when the financial crisis in 2009 struck the country, including New York State. In response to this fiscal crisis, the lawmakers in New York froze foundation aid, and the



**Morris Central School
Board Members**

Margaret Caezza, President
Wendy Moore, Vice President
Mary Dugan
Emily Boss
Russell Tilley

**Morris Central School
Administration**

Matthew Sheldon, Superintendent
Katharine Smith, Principal
Kim Murray, Director of
Pupil Personnel

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plan to help school districts across the state that were underfunded was placed on hold. Over the past few years, foundation aid has slowly increased, but not to the level based on the original formula. For some school districts, the freeze in the foundation aid was a positive thing because they would actually receive less aid with the new formula that was developed to calculate foundation aid. For Morris, that was not the case. In fact, if the new formula was in place, Morris would receive approximately \$168,113 more in foundation aid for the 2019-2020 school year. Over the past ten years, Morris has lost \$17,769,125 in promised foundation aid. Compared to other districts in our BOCES region, the amount that we have been shortchanged is more than double the amount any other district has lost.

In response to the financial issues that New York State has faced and the withholding of state aid, we continue to look for ways to reduce our costs such as maximizing use of grants, continuing to share services with other school districts and looking for ways to reduce health costs. The School Board has also recommended the use of \$35,000 from the capital fund, \$130,000 in fund balance and \$10,679 of the district’s reserves to help lower the tax levy to a 1.76 percent increase from a potential 7.6%.

Property Tax Relief Credit

The property tax relief credit was introduced in 2016 and meant to provide direct relief to qualifying New York State homeowners and is supposed to be fully phased in by 2019.

For each year you are eligible for the property tax relief credit, you will automatically receive a check. To qualify in the 2019-2020 school year, you must:

- live in a school district that is complying with the New York State property tax cap,
- receive either the Basic or Enhanced STAR property tax relief,
- have an income of \$275,000 or less, and
- have paid school property taxes in 2018.

Beginning in 2017, the property tax relief credit is a percentage of a homeowner’s STAR benefit, with lower incomes receiving a higher percentage benefit.

The credit will be fully phased in as of 2019.

The Tax Levy Cap

We are in the eighth year of the state tax levy cap law. While the State led people to believe that it is a two percent tax cap, this is not true. The law requires school districts and municipalities to use a complicated formula to determine their “maximum tax levy.” Exemptions for high pension rates, capital projects, court orders or judgments, and payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTS) are some of the items that can be excluded in determining the “maximum tax levy.” A tax base growth factor is also added in.

In reality, our district’s maximum tax levy would increase by \$75,375 which represents a 2.51% increase. This means that the Board could seek a tax levy of \$3,072,846 and only need a majority vote to have it pass. A super-majority approval would be required if we exceeded that amount. Below shows how the district determined that amount.

Budget at a Glance	
Proposed Budget	\$10,592,358
Budget Increase	\$366,867 (3.59%)
Tax Levy Increase	1.76%

Tax Cap Estimate

Tax Base Growth Factor	\$13,488
Tax Increase of 1.02% (2%)	\$56,153
Capital Tax Levy	\$5,734
Maximum Tax Levy Threshold.....	\$75,375
2018-2019 Tax Levy.....	\$2,997,471
Maximum Tax Levy.....	\$3,072,846

The board has decided to seek a tax increase of 1.76% which is within the maximum tax levy of \$3,072,846.

The new tax levy cap law has also changed the rules for contingent budgets. What was previously considered to be a cap on spending in contingent budgets is now a zero percent cap on the tax levy increase. In other words, the Morris Central School District would have to levy the same amount of taxes as in the current year or less. If we had to go to a contingent budget, we would have to reduce our budget by \$52,774.

Other aspects of the contingent budget rules have stayed the same. If voters defeat their school district budget on May 21st, a district has three options: resubmit the same budget for a revote on June 18th; submit a revised proposal for a revote on June 18th; or adopt a contingent budget. If residents vote down a resubmitted budget, the district MUST adopt a contingent budget.

Adopting a contingent budget prohibits a district from spending any money in certain areas as prescribed by law. These would include community use of school facilities (unless all costs are reimbursed to the district), new equipment purchases, non-essential maintenance, and capital expenditures (except in emergencies).

These requirements existed prior to the tax levy cap and remain in effect.

Zero Percent Increase in Contingency is the Real “Cap”

While districts still have the opportunity to hold another vote if a proposed budget fails on the first try, the new “zero” percent cap on contingent budget tax levies raises the stakes for school leaders as they work to craft budget proposals that their communities will support.

Estimated Tax Rates

Although the final tax rates will not be set until August, it appears likely that actual tax rates will increase by approximately 1.76 percent. This is only an estimate. The tax rates differ between the four towns because of equalization rates set by New York State Office of Real Property Services. Equalization rates are established in an effort to make sure the tax levy is fairly distributed when one taxing entity (the district) spans multiple municipalities, which may use different assessment practices. The district will set final tax rates in August, after the towns finalize assessment figures and the state sets the equalization rates.

Budget Hearings

The official budget hearing on the proposed budget will be held Tuesday, May 14 at 6:30 p.m. in the high school library.

There will be a second budget meeting on Thursday, May 16 at 1:00 p.m. in the elementary library. All are welcome for both meetings.

Increase of Overall Budget

The budget-to-budget increase of \$366,867 is mainly due to salary increases, the addition of a teacher and the inclusion of the capital outlay project.

Major Budget Expenditure Categories

↑ Salaries: \$3,830,843 (7.1%)

Total spending on salaries is increasing by approximately 7.01%. This is largely due to contractual obligations, the addition of a classroom teacher and less federal grant money to offset salaries. There is an increase of \$254,609 in salaries.

