



SPECIAL BUDGET EDITION



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PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
MAY 12, 2026
 6:30 p.m. in the Jr./Sr. High School Auditorium

BUDGET AND BOARD MEMBER VOTE
MAY 19, 2026
11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Dear Community Members,

We hope this newsletter finds everyone doing well and looking forward to some nice weather ahead. With spring also comes preparation for the 2026-2027 school budget.

Governor Hochul tasked the Rockefeller Institute early in 2024 to evaluate and recommend improvements to New York State’s Foundation Aid formula to better ensure equitable and effective education funding. Many good recommendations were made in that study. Unfortunately, very few were acted upon. This formula has been in place for over 20 years with very few updates being made to the way aid is calculated. Foundation Aid is the single largest component of state aid that Westmoreland CSD receives. The current formula is derived utilizing a number of data points. Two of the biggest factors that determine our operating aid are school enrollment and district wealth.

Although our enrollment has stabilized over the past decade, it’s true that it is down from where it was when the formula was originally enacted, but this is consistent with most districts across our state. Just to highlight a few points, since 2003-2004:

Our enrollment is down 28%, but the number of general education teachers has decreased by 17% (13 positions – about one per grade level) and the number of non-instructional staff is down 21% (16 positions comprised of assistants, aides, bus drivers, cleaners and maintenance workers). During this same time however we have increased the number of special education teachers, reading teachers, speech teachers, social workers, school counselors and technology staff. In addition we now contract with the Oneida County Sheriff’s Department to have a security officer in each building, with ICAN to have a health and wellness coordinator in each building, Day Automation to provide security apparatus on campus, etc., to name just a few.

We continue to stress to members of the NYS Legislature, NYSED and the Governor’s Office that a small decrease in enrollment doesn’t always correlate to a decrease in spending. There are many more mandates and expectations that are required today that didn’t exist 20 years ago, school security and supporting the mental health needs of our students, are two of the biggest changes, both of which come with big price tags. If you were to view a detailed school budget you would see that the majority of our costs are in personnel – it takes people to educate kids, plain and simple.

The second of the two biggest data points in the foundation aid formula is a calculation that looks at district wealth (wealth within the boundaries of our school district) and the ability of communities to fund their own educational programs. NYS determines combined district wealth by combining the gross income per pupil with property values within each school district. It is ultimately a measure of the district’s capacity to raise local revenue to subsidize its own schools. To highlight some of these statistics:

Continued on Page 2



Calling Every Community Member !

PLEASE TAKE OUR SURVEY

Whether you have children in our schools or not, we want to keep you informed and involved. Stay connected with updates on school events, community happenings, and more!

When combining gross income with property values an average district in NYS is assigned a score of 1.0 (those below 1 are poorer than the state average while those above 1 are richer than the state average). The Westmoreland District has seen an increase from .456 in 2007 to .644 in 2026 – an over **40% increase in district wealth**. To put this into context, many small rural districts across the state have been stagnate over the past 20 years while our wealth has increased exponentially.

The formula is ultimately designed such that poorer districts across the state receive the most aid per student. So, district wealth and school enrollment in essence determine how much NYS will fund each school district with the portion not covered by NYS expected to be subsidized by the community.

For Westmoreland specifically, this is a mixed blessing. It's good because our district wealth is up exponentially higher when compared to comparable districts than it was 20 years ago; conversely it's bad because that means a smaller foundation aid amount per student. Our district is operating under what NYS calls a save-harmless provision. Basically this says that we already receive more operating aid than we should receive given our districts wealth and enrollment. Currently there are over 400 schools across our state that are classified as save-harmless. A statistic based on old, flawed data. A notion that we continue to fight!

At present we still don't have an enacted NYS budget (it was supposed to be adopted by April 1) but in Governor Hochul's proposed budget, she proposed an increase of only 1% in operating aid for all save-harmless districts. For us this amounts to \$85,588. This is woefully inadequate and a proposal that should concern all districts across our state. The policymakers fail to understand that educating kids today is much different than it was in 2007. It costs money to provide programs and services, many of which were once the obligation of outside agencies and service providers but today fall on our shoulders.

Because NYS has once again failed in meeting its constitutional obligation to adopt a budget by t April 1, we have had to construct a budget using projections from Governor Hochul's executive budget proposal in January. This means that we are in a position of balancing a budget without having a firm state aid projection.

The spending plan that we are proposing is an increase of 7.68%, but this is misleading because over 29% of that increase is the result of the recent capital project. That increase will be offset by an increase in building aid, which you will see. We are proposing an increase in non-capital related expenses of about \$1,400,000. Much of this increase is the result of increases in salaries and benefits (health insurance alone is up close to \$400,000), energy costs and contracted services for special education, security, and mental health supports.

