

2026

Seneca Area School's Administrative Report

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Welcome to the 2026–2027 School Year!

Dear Students, Parents, and Community Members,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year! We trust that everyone had a safe, relaxing, and fulfilling summer break. As we kick off this new academic year, we are thrilled to share some exciting changes and updates across our district.

Celebrating Our Fantastic Team

Our instructional and support staff are the heart of our school, and we are incredibly dedicated to helping every student grow and succeed. We are thrilled to share some wonderful updates about our team:

- **Kitchen & Nutrition:** In January 2026, **Tabby Benzing** was hired to lead our kitchen. Following a DPI audit this past spring, the District received glowing feedback for its kitchen operations and food program. Joining Tabby in the kitchen, **Karen Snyder** and **April Jackson** will be vital in preparing, cooking, and serving the nutritious meals our students need to fuel their school day.
- **Buildings & Grounds:** In March 2026, **Wade Varo** joined us as our Maintenance Supervisor. Wade has already implemented numerous updates to our facilities, making our campus and buildings look truly wonderful.
- **Custodian & Cleaning Staff:** **Carissa Bell** and **Meg Schroeder** have done an outstanding job cleaning, painting, and prepping our school buildings so everything is ready for the first day of school.
- **Academic Staff:** We are excited to welcome **Aaron Taylor** as our new High School Science teacher. Aaron brings a wealth of knowledge and a collaborative spirit to our team. Additionally, **Matthew Rice**, entering his third year with the district, will assume the role of Special Education Director. Matthew will also continue to serve as our Elementary Principal and to teach select high school classes.

All of these exceptional team members strengthen our already strong staff and reflect our unwavering commitment to providing our students with the best possible educational experience.

Leadership & District Vision

I am incredibly proud to begin my eleventh year in the Seneca Area School District. This will be my second year serving as your District Administrator, and I will also continue in my role as the Middle and High School Principal. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude and deep commitment to this community.

As we look at the year ahead, my primary goals include:

- **Open Communication:** Encouraging clear, thorough, and transparent communication with all stakeholders, including staff, students, parents, and community members.
- **Positive & Safe Culture:** Strengthening our established school culture to ensure our classrooms remain safe, comfortable, and respectful environments for all.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** The Seneca area has consistently demonstrated a remarkable commitment to supporting our schools. **Sarah Sime** has done wonderful work as our school district's Business Manager. As we navigate recent declines in federal and state funding, rest assured that we will continue to manage our local, state, and federal resources responsibly, always prioritizing our students.
- **Well-Rounded Support:** Collaborating closely with our teachers to deliver a top-tier education while actively supporting our students' mental health and well-being as they navigate the challenges of growing.

Technology & Preparation for the Future

Our district continuously pursues each student's growth and advancement, ensuring they are fully prepared for their next steps after graduation.

Thanks to the continued generosity of the **Seneca Educational Foundation**, our one-to-one technology initiative has successfully supported our high school students with individual Chromebooks for thirteen years. We are proud to continue this robust digital integration across the grades, ensuring our students are equipped for the modern world.

Please welcome **Susie Garfoot** to the district, as she will be working on the District's technology needs and issues.

Important Dates & Next Steps

With summer winding down, we are actively preparing for the first day of school on **Tuesday, September 1st**. To help us start the year off strong, please review the calendar of important dates provided with this letter. If you have any questions or concerns as we navigate the upcoming school year, please do not hesitate to reach out to me via phone or in person. Your involvement is vital, and I am here to support you and your child every step of the way.

Here's to new beginnings and an incredible year ahead!

Calendar Reminders

Just a reminder that we have the following school calendar events in August and September:

- Open House and dinner **Wednesday, August 26th**, 4:00 pm- 6:00 pm
- First day of school, **September 1st**.
- School pictures, **October 1st and October 2nd**.





School Web Page

Our school web page is the biggest single source of information on our school, including daily and monthly schedules, menus, handbooks, contact information, announcements, calendars, access to *Skyward*, and much more. Text messages and reminders are sent out through the school webpage. This website is powered by Apptegy, and it integrates seamlessly with smartphones and tablets. It allows students, parents, and District residents to access all our school information more directly. Upgrading this website has greatly increased the flow of information from our school to our community. You can find the school website at: www.seneca.k12.wi.us

Through the website, we have launched a mobile app that helps students, parents, and community members know what is happening at school from their phones. We know that families are using smartphones as a primary means of communication. That's why we've created an app that is custom-built for mobile. In the app, you can find cafeteria menus, sports scores, staff contact information, and event information. The app will help you better understand what is happening at school, connect with staff, and stay up to date on school information.