↓ Employment Benefits: \$2,545,812 (1.36%)

We are seeing a decrease of 1.36% in employee benefits. This decrease is due in most part to changes to our TRS (Teacher Retirement System) rates. We are expecting a decrease of \$35,062 in employee benefits.

↑ Debt Service: \$1,623,233 (23.31%)

Our debt service will increase by \$306,819. This is an increase of approximately 23.31% and is due to the debt that we are taking on as part of the project that was just completed. The funding for the \$100,000 capital outlay project is also part of this increase.

↓ Equipment, Supplies and Contractual Items: \$786,505 (7.14%)

In this area, we are seeing a decrease in supplies/materials due to lower costs for heating oil and a reduction in equipment requests. As a result of these changes, we will see a decrease of 7.14% in this area which equates to a cut in this area of \$60,521.

↓ BOCES Services/Private Tuition: \$1,805,965 (5.2%)

BOCES services account for approximately 14.80% percent of the overall budget while private tuition is approximately 2.24% percent of the budget. BOCES costs have decreased for this next school year as well as the number of students who will be attending a private school for special education services. The total decrease in BOCES and private tuition costs is \$98,978.

Two Additional Items in Proposed Budget

The Board of Education is proposing two additional items as part of the 2019-2020 budget. Both proposals would be paid through our unanticipated fund balance and would not increase the tax rate.

First, there is a proposal to increase the 2016 approved capital project budget by \$30,000. In 2016, voters approved a \$2.695 million dollar project. The project work is nearing completion and it is time that we go out to bond the project. When bonding for a project, there are two different ways that a school district can do that. One is going out to the public market for the financing and the second way is to go through the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY). When the district's financial consultants first discussed financing with the district, interest rates were low and they felt that it would be best to go through the public market. With the interest rates having increased since 2016, however, they now feel that we will save money by going through DASNY. To do that, we will need to increase the overall budget of the project to pay for the additional charge that it costs to go through DASNY.

The second item that is included in the 2019-2020 budget is a capital outlay project. Information is provided below about a capital outlay project and why the Board of Education is seeking to include one in next year's budget.

Capital Outlay Project

New York State laws allow school districts to receive state aid on small building projects that do not exceed \$100,000. In order to receive the aid, however, there are specific requirements that school districts must follow including:

- The project cannot exceed \$100,000, including all incidental fees (legal, architectural, etc.).
- The project must be part of the annual budget, be voter approved and paid through a budget appropriation.
- A district cannot borrow money for this type of project.
- The district will receive state aid back on the project in the year following completion of the project. It is not paid out over a series of years.

How does a capital outlay project work?

- Within the proposed 2019-2020 project, the specific project for which the funds will be used is outlined.
- Once the budget is approved by the voters, the school must have architects complete and submit drawings of the project to the State Education Department for approval.
- The project must be completed within the school budget year, July 1-June 30.
- Once the project is completed, the district submits final cost reports to the state for approval and payment.

What is the purpose of a capital outlay project?

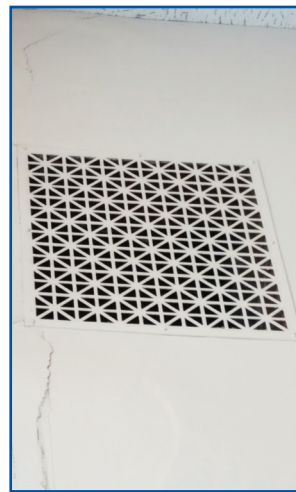
The purpose of a capital outlay project is to allow a school district to perform small projects in order to maintain its facilities rather than waiting for issues to become larger and having to have a larger project.

What does the district plan on accomplishing in the 2019-2020 capital outlay project?

During the larger project that was just completed, two issues were found that we hope to correct through a smaller project. When doing work on the outside façade, it was noticed that the EIFS (Exterior Insulation & Finishing System) work outside the cafeteria is failing; it is slowly sagging and pulling away from the brick work. If it is not corrected in the near future, it could become a safety issue.

During the project work in the elementary wing, it was brought to our attention that there are not proper fire stops between some of the classrooms. If we have a fire in the building, this could increase the chance that the fire spreads more quickly. During a walkthrough of the building in the summer of 2018, former fire chief Charlie Henness also noticed this issue and brought it to our attention. This would be corrected through the project.

Lastly, if money allows, we also hope to retile several of the bathrooms in the elementary wing and possibly re-carpet the offices.



An example of where a fire stop needs to be installed.



One of the bathrooms that floor tiles need replacement.



A picture of the EIFS system that needs repair.

Other Items on the Ballot . . .

Two candidates up for two, three-year Board of Education Terms

The school district has a five member board of education. Members are elected by voters in the district and serve three-year terms. Current members and the years that their terms end are as follows: Margaret Caezza (2019), Wendy Moore (2021), Mary Dugan (2019), Emily Boss (2020), and Russell Tilley (2020). This is a volunteer position and takes a great deal of dedication to be a member.

This year, voters will select a candidate to fill the position currently held by Margaret Caezza. After being a part of the Board of Education for 15 years and acting as president for the past 12, Margaret has decided not to seek reelection. We want to thank her for her many years of service and dedication to the Morris School District.

Michael Walling, a former member of the Board of Education, is running unopposed for the position that will be vacated by Margaret.



Michael Walling and his family live on Littlewood Road in Morris and has lived in the district for nearly his entire life. Mike is an MCS alumnus class of 1985, attended college at SUNY Cortland and SUNY Oneonta and is now a Vice President and District Manager for Community Bank NA.

Mike and his wife have three children, two who attend MCS and one who is a Morris alumnus and now attending SUNY Oneonta.