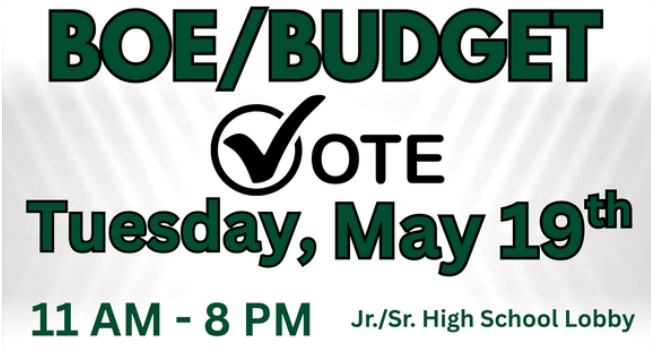
In an effort to cut spending, this budget also relies on layoffs and cuts to staffing (5 positions will be eliminated) and we will be shifting costs by moving some special education services back to the district and taking over the previously privately operated Pre-kindergarten Program.

With an expected increase of only \$85,588 in foundation aid, this leaves us with a sizeable deficit. With your support, we will close that deficit by asking you to once again vote for an increase in taxes. Because of a number of things, many of which we addressed earlier, our tax cap this year stands at over 10%, which is the community's expected contribution to our schools. We would never support a tax increase of that magnitude, but we are asking that you support an increase of 3.99% this year. Every 1% increase nets us about \$95,000 in additional revenues. We will close the remaining gap with again allocating funds from our reserves.

We invite you to attend our budget hearing held in the high school auditorium prior to the scheduled Board of Education meeting on May 12, 2026 at 6:30pm.

Thank you, as always, for the unmatched community support of our schools.

Sincerely,
The Westmoreland School District Board of Education and Mr. Migliori



2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET What You Need to Know

The District budget vote, along with the Board of Education election, will be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, from 11:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m., in the Jr./Sr. High School Gym Lobby. If the proposed budget is passed by voters, it will be enacted for the 2026-27 school year. If not passed, the Board of Education can:

- Place a revised budget before district residents for a vote.
- Place the same budget before district residents for a vote.
- Immediately adopt a contingency budget.

PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing on this year’s proposed budget will be on **Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at 6:30 p.m., in the Jr./Sr. High School Auditorium.**

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Early mail and absentee ballots may be obtained at the office of the School District Clerk. Applications for early mail and absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk **at least seven (7) days before** the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter or **the day before** the election if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter. A voter may complete an application for an absentee or early mail ballot, in person, at the District Clerk’s office by 3:30 p.m. on the day before the vote. All ballots must be returned to the District Clerk’s office no later than **May 19, 2026 at 5:00 p.m., prevailing time.**

TO VOTE YOU MUST BE:

- A U.S. citizen
- At least 18 years of age
- A resident of the District for at least 30 days prior to May 19, 2026

TO VOTE YOU:

- DO NOT have to be registered to vote.
- DO NOT have to own property.
- DO NOT have to be a parent/guardian or have children in the district.

SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET NOTICE

TOTAL REVENUES

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2025-26 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year	*Contingency Budget for the 2026-27 School Year
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$26,723,864	\$28,775,769	\$28,390,796
Increase/Decrease for the 2026-27 School Year		\$2,051,895	\$1,666,932
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		7.7%	6.2%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		3.3%	0.00%

*Should the proposed budget be defeated and a contingency budget is adopted pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law, \$384,963 will be eliminated in equipment, curriculum/staff development, student supplies and additional items to be determined by the Board of Education for the 2026-27 school year.

PROPOSITIONS ON THE BALLOT

PROPOSITION #1-Budget Resolution \$28,775,759

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Westmoreland Central School District in the County of Oneida, State of New York, by and hereby is authorized to expend \$28,775,759 for the 2026-2027 school year, and to levy the necessary tax therefore.

PROPOSITION #2-Bus Purchase

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Westmoreland Central School District is hereby authorized to undertake the acquisition of school buses, including, without limitation, one (1) 65-passenger school bus at an estimated maximum cost of \$186,345, and two (2) Suburban-type vehicles both at an estimated maximum cost of \$180,000, all at an estimated maximum aggregate cost of \$366,345, less trade-in value, if any, such cost, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax to be collected in annual installments, with such tax to be offset by state aid available therefor; and, in anticipation of such tax, debt obligations of the school district as may be necessary not to exceed \$366,345 shall be issued, or the School District may enter into an installment purchase contract if the Board of Education determines that it is in the best interest of the School District to finance the purchase in that method.