You can download the app for free from the Apple App Store or Google Play, as follows:

on Android: <http://bit.ly/2UDC2jb>

on iPhone: <https://apple.co/2Uv3YWq>

Accessing Student Information

Most parents would like to know as much as possible about their child's school experience, and we try to accommodate you through our ***Skyward student services software***. This software helps the school better organize and track your child's information and allows you to access it more easily. You can access your child's file

from any computer with your own personal password, allowing you to view your child's grade reports, lunch account balances, discipline records, attendance records, and other useful information. If you would like a password for *Skyward* "Family Access", contact Mrs. Ashley Roberts aroberts@seneca.k12.wi.us

Start-of-the-Year Forms are Available in Skyward!

The school would like all families to complete the start-of-the-year forms by Monday, August 25th. We encourage families to fill out all start-of-the-year forms on Skyward again this year. These forms are best completed on a computer or laptop, not a cell phone. You can update your family and student information, complete free/reduced-price lunch applications, and complete all your technology forms through Skyward. Access to these forms will be available on your homepage when you log in to Skyward. Click "Beginning of the Year Forms" to complete your Registration.

If you need access to Skyward, you can complete the "Skyward Access" form on our website at www.seneca.k12.wi.us. Click the Information tab at the top of the home page, then "Miscellaneous Forms," then "Skyward Family Access Request Form." Fill this out and click "submit". You will be emailed your login information to begin using Skyward. For questions on any of these procedures, please contact Kari Hagensick at kahagensick@seneca.k12.wi.us or Ashley Roberts at aroberts@seneca.k12.wi.us

IMPORTANT START OF THE YEAR REMINDERS

Wednesday, August 26, 2026:

- **Open house in the elementary, 4:00-6:00 p.m.:** Teachers will be in their classrooms, and students will have the opportunity to bring their school supplies with them. Please remember to have your child label all their personal items.
- **6th Grade Middle School Orientation, 3:00-4:00 p.m.:** The 6th graders will meet in the Band Room for middle school orientation. The teachers will be on hand to introduce themselves. We will walk the students around all the classrooms, and they will receive their schedules and locker numbers if they choose to store their school supplies in their lockers.

- **Community Picnic, 4:00-6:00 p.m.:** The school cafeteria will provide a dinner for families and community members who would like to visit the school.

◆ **One of the major changes to the MS/HS is the cell phone policy. The Seneca Area School District will implement a no-cell-phone policy during the school day.**

High school and Middle school students who choose to use or possess cell phones, smartwatches, or other electronic listening devices will be expected to turn them off and place them in a designated area before their first class of the day. Elementary students should keep their cell phones with their teacher.

Students who need to have a cell phone during the school day must get administrative approval.

Students who use/possess their cell phones or other devices without permission at school, as listed above, will face the following disciplinary consequences:

1st Violation: The device will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day.

2nd Violation: The device will be confiscated, and the student will serve an after-school detention.

3rd Violation: The device will be confiscated, and the student will serve an after-school detention.

4th and subsequent Violations: The device will be confiscated, and the student will serve an after-school detention. The device will be turned in to the school administration, and a meeting with a guardian/parent will be held.

Locker rooms/Restrooms: Students who use a phone in the locker room or restroom will receive a Major Offense on the Log Card Steps.

To promote respect for privacy, intellectual integrity, and a positive learning environment, students are also prohibited from photographing, filming, or recording students or staff at school or school-related events without the permission of the school administration and the party being photographed, filmed, or recorded.

School Day Start and End Time

Breakfast for Middle and High School will be at **7:45 a.m.** Students will then go to their advisor/homeroom for 21 minutes. The school day will end at **3:30 pm.**

Tuesday, September 1st:

- First Day of School: Students should be ready for their buses 10 minutes early on the first day. Elementary students will report to their classrooms. Students in grades 6 -12 will report to their homeroom teacher/advisor.