Mike served on the school board in the past, serving three consecutive terms for a total of nine years. He has also served on the Morris Village Board as a Trustee and Morris Town Board as a Councilman, was a former Cub Scout and Boy Scout leader and attends the Morris Episcopal Church. Mike is active in the MCS Booster Club and is currently the president of the club.

Voters will also select a candidate to fill the position currently held by Mary Dugan. Mary is just completing her first term as a Board of Education member and is seeking reelection. She is running unopposed.



Mary Dugan was raised in Darien Center, NY, and has lived in Morris for the past sixteen years. Prior to moving to Morris, Mary was employed as a Speech-Language Pathologist both in the healthcare and educational fields, working in WNY hospital systems and teaching undergraduate and graduate levels at the University at Buffalo. Currently, she serves as the Business Administrator for David M. Dugan, DDS, MD, PC surgical practice.

Mary is active in the Morris Central Booster Club, Morris Planning Board, Morris Beautification Project, and attends the First Baptist Church of Morris. She is married to Dr. David Dugan. Together they have four children, three of whom attend Morris Central School, and the oldest is a Morris alumnus and currently a freshman at Syracuse University.

Budget Summary

New York State law requires all school districts to present their budgets divided into three expenditure categories—program, administrative, and capital—and compare them to last year’s amount. Morris’s three-part budget breaks down as follows:

PROGRAM	2018-2019	2019-2020
Amount.....	\$7,321,841\$7,394,725
% of total	71.60%69.81%


- *Includes salaries and benefits of all teachers and staff who deliver pupil services (guidance, health, library/media, etc.), textbooks and equipment, co-curricular activities, athletics, and transportation costs (except bus purchases).*

ADMINISTRATIVE	2018-2019	2019-2020
Amount.....	\$941,429\$946,764
% of total	9.21%8.94%

- *Includes salaries and benefits of administrative staff including finance and central office staff; curriculum and staff development, school board costs, general insurance and professional fees.*

CAPITAL	2018-2019	2019-2020
Amount.....	\$1,962,221\$2,250,869
% of total	19.19%21.25%

- *Includes salaries and benefits of maintenance and custodial staff, debt service on buildings and school bus purchases, utilities and tax certiorari and court-ordered costs.*



Don't Forget to Vote!

Tuesday, May 21

Polls will be open from noon to 8:00 p.m. in the school's lobby.

Voter Eligibility

To vote, you must be at least 18 years old, a U.S. citizen and a resident of the Morris Central School District for at least 30 days prior to the vote. You do NOT need to be registered to vote.

Absentee Ballot Information

To vote by absentee ballot, you must fill out an application. Contact the district clerk, Judy Matson, at 263-6102 for the application. If you want a ballot mailed to you, your application must be received by May 14th. If you plan to pick up your ballot, your application must be received by May 20. Completed absentee ballots must be received by the district clerk by 5:00 p.m. on May 21, the day of the vote.

Highlighting Achievement

Morris Central School Excels in Many Areas

At a proposed \$10.59 million for next year, the school budget is the biggest investment the community makes with its tax dollars. The following information is just a sample of the return on this investment:

- Last year, more than 90% of our students passed the Earth Science, Living Environment and the Spanish checkpoint A tests, and 100% of the students passed the Algebra I, Geometry and Spanish checkpoint B & C exams. We also had excellent mastery rates on many our Regents which is a score of 85 or higher as 40% of the students reached mastery on ELA, 44% on Living Environment and Physics, 52% on Global and 65% reached mastery on the U.S. History and Government Regents.
- 16 of our students score a 95 or higher on one or more of the Regents this past year.
- Eight of our 2018 graduates completed the vocational requirements through BOCES and graduated with vocational credentials.
- The 2017-2018 yearbook staff was awarded a Jostens National Yearbook Design Recognition Award for excellence in design and coverage.
- Thirteen out of the twenty-four 2018 graduates earned an Advanced Regents Diploma and five of those with mastery in math or science.
- The District is able to offer an afterschool and summer program to any interested students in K-8th grade.
- Students can earn up to 36 college credits through the accelerated classes that we offer.
- We had five students inducted into National Junior Honor Society, four inducted into National Honor Society, and two members into the Spanish National Honor Society.
- Ten of our 2019 graduating seniors will be receiving Clark Scholarships, totaling more than \$41,200 a year.
- The District offers summer school in certain junior and senior high school classes for credit recovery.
- MCS students graduating in 2019 have been accepted at these colleges and universities: SUNY New Paltz, SUNY Oswego, Ithaca College, SUNY Cortland, RIT, SUNY Brockport, Monroe Community College, SUNY Delhi, SUNY Buffalo, Albany College of Pharmacy, SUNY Polytechnic Institute, Syracuse University, SUNY Oneonta, SUNY Cobleskill, Buffalo University, SUNY Geneseo, Keuka College, University of Albany, St. John Fisher, SUNY Broome, and SUNY Alfred.
- Our Girls' Soccer, Boys' Basketball, and Girls' Basketball teams all were named scholar-athlete teams for the 2018-2019 school year.
- Students continue to make a positive difference in the community, the region, and the world. This year, students and staff have raised money and awareness for many causes which include the American Cancer Society, Butternut Valley Food Pantry, Polar Bear Jump, Operation Troop Organization, homeless shelters in Albany, Boston, NYC and Oneonta, the Casa Buho school in Ecuador, and assisted several local families in need. We also have had several different students volunteer to assist at community dinners and with various charitable organizations. Finally, students in the College for Every Student Program hosted a breakfast for local veterans again this year.
- We have several students compete in the Chemistry Olympiad and Envirothon each year. The school district also had a student selected to participate in Pen in Hand which is an intensive writing conference for outstanding writers.
- Morris had four students inducted into the National Technical Honor Society through ONC BOCES.
- Last summer, two students were chosen and participated in Outward Bound.
- Many students were selected to participate in Area All State and All-County Band and/or Choir.