PROPOSITION #3-Establishment of a Capital Reserve

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Westmoreland Central School District is hereby authorized to establish a Capital Reserve Fund pursuant to Section 3651 of the Education Law (to be known as the “2026 Building Capital Reserve Fund”), with the purpose of such fund being to finance construction, reconstruction, improvement and equipping of school buildings and facilities; such capital costs being of a type that would be eligible for financing under the local finance law, and costs incidental thereto, the ultimate amount of such fund to be \$5,000,000, including earnings thereon, the probable term of such fund to be 10 years, but such fund shall continue in existence until liquidated in accordance with the Education Law or until the funds are exhausted, and the sources from which the funds shall be obtained for such Reserve are (i) amounts from budgetary appropriations from time to time, and (ii) unappropriated fund balance made available by the Board of Education from time to time, and (iii) New York State Aid received and made available by the Board of Education from time to time, all as permitted by law.

CANDIDATES FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

There are three (3) vacancies on the Board of Education:

- Two (2) at-large positions for three (3)-year terms, effective July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029
- One (1) at-large position for a two (2)-year term, effective May 20, 2026 through June 30, 2028

Vote for THREE [3] Candidates:

- 1. Steven Bulger**
- 2. Denise Szarek**
- 3. Kelly Flint**

Go to page 11 to learn about the Board of Education candidates.

Budget Detail - Summary of Expenditures

	25-26 Adopted Budget	26-27 Proposed Budget	Percent Change
Administrative Component:			
Board of Education	\$ 16,840	\$ 20,612	22.4%
Central Office & Finance	\$ 1,077,786	\$ 1,061,013	-1.6%
Administration & Improvement	\$ 872,118	\$ 988,803	13.4%
Other Administrative	\$ 254,366	\$ 261,900	3.0%
	\$ 2,221,110	\$ 2,332,328	5.0%
Capital Component:			
Operation of Plant	\$ 890,806	\$ 1,000,944	12.4%
Maintenance of Plant	\$ 811,036	\$ 793,796	-2.1%
Refund on Real Property Taxes	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	0.0%
Debt Service	\$ 1,660,000	\$ 2,472,799	49.0%
Capital Outlay	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	0.0%
	\$ 3,464,842	\$ 4,370,539	26.1%
Program Component:			
Instruction	\$ 8,380,844	\$ 7,607,528	-9.2%
Special Programs	\$ 3,099,037	\$ 3,748,591	21.0%
Pupil Services	\$ 1,185,404	\$ 1,375,601	16.0%
Pupil Transportation	\$ 1,385,476	\$ 1,463,449	5.6%
Instructional Media	\$ 584,513	\$ 799,966	36.9%
Employee Benefits	\$ 6,402,638	\$ 7,077,757	10.5%
	\$ 21,037,912	\$ 22,072,892	4.9%
Total Appropriations	\$ 26,723,864	\$ 28,775,759	7.7%

2026-27 Expenditures by Component

	Program Component	Capital Component	Administrative Component
Total Budget 2026-27			
\$ 28,775,759	\$ 22,072,892	\$ 4,370,539	\$ 2,332,328



BOE MEETING

BUDGET HEARING

Tuesday, May 12th

JR./SR. High School

6:30 PM

Budget Detail - Revenue Sources

	25-26 Adopted Budget	26-27 Proposed Budget	Percent Change
Real Property Taxes	\$ 9,624,063	\$ 10,008,063	3.99%
Interest Earnings	\$ 240,000	\$ 220,000	-8.3%
State Aid (Except Building Aid)	\$ 12,874,787	\$ 13,193,050	2.5%
Building Aid	\$ 1,359,743	\$ 2,044,590	50.4%
Other Revenues	\$ 890,950	\$ 600,735	-32.6%
Use of Reserves	\$ -	\$ 975,000	
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$ 1,664,121	\$ 1,664,121	0.0%
Rent	\$ 70,200	\$ 70,200	0.0%
Total Revenues	\$ 26,723,864	\$ 28,775,759	7.7%

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

The Westmoreland Drama Club's performances of The Addams Family at the Stanley Theatre



Select Chorus trip to the State Capital

Into the Woods Jr. Performance



To view Full articles and more photos, please visit our website



Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) 2026–2027 School Year

FULL DAY!

The Westmoreland Central School District is pleased to announce that we will offer free, full-day Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) for the 2026–2027 school year. UPK is a district-run program held Monday through Friday from 8:45 AM – 3:15 PM, following the Westmoreland school calendar. Enrollment will remain open through June 15, and all eligible families are encouraged to apply.