Resource Officer at our School

Crawford County Sheriff Dale McCullick and the Sheriff's Department detectives have worked proactively with our school to identify ways to improve school safety. Several years ago, the Sheriff's Department promoted an initiative to hire a school resource officer to be shared between the Wauzeka-Steuben School District, the North Crawford School District, and our school. The School Boards of those three schools committed to funding the position. A school resource officer builds connections with students and staff and helps us handle many challenges that may come up at school. Officer Alex Udelhoven is entering her second year as a school resource officer. We appreciate Alex as she is a valuable resource and works exceptionally well with our students.

Personal Technology Devices in Our School:

High School and Middle School are One-to-One, and the Elementary School also has Access!

Since September 2013, high school students have been using personal technology devices in class and at home.

In November 2011, Frank McCormick of the Seneca Educational Foundation approached the school, offering to fund a project benefiting students. After exploring various options, teachers determined that personal technology devices could enhance

learning. The Foundation enabled the purchase of Apple iPads and Google Chromebooks.

Chromebooks are the best fit for students. We implemented a "one-to-one" program, ensuring each student receives a Chromebook for the school year. These Chromebooks, which store information online and boot up in about 10 seconds, allow for seamless classroom activities. The Foundation funded over \$30,000 for this initiative and continues to support Chromebooks for each incoming freshman class.

This project significantly enhances instruction by providing students with immediate access to their devices, maximizing instructional time, and enabling students without personal devices to access school resources from home. Graduating students get to keep their Chromebooks.

We're excited to share how we're making our devices more accessible for every student! In middle school, each homeroom has a bank of Chromebooks ready for classroom use, and for grades 2-5 in elementary school, there are towers with Chromebooks for each class. Kindergarten and first-grade classrooms also have some devices for small-group activities.

Our students have already noticed great benefits from using these devices, and we're looking forward to even more! A study by Project Revolutionizing Education showed impressive results from one-to-one programs, including reduced paperwork, fewer disciplinary issues, improved test scores, and lower dropout rates. We will also monitor screen time to ensure students are not spending too long in front of a screen.

We want to extend a huge thank you to the Seneca Educational Foundation and its supporters for making these opportunities possible. We truly appreciate our community's support!

Just a quick reminder for students: please take care of your Chromebooks, as repairs can be costly. Let's keep them in great shape!

End-of-Day Check-out Procedures for Elementary

To avoid confusion as elementary students leave school at the end of the day and to make things safer for your child, the following procedures will be followed for pick-up of elementary students in grades Pre-K through 4 who do not ride the bus at the end of the school day.

At the end of the school day, elementary students who expect to be picked up by parents or guardians will wait at the east end of the elementary building, near door 33,

for their designated adult. **Children will not be dismissed to go to individual vehicles. The adult picking up the child should go to the teacher in charge of the students and verbally notify them that the student is leaving the school grounds with their parent/guardian.** While this is an added inconvenience for you as adults, we take our responsibility for your child's safety seriously. We feel this added step ensures that your child is accounted for every step of the way as they leave the school grounds. We will do everything we can to provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child to learn in while minimizing any risks that may arise. **Any older siblings who are dropping off or picking up their brother or sister should use the designated elementary pick-up and drop-off area. Elementary students should not walk from the student parking lot to the elementary building on their own, as it is unsafe due to traffic.**

School Entry and Exit Points

The evolving threats to schools in our society today have led us to continually evaluate how we operate regarding safety and security. Our goal is to make our school as safe as possible while still allowing us to operate efficiently. The following procedures will be in effect for the upcoming school year:

Elementary Building: Entry point: Double doors facing the gym (Door 30). You must contact the office to have them open this door when you enter; there is a buzzer by the door. All other doors will be locked throughout the school day.

Please Do Not Drop Off Students at School before 7:45 AM.

Middle School/High School: Entry points: Double glass doors on Highway 27 (Door 1). Upon request, office personnel will unlock the door. All other doors will be locked throughout the school day.

If you need to pick up your child during school hours, use the doors mentioned above. You will not be able to enter the building from any other point. Doors are numbered for your convenience. There are "15-minute" parking spaces along Highway 27. In elementary school, we placed a rope along the south side of the playground to

prevent traffic from entering during the school day. You can park along the rope to enter the elementary when it is in place.