VOTE
TUESDAY, MAY 21
NOON-8 PM
SCHOOL LOBBY



2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Expenditures by Category	2018-2019 Budget	2019-2020 Proposed	Dollar Change
Program Expenditures (Total)	\$7,321,841	\$7,394,725	+\$72,884
Teaching (Regular)	\$2,222,230	\$2,321,161	+\$98,931
Special Education	\$1,435,391	\$1,389,636	-\$45,755
Occupational Education	\$197,690	\$184,814	-\$12,876
Instructional Media.....	\$169,289	\$161,742	-\$7,547
Summer Music/Driver's Ed.....	\$2,730	\$1,000	-\$1,730
Attendance.....	\$2,412	\$2,484	+\$72
Pupil Services (Guidance, Health, Psych.)	\$309,220	\$320,566	+\$11,346
Student Activities	\$112,454	\$121,116	+\$8,662
Student Transportation	\$544,018	\$600,107	+\$56,089
Employee Benefits	\$2,326,407	\$2,292,099	-\$34,308
Administrative Expenditures (Total)	\$941,429	\$946,764	+\$5,335
Board of Education	\$14,065	\$15,181	+\$1,116
Central Administration	\$174,920	\$181,003	+\$6,083
Finance	\$215,342	\$221,427	+\$6,085
Legal, Public Info. & Service.....	\$24,185	\$25,550	+\$1,365
Central Services.....	\$47,055	\$48,905	+\$1,850
Insurance, BOCES Admin. Costs	\$178,625	\$168,348	-\$10,277
Instr., Admin. & Improv.	\$130,987	\$133,970	+\$2,983
Employee Benefits	\$156,250	\$152,380	-\$3,870
Capital Expenditures (Total)	\$1,962,221	\$2,250,869	+\$288,648
Operation & Maintenance.....	\$535,590	\$524,303	-\$11,287
Refund on Property Taxes.....	\$2,000	\$2,000	+\$0
Employee Benefits	\$98,217	\$101,333	+\$3,116
Debt Service	\$1,316,414	\$1,483,233	+\$166,819
Transfer to Federal.....	\$10,000	\$140,000	+\$130,000
TOTAL	\$10,225,491	\$10,592,358	+\$366,867
Estimated Revenues by Category	2018-2019 Budget	2019-2020 Proposed	Dollar Change
State Aid	\$6,754,440	\$7,119,434	+\$364,994
Other Revenues			
Charges for Services--Tuition	\$114,330	\$75,000	-\$39,330
Interest & Penalties on Taxes.....	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
Interest on Investments.....	\$1,000	\$12,000	+11,000
Rental of Real Property	\$0	\$0	\$0
Refunds for BOCES Aided Serv.	\$130,000	\$130,000	\$0
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
Subtotal	\$275,330	\$247,000	-\$28,330
Use of Appropriated Fund Balance & Reserves	\$198,250	\$175,679	-\$22,571
Property Taxes			
Property Tax Levy	\$2,997,471	\$3,050,245	+\$52,774
Payment in Lieu of Taxes.....	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal	\$2,997,471	\$3,050,245	+\$52,774
TOTAL	\$10,225,491	\$10,592,358	+\$366,867

Science at MCS

PLASTIC FILM RECYCLING

The Casella Waste/Otsego County Conservation Association (OCCA) Plastic Film Recycling Challenge ended officially on April 1, with a grand total of 598 pounds of plastic film recycled in the Morris Community! High School collected 247.3 lbs and the elementary school collected 350.7 lbs. Great job!

GREENHOUSE TO CAFETERIA

As Spring approaches, we are looking forward to getting back out to the greenhouses, but the cold and snow has not kept us from gardening away! A Bassett 5210 mini-grant helped us fund our Cafeteria Herb Tower, which is nearing completion. Parsley, basil, cilantro, dill, and even some leafy greens are taking sprout, and has been installed in the cafeteria. Students in the Environmental Science Class researched and designed a PVC structure that will allow herbs and greens to be grown indoors, year-round. The vertical tower can hold nine plants in a row, and can be stacked and unstacked as needed. We are looking forward to some edible greenery in the cafeteria!

Once our Herb Tower is complete, we will be turning toward the outdoor greenhouses. Planting will begin in April, with peas and greens in the greenhouses, and our less hardy plants starting indoors. Thanks to grants from Bassett's 5210 Program, we will be purchasing compost bins for greenhouse waste, and recycling our weeds and old crops into fertilizer.

We are always looking for summer volunteers, to help with Greenhouse upkeep. Keep your eyes out on the Morris Central School Facebook page to sign up, or contact Heather Grant at hgrant@morriscs.org.

IN MARCH WE CELEBRATED EINSTEIN'S BIRTHDAY AND PI DAY!

Science Club along with the math department celebrated Pi Day on March 14. March 14 (3/14) is celebrated as pi, which is 3.14, day. There was a hoop shooting contest at the event. The winner was awarded a "pizza pi" gift certificate. It was open to all 9-12 grade students and faculty. About 20 students participated, with lot of enthusiasm. Brandon Richards, a senior, won the competition.