Eligibility Requirements:

According to the New York State Education Department, eligible UPK students must be four (4) years old on or before December 1 and not yet five (5) years old by December 1, making them not yet eligible for kindergarten.

Selection Process:

The first 36 applicants will be guaranteed a spot in the UPK program. Any additional applicants will be placed on a waiting list. If enrollment numbers allow, an additional classroom may be opened.

Notification & Important Dates:

Families will be notified of acceptance or waitlist status shortly after the June 15 enrollment deadline. An open house will be scheduled in August.

How to Apply:

Families are encouraged to apply as early as possible to secure placement for the fall. UPK applications are available at the Primary Elementary Main Office and on the district website.

SCAN FOR APPLICATION



ABC 123



Westmoreland

UNIVERSAL PRE-K Registration

APPLY NOW



Senator Joe Griffo Visits Westmoreland Primary School

Students at Westmoreland Primary School recently welcomed a special guest when Senator Joe Griffo visited to speak with them about careers in politics and how state government works. During his visit, Senator Griffo talked with students about his role in state government and how decisions made in Albany can impact schools and communities across the region. He explained how the legislative process works and how voting helps leaders make decisions that support school districts and the people they represent.



100th Day of School!

Students marked the big milestone by creating shirts with 100 items on them — and some grades even dressed up as 100-year-olds! It was a fun-filled day celebrating 100 days of learning and growing!



Students in grades PreK–6 had the opportunity to participate in the Reading Safari, a literacy program through Enchanted Forest Water Safari that encourages reading outside of the school day. Through this program, students earned a FREE ticket to Enchanted Forest Water Safari for this summer by completing at least six hours of reading outside of school.

UPPER ELEMENTARY NEWS



The ZI3 Club recently hosted a heartwarming Valentine's Day fundraiser, creating and selling "Love Bugs" to support a great cause. Proceeds from the fundraiser benefited CPV Rescue & Sanctuary, helping provide essential supplies for animals in need.



Zi3 Night marked its 10-year anniversary with a Hawaiian-themed family night full of fun and creativity!

Families took part in hands-on activities like building erupting volcanoes, carving tiki designs, and creating colorful Hawaiian leis.



Stay Tuned

For Summer Enrichment Sign-Ups



- ZI3 Maker Camp**
- Mysteries of Flight – ZI3 Flight Zone**
- ZI3 Bulldog Kitchen Science**
- Canine Creation Camp – ZI3 Pet Innovation Lab**

Mrs. Livermore's 4th grade students are bringing history to life through music using dulcimers! As part of their Social Studies and ELA curriculum, students explored the important role New York State played in the Revolutionary War through an engaging, hands-on learning experience.



Westmoreland/Oriskany Launches Girls Varsity Flag Football Program

The Westmoreland/Oriskany Girls Varsity Flag Football team is kicking off its inaugural season as part of the growing movement in high school athletics! Competing in the fast-paced 7-on-7 format under new NFHS rules, our athletes are leading the way—under the leadership of Head Coach Tim Moore and Assistant Coach Jack Williams.



Celebrating Excellence – Class of 2026 Top 10%

We are proud to recognize the outstanding achievements of our highest-performing students in the Class of 2026. Their dedication, perseverance, and commitment to academic excellence have earned them a place among the top 10% of their class.

CLASS OF 2026

In alphabetical order:
Juliana Acee
Abigail Brewer
Samantha Parzych
Kayla Sciorilli
Kamdyn Stanek



Our high school juniors are making a difference by mentoring upper elementary students through a leadership program. This opportunity allows younger students to build confidence and skills while our juniors grow as role models and leaders



BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES



STEVEN BULGER

I am proud to be seeking re-election to the Westmoreland Central School District Board of Education, a role I have had the privilege of serving in since 2019, and to continue serving a community that has meant so much to my family and me. My wife Laura and I have lived in Westmoreland since 2008, where we are raising our two children, Breana, a Junior, and Steven Jr., a Freshman. Like so many families in our community, our lives are deeply connected to our schools, and we care greatly about the opportunities available to every student.

Professionally, I serve as CEO of ICAN (Integrated Community Alternatives Network), where I have spent over two decades working with children and families facing social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. This experience has shaped my belief that supporting the whole child is essential, and that every student deserves to feel safe, supported, and prepared to succeed.