While these procedures may inconvenience you and us, we do this to make your child as safe as possible. We are doing everything we can to provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child to learn in while minimizing any risks that may present themselves.



Athletic Events Season Passes and Fees

Athletic event season passes, which are good for all home events, are available in the school office, including:

Adult Season Passes: \$35.00 per adult.

Student Season Passes: Admission to home events for Seneca school students and athletes is free.

Golden Passes: No Cost. Lifetime passes are available to those aged 62 and older. Allows the holder to attend all conference games except at DeSoto.

Athletic Fees: There are no student participation fees this year.

Welcome Back from Title I

Welcome to the new school year! This is an exciting time as your child adjusts to their new classroom and routines. We would like to take this opportunity to inform you about the Title I Program within the Seneca School District. Title I is a federal program that provides funding to school districts and schools with high numbers or high percentages of disadvantaged children. Its main goal is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to receive a high-quality education (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website).

In the Seneca School District, Title I is implemented as a schoolwide program, enabling all staff to support all students in our school. The aim of a schoolwide program is to achieve high academic achievement in core subjects for all students, especially those

who need it the most. Additionally, Title I offers extra assistance in basic skills based on achievement and reading test scores, or as requested by a teacher or parent.

If you have any questions about the Title I program in Seneca, or if you have concerns about your child's academic progress as they begin the new school year, please feel free to contact Kelsey Kleven, the Title I Coordinator, at 737-9177 ext. 1320, or by email at kkleven@seneca.k12.wi.us.

Academic Standards

"The Seneca Area School District follows the standards as adopted by the state of Wisconsin as a framework for our academic expectations. All state and federal laws are complied with. The Common Core Standards have been followed where appropriate and are used as an outline of base expectations. These previously mentioned baseline academic standards are exceeded by our school in most areas."

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the School District of Seneca that no person may be denied admission to any public school in this district or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreation, or other program or activity on the basis of creed, religion, race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, political affiliation, arrest or conviction record, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, religion, physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability or handicap as required by s. 118.13 Wis. Stats. This policy also prohibits discrimination as defined by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race and national origin), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

People with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for information, or who have questions concerning this policy, should contact:

Alex Osterkamp, District Administrator, Seneca Area School District, 202 Main St, Hwy 27, Seneca, WI 54654. Email: aosterkamp@seneca.k12.wi.us

Information About the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program

We have included the application for the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program with the registration forms on the school's website. Please consider the following points regarding this important program:

- This program is a vital source of aid to our school district. Many federal and state programs base the amount of funding they send to us on the number of families in our district who are eligible for the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program.

- Your choice on whether to participate in this program is **confidential information**. Office personnel do not share it with anyone.
- If your income drops suddenly during the school year, you can become eligible for the program and fill out the paperwork at any time. If your income increases during the school year, it does not affect your eligibility.
- Students eligible for the free and reduced lunch program can receive two free ACT fee waivers and a reduced Advanced Placement (AP) exam fee. See Mrs. Chambers for more information about these benefits. If you have any other questions about the Free and Reduced Lunch program, please contact Kari Hagensick at the school office.



School Lunch Program Policies

We will again use the Skyward computerized system for our hot lunch and breakfast programs this year. You can view your lunch account information from your personal computer through the *Skyward* "Parent Access" program. *A reminder that information about free and reduced lunch is located elsewhere in this newsletter.*

Lunch	Breakfast
Elementary: \$3.45 daily. \$17.25 weekly	PK- 12: \$1.50
Grades 6-12: \$3.85 daily. \$19.25 weekly	Adults \$3.00
Reduced: \$0.40 daily. \$2.00 weekly	
Adults: \$5.00 daily	

No charge for Breakfast for those qualifying for free or reduced lunch

Electronic lunch account payment option is available!

You will need your family ID# to set up an account. This number can be located in your parent Skyward account. Once you log in to Skyward, click on **STUDENT INFO** along the left side of the screen, then click on the blue **View (student's name) family**. Your family ID# will be located in the upper right corner of this screen.

The Seneca Area School District is pleased to introduce a program called *e~Funds for Schools*. This program offers various options for parents/guardians who *choose* to make payments online and is extremely user-friendly. Not only will you have the ability to have lunch payments electronically withdrawn from your checking account or charged to your credit card, but you also have the flexibility to make a payment at any time through the school's website.