LIFE SCIENCE CLASSES

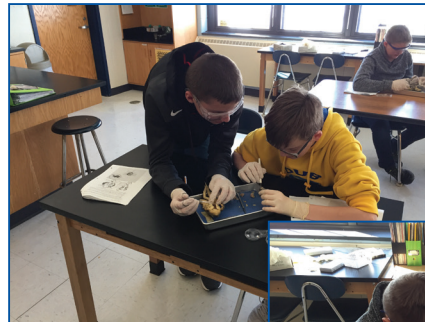
The Living Environment classes have completed over their required 1200 minutes of labs to prepare for their Regents exam, including investigations about photosynthesis and respiration, designing their own experiments, and dissecting pigs to compare with human anatomy. In April they finished up studying cell division and creating models and flip books to better understand the process. After that, they learned about the structure of DNA and learned to extract DNA from cells! Science 8 completed worm and frog dissections to aid in their understanding of human anatomy and physiology. After that they started studying ecosystems and ecology. They will be completing a project that ties together their understanding of food webs and the different biomes found on Earth.



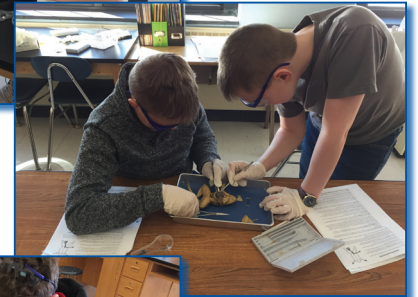
Gabbi Eklund and Kayla Francis plant the first seedlings in the Cafeteria Herb Tower



Brandon Richards



Lincoln Waffle and Garrett Aikins practice their dissection skills



Logan Dunham and Jack Knapp identify the internal anatomy of their frog



Justine Norton, Jonathan Child, and Carissa Richards work together to identify the anatomy of their frog



Plastic Film Recycling Challenge



Ian Rehrmann weeding the lettuce beds in the Greenhouse



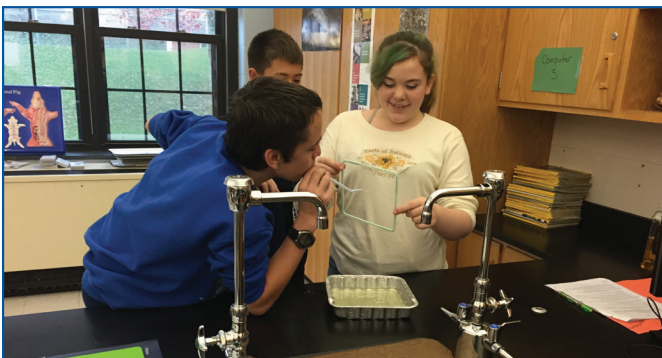
Tylor Kopp, Matt Murphy and DJ Fields work in the Greenhouse



Elizabeth Thompson repairs vegetable bed borders



Robbie Hand, Laura Foote, and Kayleigh Hoyt create a model of a cell membrane using soap bubbles



Evan kneaskern, Alex Page, and Fiona Ventura use soap bubbles to model the properties of a cell membrane

Rotary Exchange: Miranda Carrabba

Every other year Morris Central School sends an exchange student to a foreign country. This year, Sophomore, Miranda Carrabba was chosen to go to Brazil. Her excitement is almost tangible. She's going to live in the warmest state in Brazil and she's already been to several rotary meetings which include presentations in Portuguese, and learning about Rotary rules she will have to follow during her exchange.

Exchange year is full of meeting new people from all around the world, learning about a new culture you've never experienced before and becoming an independent person who understands the differences between other countries. Miranda is scared the most "of losing one of my family members or pets while I'll be on my exchange, and also I'm really nervous about communicating with all the people who probably don't know any English. It'll be hard to tell them what I need or want."

On the other side, she is very excited about "learning new culture that is very interesting to me, Amazon trip that will be at the end of my exchange, and also seeing so many new things and meeting new people."

—Anna Pavelkova ('19)

Clark Foundation Scholarship



Ten students from the Class of 2019 have received a total of over \$40,000 in scholarships from the Clark Foundation. These scholarships are renewable each year the student attends college full-time. We are grateful to the Clark Foundation for their continued support of our Morris students.

Reminder . . . Any MCS student who graduated in the year 2015 or after is eligible to apply for the Clark Scholarship. You must have earned a 3.0 GPA over two consecutive college semesters to apply for this scholarship and must be attending college full-time. If you meet these qualifications, you should contact the Clark Foundation at (607) 547-9927.

—Mrs. Catella, Guidance

Clue on Stage

On February 14-15 the Drama Club performed the show *Clue*, directed by Mrs. Telfer, which was based on the movie by the same title. Three women and three men were invited to a dinner party that turns into a hilarious murder mystery. The stage manager, **Renate Carrabba** ('19) said that "the show was really one of the hardest to set up because there were so many stage changes." The group worked on it for three and a half months, practicing and rehearsing after school. Throughout the span of three months, we worked on memorizing lines and getting the audience's attention. **Austin Ward** ('19), a first-time Drama Club participant, played Mr. Peacock in the play. He said, "This was my first year acting with Drama Club, and it really helped me break out of my comfort zone. I enjoyed putting on plays and growing with other actors and actresses. I will miss drama club next year."

Our director, Joanne Telfer, said, "Our play *Clue* this year was such a blast. I had so much fun working with these talented actors and actresses. I would like to give a special thank you to the seniors **Austin, Renate, Anthony, Will, Ashley, Ethan, and Zoe**—you all will be greatly missed. I also would like to thank the production crew and backstage crew for working so hard throughout each and every day."

Everyone in Drama Club has improved. They help each other get better as both performers and students. Senior, **Renate Carrabba** has been in drama club for three years; she said, "I love being a part of drama club; it's the best part of my day. As the stage manager, I'm in charge of what goes where, during certain scenes. I enjoy being the stage manager because I get to be apart of the show without being seen out on stage. I will really miss drama club and being a stage manager when I go to college." This year's drama club performed outstanding performances and we hope to see many more throughout the year.