I have also been actively involved in our community as a Westmoreland Pop Warner and Little League coach, working with many of our young Bulldogs over the years. I have been proud to support efforts that strengthen opportunities for our youth and families, including the transformation of the former Rising Stars facility into what is now Elevate CNY; a space that continues to provide a safe, positive environment for students to grow, compete, and connect. I have also been proud to be part of the development of the Wadas Fields at Hubert Pritchard Park, creating new opportunities for youth baseball and softball in our community. Additionally, I have strongly supported recent upgrades to our school facilities, including the new all-purpose turf field—one of the first all-organic fields of its kind in New York State—with the addition of lights that have expanded opportunities for students across athletics, physical education, and the Westmoreland Marching Band.

In my role on the Board, my focus has always been on doing what is best for our students. That means supporting their academic success while also ensuring they feel safe, supported, and prepared for the challenges they face today. I strongly believe in continuing to invest in the people who make that possible—our dedicated teachers, staff, and administrators—while also being mindful of the impact decisions have on our families and taxpayers. My goal is to help ensure that every student in Westmoreland has the opportunity to succeed in a safe, supportive, and high-quality learning environment.

Westmoreland is a special place, and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve this community. I remain committed to doing what is best for our kids and continuing to support the strong foundation that makes our district something we can all be proud of. I would be honored to receive your vote this May and continue representing our community and supporting the success of all Westmoreland students.



DENISE SZAREK

My name is Denise Szarek, a Real Estate Title Officer and Area Manager for Frontier Abstract and Research Services, Inc. I am running for re-election to the Westmoreland School Board. I am a resident for 23 years and an 8-year veteran of the Board, I am committed to ensuring every student has access to a high-quality, safe, and future-ready education through a focus on technology, literacy, and vocational skills. My grandson, Tyler, graduated from Westmoreland in 2024 and now attends SUNY Cobleskill, majoring in Environmental Sciences. Granddaughter Emma is a junior at Westmoreland and is active in track & field.

Professionally, I leverage over 40 years of business expertise in the Real Estate Title Industry, where I have developed a reputation for research skills, collaborative problem-solving, and management of complex budgets. This background provides me with the essential skills to ensure district resources are used effectively and transparently, a critical function of the School Board.

In addition to my professional work, I have served as a 4-H leader in Madison County for 15 years. I have served the Westmoreland community for the last 6 years as the Steward of the first Little Free Library in Westmoreland, providing free books to the Community. During my tenure on the Board, I have dedicated the last 8 years to serving on the Budget/Audit Committee, Policy Committee, and Safety Committee.

If re-elected, my priorities will be driving fiscal transparency, student mental health and safety, and fostering a culture of excellence for all students. I believe that a strong school system is the heart of a thriving community and is committed to listening to the concerns of parents, teachers, and taxpayers alike. Join me in building a stronger community. She asks for your support and your vote on May 19th.



KELLY FLINT

My name is Kelly Flint a long time resident of Westmoreland NY. I am a former Westmoreland Central School District board member and am very excited to be running for school board once again. I have a strong understanding of how supportive our community is of our school district and what it takes to work with stakeholders at every level to put our students and staff at the forefront of all decisions. If voted back in as a member of the Westmoreland Central School Board of Education I will be committed to influencing our education system in all ways, overseeing any financial concerns, and representing our community in a professional way that parents and members of our community feel heard. I am very excited about running for WCS School Board again and cannot wait to be able to make an impact of our community.



Westmoreland
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Board of Education

John Acee - *President*
Heather Johnson - *Vice President*
Steven Bulger
Paul Kulpa
Pamela Murphy
Denise Szarek

Administration

Rocco Migliori - *Superintendent of Schools*
Stephen Polera - *Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment*
Joshua Saxton - *Jr./Sr. High School Principal*
Trevor Haskell - *Upper Elementary School Principal*
Jessica Maine - *Primary Elementary School Principal*
Bryan Yurka - *Director of Special Education/District Data Coordinator*
Luke Willson - *School Business Official*
Jerry Fiorini - *Athletic Director*

Visit our website for updates and current events!



We are excited to announce that our new track and field is officially open and ready for use for Spring sports! This incredible facility will host football, soccer, marching band, track meets, graduation ceremonies, and much more. We also look forward to hosting sectional competitions and night games under the lights.



Our Vision

All students will strive towards individual excellence, become independent thinkers, be meaningful contributors and life-long learners, embrace who they are and look forward to who they can become as they prepare to be respectful, productive citizens in a diverse and evolving society.

Our Mission

The Westmoreland Central School District will work collaboratively with the entire community to maintain a safe and nurturing learning environment where high expectations are the norm and risk-taking, rigor, creativity, independence, and innovation are valued and fostered.