The *eFunds for Schools* electronic payment service is provided to the school by a third-party service provider. The service provider has a nominal fee for their service. **The Seneca Area School District will cover the fees associated with transactions; therefore, these services are provided at no cost to parents and guardians.** The system carries a Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) charge if the payment is "bad." When you set up your account, please review your options carefully.

You are in full control of your account and can make a payment at any time that is convenient for you. **No payments will be allowed without your knowledge and authorization through this secure payment system.** By providing your home and/or work email address, an email notification informing you of the student's name, the purpose of the payment, and the amount of the item will be sent to you each time a payment is to be processed. The *e~Funds for Schools* site is secure and uses industry-standard data encryption.

How does e-Funds for Schools work?

- Families set up and maintain their own logins, passwords, and payment preferences. Your account information is retained in a password-protected file.
- *eFunds for Schools* will help eliminate last-minute check-writing hassles, improve efficiency, and cut costs for both you and the school district.

- Online payments will help eliminate the worry that your children could lose or forget the money intended for school items or that it might be spent on other non-school-related items.
- Payments from a credit card or checking account may easily be set up. If possible, please use your checking account to make payments. Checking accounts are referred to as a **DIRECT DEBIT**. Credit/Debit card transactions have a higher fee than Direct Debit transactions.
- Parents/guardians may establish a recurring payment or may opt to make a one-time payment.
- The program offers various types of payment to families that include but are not limited to instructional materials, field trip fees, yearbook fees, graduation fees, and, of course, food service payments. The system may be expanded to include additional fees.

Seneca Area School District e~Funds link:

<https://payments.efundsforschools.com/v3/districts/56782>

Seneca Area School District Annual Meeting- This will be held October 21st at 6:00 pm.

Wisconsin School Bus Stopping Procedures

Wisconsin school buses use an eight-light system, which incorporates amber lights with red lights. The amber lights will flash before the red lights, as a “Warning” that the bus is preparing to stop. The additional lights alert vehicles traveling around a school bus that they should prepare to stop, similar to a traffic light.

-When amber lights are on: Drivers should slow and proceed with caution, preparing to stop.

-When the red lights are on: Drivers are required to stop 20 or more feet from the bus. This applies to all vehicles, both those following and approaching from the opposite direction, and in all lanes. No vehicle may proceed until the bus resumes motion and has turned off the red warning lights. The stop arm on the bus is an added communication to other drivers, but the lack of an extended stop arm is **not** a reason to pass a bus whose red lights are flashing.

Parents, please inform your child about these procedures so they are aware. Bus drivers will signal for children to cross traffic with two short horn beeps.

As we prepare for another school year, please watch for school buses with amber and red lights flashing; they are preparing to stop or are stopped! A vehicle owner can be cited when the driver of a car illegally passes a school bus. A law enforcement officer need not witness this violation if the school bus driver reports it to the law enforcement agency within 24 hours. Fines can be quite high for illegally passing a school bus, but the risk of hitting a child is even higher.

It's against the law not to stop for a school bus, but more importantly, our children are counting on you for their safety on the way to and from school!

For more detailed information about this change, see the YouTube link below.:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llpXv7ChbKk>



Speak Up, Speak Out Wisconsin was created by the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of School Safety (OSS). It is a one-stop place for important concerns, offering a Threat Reporting System, Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management, Critical Incident Response, and General School Safety Guidance.

When you, a friend, or the community needs help, you can make it happen. Speak up and Speak out by reporting a tip. The resource center will respond quickly and confidently to make sure we can help you or someone who is hurting, struggling, or in danger. <https://speakup.widoj.gov/>



24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT

In Wisconsin, calls, texts, and chats to 988 are answered by 988 Wisconsin Lifeline, a service of Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin under a contract with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. If the 988 Wisconsin Lifeline is unable to answer the call, text, or chat, the contact is routed automatically to a backup support center, which may be located in another state.

988 counselors understand that life's challenges can sometimes be difficult. They are trained to help you through stressful times and connect you with local resources if you need them.

There are three things to know about what to expect when you contact 988.

- You'll be given some options to select the service that meets your needs.
- Your counselor will ask some questions to first make sure you are safe.
- You'll get one-on-one, judgment-free support.