—Austin Ward, Senior



Clue



National Technical Honor Society

Four students from Morris Central School were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society late March: **Chino Osuna, Ashley Harrington, Jacob Walling, and Nick Ventura.** Congratulations!

Chino studies visual arts, Jake and Ashley are in the New Visions Health Professions Program, and Nick studies Information Technology.



After visiting the Classic Car Museum, Ms. Coloney's class made alphabet books with the Pre-K

Modified Baseball Pre-Season

This year's modified baseball team is very excited to see where their season is going to take them. Mr. Michael Gregg is the coach again this year; most of the team is made up of 7th graders and a couple of 8th graders because several of the 8th graders moved up to varsity to help them field a team this spring.

Modified baseball is the beginning of baseball for some of the players who did not play little league. Modified teaches the players the basic skills that they will need to become varsity baseball players. The players will learn if they are good at pitching, catching, infielding, and outfielding and see what position suits them the best.

—Devin Alger, Senior

Track and Field Pre-Season

The MCS Track and Field team began preparing for their season in early March. They welcomed some new faces to the team this year, including a new coach. Mr. Dylan Jaklitsch is the new Elementary Physical Education teacher as well as the Middle and High School Health teacher. The team has five seniors this year: **Adam Gartung, Brandon Richards, Ethan Koch, Nicholas George, and Jacob Walling.**

When not practicing with the other half of their merged Gilbertsville-Mount Upton team, it is a somewhat small group of athletes. Being a small team does not matter when it comes to their eagerness to set new personal bests. Senior thrower, Adam Gartung said, "I enjoy competing against myself, my teammates, and other schools, and I'm looking forward to beating my personal bests from last season." The team is waiting impatiently for the warm weather and is looking forward to a successful season.

—Kylie Brigham, Junior

Morrisian yearbook featured in 2019 Jostens Look Book

Morris Central School's yearbook, *Morrisianian*, has been recognized for excellence and featured in the 2019 Jostens Look Book, celebrating the best-of-the-best in yearbook design and coverage. The Jostens *Look Book* is a collection of spreads and photos from outstanding yearbooks and their creative themes, cool covers, beautiful designs, relevant coverage, meaningful storytelling and stunning photography. Along with design excellence, the annually published Look Book honors the important role well-crafted yearbooks play in helping schools chronicle the experiences, stories and achievements most relevant to students and that academic year.

Morris was the only Central New York Yearbook chosen to be in this year *Look Book*. It is the third time Morris has been recognized. The *Morrisianian* was created by **Selena Rathbone** (Co-Editor-in-Chief), **Austin Ward** (Co-Editor-in-Chief), **Rebekah Oliver** (Business Manager), **Kaleigh Spencer** (Secretary), **Zoe Rude, Core Deflumere, Elizabeth Thompson, Ashley Harrington, Renate Carrabba, Adam Gartung, James Tuttle, and Ethan Koch** under the direction of Julene Waffle, Morris Central School's yearbook adviser.

"I am extremely proud of the staff for working so hard to earn this honor. There is so much that goes into the production of a quality yearbook, and these students deserve the recognition," said Waffle.

The Morris Central School *Morrisianian* was one of only 387 yearbooks selected from over 2,000 yearbooks submitted. The 2019 panel of judges, comprised of nationally recognized scholastic journalism professionals and award-winning yearbook advisers, selected the best examples of yearbook spreads and covers to make up the 320-page 2019 *Look Book*.

"The Jostens *Look Book* showcases the hard work and dedication of students who tell the story of the school year through photos and words. It is their collaboration and communication, as well as creative thinking in challenging situations, that results in the fine designs shown in this book," said Sara Sausker, Senior Manager of Customer Experience. "We are very proud to celebrate the ability of this country's future leaders and communicators by showcasing their sophisticated designs and photography."

Julene Waffle and her yearbook staff received a copy of the 2019 Jostens *Look Book* and plaque from Jostens to recognize their outstanding achievement.

The Jostens *Look Book* is a must-have resource for yearbook advisers and staffs seeking creative design and coverage ideas, trends and inspiration. The Look Book complements www.YearbookAvenue.com and www.facebook.com/JostensAdviserandStaff, Jostens online destinations for yearbook creation ideas and professional sports segments. Jostens serves markets in North America, Europe and Asia. www.jostens.com.

RoboRave Challenge



CROP students **Delaney Coveny**, **Hunter McAdams**, **Savannah Miller**, **Kaedin VanEchaute**, Peer Leader **Kyle Blake**, and Teacher/Activity Leader Ms. Sclafani represented MCS CROP at the RoboRave Challenge held at the Oxford Academy School in Oxford on Saturday, April 6. Students were required to bring their assembled robot to the challenge. There they went against others teams looking for the fastest and longest run time for their robot. Students practiced all day coding and programing their machines to place in the final run of the day.

Though our students didn't make the final challenge, they gained knowledge and insight on how to achieve this for next time. Yes, they were quick to state they will be joining again in next year's RoboRave Challenge!

Spanish National Honor Society Inductions

On Wednesday, March 6, two students were inducted into the Pachacútec Chapter of Morris Central School's Spanish National Honor Society. To be considered for induction into the SNHS,

the students must be actively enrolled in a 5th semester of Spanish or higher, have a minimum average of 90 for three consecutive semesters, and have an overall average of no less than 80. Additionally, students must not have failed a class due to attendance. Freshmen are not able to be inducted unless they are approved by the AATSP Council. We are lucky that our two inductees this year are, in fact, freshmen. They have done an amazing job in language studies, holding averages in the mid- to high-90 range per semester.

"These students are the cream of the crop," said Advisor Joanne Telfer. "They are hard working, kind and full of integrity. It is such an honor to be a part of the Spanish Honor Society. It's not something that is available to everyone and for that reason alone, it's truly a special honor. I was a member of this Honor Society when I was in High School and College, and now it is a great opportunity to pass this along to my students. I am very proud of them all."



Current members include Seniors **Jacob Walling** and **Ashley Harrington** (Associate Members) and Juniors **Morgan Valentine**, **Mollie Dugan** and **Abigail Maurelli**. New Inductees this year include Freshmen **MacKenzie Graves** and **Alex Page**.

—Mrs. Joanne Telfer, Spanish



Mr. Packard's class working on projects





Mr. Sheldon read books to all the kindergartners for Dr. Seuss week.

Booster Club

As the spring sports start to kick off, the Booster Club has been busy. The Booster Club at Morris does many different things to support all of the sports teams. As it is spring time, the Booster Club has to switch from doing concessions inside to doing them outside for the spring sports baseball and softball. At the end of March some members of the Club got together to clean out the outside concession stand in preparation for the season. They had to sweep, dust, and clean out the fridge and grills. They also had to cart all of the snacks, drinks, and food from the concession stand inside to the outside one. The Club got the stand all nice and clean for the spring months.

The Booster Club helps out the Morris sports teams in many ways. From helping teams out with giving each player twenty dollars towards their warm ups for each season, to making signs to give to senior players at senior night, to working the concession stand and donating food and drinks for the stand.

The Booster Club shows a lot of support towards the sports teams here at Morris. As a student athlete here at Morris, I am very thankful for all of the support the Booster Club has shown me and all of the high school teams here at Morris.

—Elizabeth Thompson, Senior



Varsity boys playing basketball at SUNY Oneonta playing Marathon. The boys sadly lost by only a small margin.

MCS Drama Club AWKWARD SILENCE Presents The Dessert Theater

On Friday, June 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria, the MCS Drama Club, Awkward Silence, will be holding the world-famous dessert theater once again! You'll love it, so come on down. This year's presentation is Hawaiian Lunacy. This is set on *The Big Island*. Hawaii was inhabited by little people known as Menehune. Some say Molowa had some Menehune blood in him and that was why he was only four foot tall. Recently, however, he'd been causing so much mischief that people were complaining. Today he disappeared. Who rid the island of Molowa?

Come in and help solve the mystery of the missing Molowa, and enjoy some desserts and coffee, tea, and/or lemonade. Admission is \$5 per person and the show is appropriate for all ages. Wear your favorite Hawaiian garb and get a dollar off of your admission, but you'll want that dollar because to solve the mystery, you will have to buy clues and they are only \$1 each! It's a great night of fun and excitement, and the treats are good, too! As always, thank you for your support!

—Mrs. Joanne Telfer, Spanish

RYLA

RYLA is a Rotary Youth Leadership Award Conference and Liz Illaraza and Anastasia Edwards from Morris Central School will be attending. During this summer program, awardees create new friendships and learn a lot about social and leadership skills. "I can't wait to experience RYLA and meet new people," said Liz Illaraza. Anastasia Edwards said, "I can't wait to learn new ways to show leadership and have a lot of fun." RYLA is a great learning experience for anybody and teaches many new skills.

—Matthew Murphy, Senior



Sophomore, Miranda Carrabba and her Irish dance troupe, Damshavetha, danced at MCS in honor of Saint Patrick's Day. Miranda danced to a horn pipe tune and to "Job of Journeywork."

Distance Learning Economics

Seniors have to complete a Participation in Government class and an Economics class that each last half of the school year in order to graduate. There is an option for students who want to take the classes for college credit as well.

The college version of the Economics class is administered through distance learning classes. The students learn economics just as they as if they were in the Syracuse, Economics 101 class. The teacher is Mr. Saggese from Milford and he teaches students from his school, Roxbury, Edmeston, and Morris. The students from Morris are **Brandon Richards, Benjamin Child, Nathaniel Edwards, Anthony Shoentube, Elizabeth Thompson, and Renate Carrabba.**

From January to June the class is Economics where the students learn about the basics and then delve into the more complicated parts of economics. **Renate Carrabba** said, “the class is challenging, but I really enjoy learning about economics and it is very different from any other class I’ve taken in high school.”

—*Renate Carrabba, Senior*

Pi Day Celebration

Pi Day is a day dedicated to the celebration of the globally used term Pi to represent 3.14 followed by thousands of more small numbers that allow anyone trying to figure out the circumference of a circle. However, the term Pi is not the only reason it is an internationally recognized day. Albert Einstein’s birthday is also celebrated on Pi Day. And no matter who you are, almost everyone knows who Albert Einstein is. And because of this, everyone has a reason to celebrate Pi Day, a day that Chemistry Teacher, Ms. Vidya Nagarur, of Morris Central School feels “is for math and science, making it a very good day to celebrate and learn and enjoy.”

Nationally, almost every school in America had some sort of recognition of Pi Day. And with this recognition often comes an event that students get creative, such as with Mrs. Denning. This year her students created and wore t-shirts symbolizing Pi Day. All around, Pi Day is one that everyone can celebrate. After all, if you like pie, why not celebrate a day named Pi Day?

—*Keegan Holt, Junior*



Some of our Pre-K students enjoyed building a zoo for our animals during free choice time!



Pre-K loves playing “Spring Stew” in math! It even has a song that goes to the tune of “Purple Stew” from GoNoodle!

An Artistic Discovery

The Cooperstown Art Association had their annual art exhibition from March 8th to the 29th that held the artwork of 100 students in Otsego County. **Elizabeth Thompson, Gavin Tracey, and Laurel Brigham** were among the eight Morris students who had their artwork displayed at the exhibit. Elizabeth Thompson, Senior, won the Award of Merit for her image *Chilled Pain II* and will have the potential opportunity to have her work shown at the NYS Congressional offices.

Gavin Tracey, Senior, received the Jurors’ Citation for his image *Cotton Candy Sky* and said, “It was very nice of them to allow me to participate in their photography judging. It was an insight into the more ‘professional’ art industry, and I appreciate their courtesy and the award.” Laurel Brigham, Freshman, also received the Jurors’ Citation for her ceramic piece *The Pink Meow*.

—*Elizabeth Ilarraza, Junior*

Studio Art

Students were each assigned a gridded off piece of the Morris Mustang to enlarge to the size of a mural they put in the “echo hallway” between the high school and sixth grade rooms on the second floor of the building. The students then fit all of the enlarged pieces together to make a large horse. Students were then tasked to design their square in the style of neo-Pop artist Romare Bearden. Here are some examples of his work: https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1CIGCEU_enUS820US820&biw=1707&bih=813&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=12qeXMHjLYyHggeJpo3ABg&q=romare+britto&oq=romare+britto&gs_l=img..3..0i10i24.5858.8136..8466...0.0..0.107.957.12j1.....1....1..gws-wiz-img.....0i67j0.8uaPdLNYSpg



Students proposed sketches for the back ground and those ideas were blended together stylistically. Students decided to complete the mustang in different color values of “Morris blue” and background in other colors to help create emphasis and variety between background and the foreground or the subject of the Morris Mustang.

—*Ms. Kristine van Ingen, Art*

All-County Music Festival

Elementary Chorus

Maddie Coleman, Brodie Coleman, Zeithan Dunham,
Ali Farmer, Ryland Boss, Hannah Wist,
Delaney Coveney, Kaiden VanEchaute

Elementary Band

Grace Sperry, Levi Waffle, Sera Lentz

Senior Band

Abigail Maurelli, Kate Morano, Anthony Schoentube

Junior Chorus

Everett Pondolfino, Sawyer King, Kiernan Burke, Aidan Ryther,
Lincoln Waffle, Tatiana McAdams, Maddie Coleman



The Power of The Ruby Slippers



This year, the Senior Chorus and other students performed in *The Wizard of Oz*. **Chino Osuna**, a senior, who played Scarecrow, said, "I enjoyed [the musical] because I was able to play a character that I didn't have much in common with so it was challenging and a really fun time." **Nate Edwards**, the Tin Man ('19) said, "It was cool to work with my friends and have an amazing part in the play." Juniors **Kassie Boss** and **Anastasia Edwards** also played important roles. They worked together beautifully as Dorothy and Glinda the Good Witch. Anastasia Edwards said, "The musical was a lot of fun, and it was awesome that so many people showed up to watch us perform. The weeks leading up to the show were long and hard, but, overall, it was worth every hour." Kassie said, "I was so excited to hear I earned the leading role in *The Wizard of Oz*. I have done this show with Orpheus theatre in the past, so it was really awesome to see the different visions from different directors. It was a highlight of my year!" **Victoria**

Ranc, a Junior, brought the best performance of *The Wicked Witch of the West* to every one who attended the play. With her effortless acting, she also put a lot of hard work into really becoming her character, evil scratchy voice and all. Victoria said, "All the stress in preparing the play was worth it for the standing ovation we all received on the second night." The time and hard work that went into the months of preparing for *The Wizard of Oz* was all worth it when the musical was finally in action. Many people in the sold-out audience who have seen previous musicals done by the chorus said that *The Wizard of Oz* was one of the best ones they have seen in a long time.

—Elizabeth Ibarra, Junior



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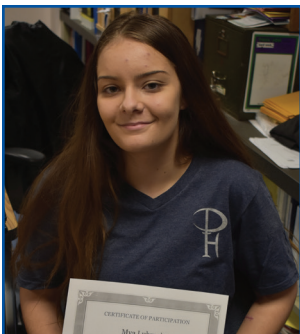
One Earth:
Our Home



This year our academic fair's theme is rooted in The Uncommon Community Reading Program (TUCCR): *One Earth: Our Home*. The fair will focus primarily on environmental work from all academic disciplines in the building. Every grade will be represented at the fair. In addition, MCS will play host to many local environmental organizations, such as 4-H, The Boy Scouts of America, The Otsego County Conservation Association, Trout Unlimited, Casella, a forest ranger from region 4, The American Chestnut Foundation, Otsego County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, a county forester, Cornell Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners, the Butternut Valley Alliance, the DEC, Otsego County Health (tick borne disease), and many more. Be sure to join us!



On March 30, the National Honor Society and the National Junior Honor Society sponsored a Spring Fun! Craft/Holiday Event with a Kids Carnival. There were games, vendors, craftors, and carnival food. Participants could shop, win a fish or a prize, play bubble soccer, and throw a pie at someone. Some participants even volunteered to catch a pie with their face, including Mr. Degan and Mrs. Hand! Anthony Schoentube, Senior, was the first to volunteer. In between games and shopping, there was hot dogs, pretzels, popcorn and cotton candy to enjoy. The money raised with this event goes towards scholarships and school need-based projects - like a new bench for the front, or towards an electronic sign for the front of the school. The NHS/NJHS thanks all who participated with this event.



Mya Laubmeier, a Sophomore, earned the opportunity to attend Central New York's Pen in Hand Writer's Conference. Mya and Mrs. Waffle spent an intense weekend of writing and listening to writers in the quaint town of Little Falls, NY.