The Family Check-Up is an evidence-based, family-centered, strength-based intervention program for families with children aged 2-17. It supports families in developing positive family management practices, such as family routines and positive behavior support. It is assessment-driven and tailored to the family.

The Family Check-Up Online is a web-based app that improves family relationships and reduces child mental health concerns. Parents who have received the program report that it is helpful and easy to use, improving relationships with their children and supporting healthy child outcomes. The Family Check-Up Online can be used independently by families, on their own schedule, so it can reach far more families than would otherwise receive services.

Please see [our flyer](#) for more information, and please click [here](#) to sign up for the Family Check-Up app. If you need additional information, please contact Alex Osterkamp, Kayla Chambers, or Angie Cale.

Note: If you've already signed up and want to keep working through the app, please go to: <https://online.thefamilycheckup.com/> to sign back in. You will be able to continue from wherever you left off.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires school districts to provide annual notice of student and parent rights regarding student records. Parents/guardians and adult students have the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records.
2. The right to seek amendment of the student's educational records that they believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. Right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Education alleging noncompliance with these requirements.

The school may release the following information without consent, as the school has designated it as "directory information": Student's name, address, home telephone, date of birth, participation in school-recognized sports and activities, weight, and height of members of athletic teams, and year in school.

People with questions or comments about this policy should see the school principal.

Students, or parents of students, may submit a written request to the District that the student's name, address, and telephone listing not be released to military recruiters or institutions of higher learning without the student's written consent. The school will follow such requests.

SENECA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRAL AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Upon request, the Seneca Area School District is required to evaluate a child for eligibility for special education services. A request for evaluation is known as a referral. When the district receives a referral, it will appoint an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to determine whether the child has a disability and needs special education services. The district locates, identifies, and evaluates all children with disabilities enrolled by their parents in private (including religious) schools, elementary schools, and secondary schools located in the school district.

A physician, nurse, psychologist, social worker, or administrator of a social agency who reasonably believes a child brought to him or her for services is a child with a disability has a legal duty to refer the child, including a homeless child, to the school district in which the child resides. Before referring the child, the person making the referral must inform the child's parent of the referral.

Others, including parents, who reasonably believe a child is a child with a disability may also refer the child, including a homeless child, to the school district in which the child resides. Referrals must be in writing and include an explanation of why the person believes the child has a disability. A referral may be made by contacting Matthew Rice, Director of Special Education, Seneca Area School District, at 608-737-9177, ext. 1106, or by writing him at 202 Main St, Hwy 27, Seneca, WI 54654, or by email: mrice@seneca.k12.wi.us

Seneca Area School District Fall Referendum

The Seneca Area School District is seeking an operational recurring referendum in the fall election on November 3, 2026.

The Seneca Area School District has not held a referendum in 18 years, and your school needs one to effectively run and teach our students.

The Seneca Area School District is asking voters on November 3, 2026, to approve a recurring referendum. In year one, the amount would be \$500,000; in year two, \$470,000. The total would be \$970,000 phased into two years.

With voter approval, we will have the authority to tax the additional \$970,000, but we are not required to tax the full amount if we do not need to. This just creates a ceiling.

From the 2010-11 school year through the 2022-23 school year, we set the budget and did not need to levy to the maximum allowed. In those cases, we levied to what we needed and did not tax the public for more. We will continue to under-levy when the budget allows.



Why We Need an Operating Referendum?

Outdated Funding Formula - We currently have a state-imposed limit that restricts the amount of money we can receive annually.

Lack of State Funding - State legislature-approved funding has not kept pace with rising costs and inflation in recent years.

Increasing Needs - Needs have increased dramatically, especially in mental health and special education.

Rising Costs - Everyday costs of running a school have increased. From running a school breakfast/lunch program to heating the building.

Cost Saving Measures Taken

Seneca has not asked taxpayers to raise the revenue limit for **18** years. The revenue limit, which includes state aid and property taxes, has been maintained through various cost-saving measures, such as:

- Staffing cuts
- Changes to health insurance plans
- Minimal raises
- Early debt repayment
- Finding external revenue such as grants.

We have made every possible cut, but our operating expenses are still affecting our savings. Therefore, we need to ask voters to increase our revenue limit to maintain our operations.

Dates and times for informational meetings will be sent out to address any questions about the fall referendum.



SENECA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT