



Tiger Traditions

May/June 2015: 2015 Budget Special Section - Volume 15 • Issue 7

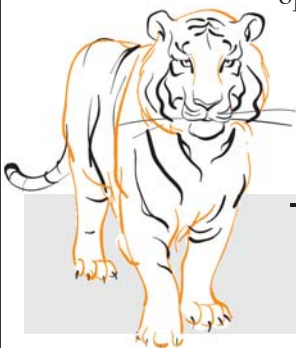
Astronaut Dr. Story Musgrave Visits Mexico School District



Dr. Story Musgrave spoke to the entire student body at Mexico Middle School.

The students and staff of Mexico School District, as well as the broader community, had the special privilege of a day-long visit from legendary Ret. NASA Astronaut Dr. Story Musgrave on Thursday, April 9, 2015. Dr. Musgrave gave captivating slide-show presentations to the students and staff at both the high school and middle school, toured Mexico and Palermo Elementary Schools, and gave an evening presentation to the community at Mexico Middle School. Throughout all appearances, Dr. Musgrave shared his life experiences that took him from his childhood on a farm in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, to flying in outer space with NASA. Along the way he: worked as a mechanic building the Mass. Turnpike, served in the US Marines in Korea, trained in the US Air Force, was a parachutist, worked as a trauma surgeon for 26 years, earned seven graduate degrees and worked with Walt Disney Imagineering. The father of seven children, he continues to work as a professor, palm tree farmer, speaker and landscape architect at the age of 80. As he spoke, Dr. Musgrave invoked listeners to be curious, creative, optimistic, and confident. He stressed

focusing on personal strengths and being disciplined 'to do the job right'. "Unexpected things in life happen," he said. "If you're ready, you won't miss them."



Dr. Story Musgrave visited Meg Cernaro's blended learning third grade classroom, at Palermo Elementary School, and witnessed how the students are using science and technology in everyday learning. Standing back, from left to right, are: Palermo Elementary School Principal Peggy Scorzelli, Dr. Musgrave, and Meg Cernaro.



Mexico High School Announces Class of 2015 Top Ten Students



Standing front, left to right, are: Andrea Ross, Alyssa Ross, Maura Roach, and Sydney McCombie. Second row: Hannah Bittner, Sophia Raymond, and Elizabeth Boulais. Standing back: Hunter Gowans, Robert Pritchard, and Victoria Towndrow.

School Budget

Special Budget Section Inside
(Pages 3-6)

For District information including a calendar of events, Board of Education meeting dates and times, contact information and more, visit the District web site at www.Mexico.cnyric.org



Mexico Middle School Choral Pops Concert, March 24

It was a full auditorium when Mexico Middle School presented their Choral Pops Concert at the school on Tuesday, March 24, 2015. The 5th and 6th Grade Chorus sang “Fireflies” and “Shake It Off,” with solos by Emalee Herrington and Alli Kerr. The Select Chorus sang “All About That Bass.” The 7th and 8th Grade Chorus sang “Good Times” and “Home,” and the Combined Chorus, with a total of well over 230 students, sang “Dance Evolution.” The entire Choral Pops Concert was directed by MACS Music Teacher Laura Washburn.



5th and 6th Grade Chorus



Select Chorus



7th and 8th Grade Chorus



Combined Chorus

MACS Student Earns Gold Key Award



Sarah Pietricola, an art student at Mexico High School, was awarded the “Gold Key” for her piece of art shown at the 2015 Central New York Regional Scholastic Art Show. The awards are sponsored by M & T Bank and the event is hosted by Onondaga Community College.



Pre-K Students Hold Birthday Parties to Celebrate Dr. Seuss

The New Haven Elementary afternoon Pre-K class posed, with Thing 1 and Thing 2 hats, for a photo during a field trip to the Mexico Public Library on Tuesday, March 3, 2015. All of the Pre-K classes in the Mexico School District took field trips to the public library in early March to celebrate Dr. Seuss’ birthday. The visits included Dr. Seuss stories, crafts, and “Cat in the Hat” cookies.

Mexico Academy & Central School is an equal opportunity educational institution and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national or ethnic origin, marital status or handicaps and disabilities in its activities, programs or employment practices. The Title IX compliance officer is Jeremy Belfield 16 Fravor Road, Mexico, NY 13114 (315) 963-8400 Ext. 5407.

Mexico Academy & Central School

2015-2016 SCHOOL BUDGET SPECIAL SECTION



BUDGET VOTE and SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

Tuesday, May 19 • Noon - 9 pm

Mexico, New Haven, and Palermo Elementary Schools

Voters are asked to decide upon two (2) propositions, including the adoption of the proposed budget for the school year commencing July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016, and to elect two Board of Education members.

Proposition One. Shall the Board of Education purchase and finance four (4) 66-passenger school buses, two (2) 14-passenger school buses and one (1) 18-passenger school bus at an estimated cost not to exceed \$583,506, including necessary furnishings, fixtures and equipment and all other costs incidental thereto and to expend a total sum not to exceed \$583,506, which is estimated to be the total maximum cost thereof, and levy a tax for the foregoing in the amount of \$583,506, which shall be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education and in anticipation of the collection of such tax, bonds and notes of the District are hereby authorized to be issued at one time or from time to time in the principal amount not to exceed \$583,506 and a tax is hereby voted to pay the interest on said obligations when due.

Budget Proposition: Shall the Board of Education of the Mexico Academy & Central School District, Mexico, New York, be authorized to expend the sums of money, which will be required for school district purposes for the 2015-2016 School Year, in the total amount of \$54,152,525 (The Budget), and to levy the necessary sum against the taxable real property in the School District.

School Board Candidates. There are two seats open, each for a term of three years. The candidates are: [Darlene Upcraft](#), [James Emery](#) and [Merrilee Gorton](#).

A Message from the Board President



Dear Members of the MACS Community,

At our April 7, 2015 meeting, the MACS Board of Education approved a \$54,152,525 budget for the 2015-2016 school year.

This budget represents a 2.85% increase in appropriations from the 2014-2015 school budget. The budget also includes a proposed tax levy that stays within our maximum allowable cap of 3.41%, and therefore will require a simple majority vote. I will also add that staying within the tax cap and filing an efficiency plan with the State should once again, result in a state rebate check for district taxpayers to cover the increase in school taxes.

More importantly, this budget allows the district to continue or expand upon several programs that have been implemented over the last few years; programs that are preparing our students for the many challenges of the 21st century. Examples of these programs include: "The Leader in Me," "Blended Learning," "AVID," "Advanced Placement" and "Project Lead the Way."

Additionally, we will be able to maintain our traditional academic offerings, as well as our extracurricular, co-curricular, and athletic programs.

To achieve the above, given the economic challenges, the federal and state mandates, and the continuous scrutiny surrounding public education, developing a budget responsive to the educational needs of our students was not an easy task, so I would like to thank the administration, staff and community for all of their efforts in developing this budget.

However, with every budget, there may be questions or concerns, so I extend an invitation for you to join us for the annual budget presentation and meet the candidates' night on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Mexico Middle School Auditorium.

Should anyone have questions or concerns regarding this budget prior to the presentation, please feel free to contact the MACS District Office or any MACS Board of Education member and we will try our best to address your questions or concerns.

Finally, I urge all of you to exercise your right to vote on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 from noon until 9:00 p.m. at the Mexico, New Haven and Palermo Elementary Schools.

Thank you for your consideration and I hope to see you for the budget presentation on May 12th.

James Emery, President
Mexico Academy & Central School District
Board of Education



2015 - 2016 School Budget Vote

Tuesday, May 19 from Noon to 9:00 pm • Mexico Middle School Auditorium

Proposed Budget

	2014-2015 Final Budget	2015-2016 Proposed Budget
General Support		
Board of Educations	\$17,125	\$19,495
Central Administration	\$228,457	\$233,670
Finance	\$486,692	\$482,176
Staff	\$423,450	\$408,410
Central Services	\$4,961,708	\$5,272,073
Special Items	\$949,758	\$970,479
Total General Support	\$7,067,189	\$7,386,303
Share of Total	13.42%	13.64%
Instruction		
Administration & Improvement	\$1,341,076	\$1,286,552
Teaching	\$20,308,301	\$21,545,422
Instructional Media	\$2,033,968	\$2,091,084
Pupil Services	\$2,140,589	\$2,134,951
Total Instruction	\$25,823,934	\$27,058,009
Share of Total	49.04%	49.97%
Pupil Transportation		
Total Pupil Transportation	\$2,925,898	\$2,735,820
Share of Total	5.56%	5.05%
Community Service		
Recreation	\$106,756	\$116,000
Other Community Service		
Total Community Service	\$106,756	\$116,000
Share of Total	.20%	.21%
Undistributed		
Employee Benefits	\$13,171,926	\$12,751,357
Debt Service	\$3,558,419	\$4,105,036
Interfund Transfer		
Total Undistributed	\$16,730,345	\$16,856,393
Share of Total	31.77%	31.13%
Total Appropriations	\$52,654,122	\$54,152,525

Revenue

	2014-2015 Revenue	2015-2016 Revenue
State Aid	\$23,996,715	\$25,656,012
Local Non-Tax	\$2,314,881	\$1,307,147
Tax Levy	\$24,842,526	\$25,689,366
Fund Balance	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Total Revenues	\$52,654,122	\$54,152,525

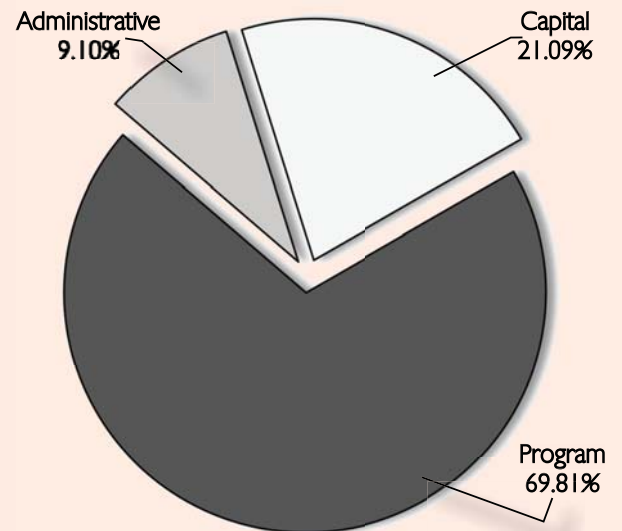
The Three-Component Budget

The State legislation which requires the state's school districts to have a public budget vote, includes the requirement that the budget be divided up into three components: program, capital, and administration. (see chart on next page)

Program Budget: This portion covers teacher salaries, school supplies, and all related educational costs.

Capital Budget: Refers to all facilities costs such as leases, annual debt service, custodial salaries and benefits, service contracts, custodial supplies, maintenance and repair of facilities, and utilities.

Administrative Budget: This section includes central administration and school offices, along with clerical support, salaries and benefits, and related expenses of all school administrators, board of education expenses for planning, and other administrative activities.



Budget Hearing

Tuesday, May 12
at 6:00 pm

Mexico Middle School Auditorium



Vote and School Board Elections

Mexico, New Haven, and Palermo Elementary Schools

Budget Notice

	Budget Adopted for the 2014-2015 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2015-2016 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2015-2016 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount <i>(not including separate propositions)</i>	\$52,654,122	\$54,152,525	\$53,929,025
Increase/decrease for the 2015-2016 school year		\$1,498,403	\$1,274,903
Percentage increase (decrease) in proposed budget		2.85%	2.42%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.62%	
A. Proposed School Year Tax Levy	\$24,842,526	\$25,689,366	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	0	0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable	0		
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	0		
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$24,842,526	\$25,689,366	\$24,842,526
F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$498,132	\$895,054	
G. School Tax Levy Limit - Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$24,344,394	\$24,794,312	
H. Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, Excluding Permissible Exclusions and Levy for Library Debt, Plus Prior Year Tax Cap Reserve (E - B - F + D)	\$24,344,394	\$24,794,312	
I. Difference: (G-H) <i>(Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)**</i>	\$0	\$0	
Administrative component	\$4,934,871	\$4,928,229	\$4,908,229
Program component	\$36,999,298	\$37,804,255	\$37,715,755
Capital component	\$10,719,953	\$11,420,041	\$11,305,041

If the proposed budget is defeated twice, the Board of Education must adopt a contingent budget. The following items are excluded from a contingent budget: equipment purchases, student supplies, non-essential maintenance, transportation of students under mileage limits set by state law, and public use of school building and grounds, except where there is no cost to the District. In light of the NEW Property Tax Cap, under contingency, the school district can levy no more taxes than the amount of taxes levied in the prior school year by the district.

List of Separate Propositions That Are Not Included in the Total Budgeted Amount:

Shall the Board of Education purchase and finance four (4) 66-passenger school buses, two (2) 14-passenger school buses and one (1) 18-passenger school bus at an estimated cost not to exceed \$583,506, including necessary furnishings, fixtures and equipment and all other costs incidental thereto and to expend a total sum not to exceed \$583,506, which is estimated to be the total maximum cost thereof, and levy a tax for the foregoing in the amount of \$583,506, which shall be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education and in anticipation of the collection of such tax, bonds and notes of the District are hereby authorized to be issued at one time or from time to time in the principal amount not to exceed \$583,506 and a tax is hereby voted to pay the interest on said obligations when due.

Basic Star and Tax Levy →



Maximum Allowable School Tax Levy

Understanding the tax levy limit and calculating, using the New York State formula, the maximum allowable tax levy for the Mexico Academy and Central School District for the 2014-2015 school year.

New York State Tax Levy Limit Formula

	\$24,842,526	MACS Prior Year Tax Levy (2014-2015)
x	1.0022	Tax Base Growth Factor
	\$24,399,048	Adjusted Prior Year Levy
x	1.0162	Allowable Growth Factor (lesser of CPI or 2%)
	\$24,794,312	Tax Levy Limit
+	\$895,054	Capital Tax Levy
	\$25,689,366	Tax Levy Limit Plus Exclusions
	\$24,794,312	Maximum Allowable Levy for the 2015-2016 school year*

Proposed Tax Levy for the 2015-2016 School Year

\$52,654,122	MACS 2015-2016 Proposed Budget
- \$23,996,715	Estimated State Aid
- \$3,373,881	Appropriated Fund Balance & Reserves
- \$441,000	Other Income
\$24,842,526	MACS Proposed or Levy for 2015-2016
3.41%	

Maximum Allowable Levy*

3.41%

vs.

Proposed Tax Levy

3.41%

*Mexico Academy and Central Schools' maximum allowable levy before exclusions, not the maximum allowable levy. Proposed 2015-2016 levy is less than or equal to tax levy limit.

Voter approval requires a simple majority vote (50% + 1).

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Three factors that determine the tax rate on your home include: tax levy, equalization rates and property assessment. The tax levy is set by the school district in May; equalization rates are established by the New York State Office of Real Property Services in August and each respective town establishes assessments and equalization rates, but these are just estimates. Therefore, tax rates are not finalized until late August, at which time school tax bills are printed and mailed.

	Budget Proposed for the 2015-2016 School Year
Basic STAR Tax Savings¹	\$681.90

The Basic STAR exemption is available for owner-occupied, primary residences regardless of the owners' ages or incomes. Basic STAR works by exempting the first \$30,000 of the full value of a home from school taxes.

¹The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

*Beginning with 2011-12 school levies, increases in STAR savings are capped at 2% of the prior year savings. The cap is not on the exemption amount – but on the savings amount.

How to Register to Vote

A qualified voter of the District shall vote only at the polling place for the election district in which such voter resides and no person shall be entitled to vote at such election whose name does not appear on the Register of the School District. Registration of otherwise unregistered voters shall take place at the District Office, 16 Fravor Road, Mexico, NY, between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm on any day when school is in session up to but not later than 2 pm on May 14, 2015. Any resident whose name currently appears on said register or on the register of the Oswego County Board of Elections for permanent personal registration or who has voted in any annual or special election within the four calendar years preceding 2015 need not register.

Absentee Ballots

Absentee ballots are available at the office of the District Clerk at the District Office, 16 Fravor Road, Mexico on school days from 9 am -3 pm. All ballots must be returned to the District Clerk by 5 pm on May 19, the date of the budget vote.

Voter Qualifications

1. Eighteen (18) years of age or older.
2. A citizen of the United States.
3. A legal resident of the Mexico Academy and Central School District for at least thirty (30) days prior to the vote.

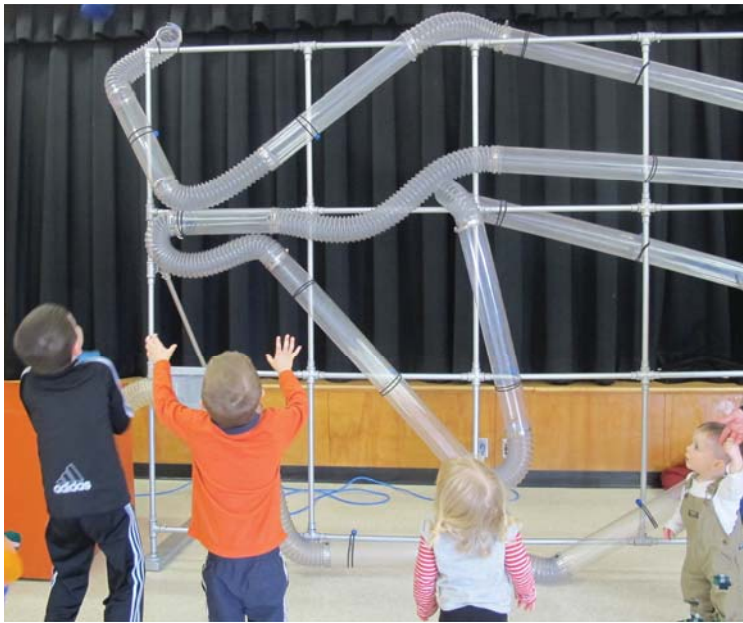
Voters may be required to show proof of eligibility before casting their vote. The following forms of proof may be accepted (not limited to): birth certificate, driver's license, non-driver ID card, utility bill, voter registration card or passport.

Any person not qualified to register or vote under the provisions of Sections 5-100 and 5-106 of the Election Law shall not have the right to register for or vote in an election.

Congratulations Mexico Academy and Central School District For Receiving the Best Communities for Music Education Award

The Mexico Academy and Central School District was named to the Best Communities for Music Education (BCME) for 2015 by the NAMM Foundation. One of only 388 districts from across the nation, Mexico's designation recognizes the district's outstanding commitment to music education with this prestigious award.





New Haven Elementary Children's Museum Event

The Whoosh! Air Tube Exhibit was a popular place during the New Haven Elementary Children's Museum Event at the school on Monday evening, March 23, 2015. The Children's Museum of Oswego, or CMOO, filled both the cafeteria and gymnasium of the school with traveling educational and recreational exhibits which included, beyond the tubes, busy boards, Lego building and racing, a construction zone and much more. At least 80 students, along with their families, enjoyed this enriching experience hosted by the New Haven Elementary Parent-Teacher Club.

Middle School ASAP Group Enjoys Swimming



Seventeen Mexico Middle School ASAP (After School Activities Program) participants enjoyed an afternoon of swimming in the pool at Mexico High on Thursday, March 4, 2015. These seventh and eighth grade students attend ASAP regularly and enjoy a variety of activities including swimming on occasion. The fifth and sixth grade students that participate in the ASAP program, of which there are approximately 45, have trips to the pool as well. On this day the students swam, played an organized game, and had fun.

Jr. FIRST Lego League Night Successful

Approximately forty, third-grade students from Mexico, New Haven, and Palermo Elementary Schools were present for the Jr. FIRST Lego League presentation at Mexico Middle School on February 25. These students met twice a week, after school, for six weeks during the winter months. Fourth grade students, who had participated in the Lego League last fall, acted as mentors to the younger students during these sessions. The focus of the league was three-fold; building robots, programming the robots, and research. Family members, staff and administration attended the evening event to see the research displays (about how boats floats), and to watch the students and robots in action.



Boat Floaters: Nicholas Cobb and Hayden Combs.



Board of Education

James Emery - President
Darlene Upcraft - Vice President
Eric Behling
Dennis Brooks, Jr.
Janice Clark
Connie Douglas
Merrilee Gorton
Maura Roach-Student Representative

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Robert Pritchard
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French Club Semi-Formal

Mexico High School Annual Semi-Formal Dance was on Friday, February 27, 2015 at the high school. MACS French Club, pictured with Madame Harter (left), organized and hosted the dance with this years' theme being "Bal du Moulin Rouge." A total of 335 students attended this, the 24th, semi-formal at the high school.

Mexico Elementary Carnival Night

The popular Twin Magicians, Paul and Dave Jackman, marveled the children with balloon creations during the Carnival Night at Mexico Elementary on Friday, March 22, 2015. Over 230 students, and their family members, joined in the fun carnival activities that included a dress-up photo booth, nail painting and hair braiding, flower pots and planting, basketball, hop scotch and more. The event was hosted by Mexico Elementary Parent-Teacher Club. Pictured with the Twin Magicians are Mexico Elementary students Angelina Warren and Tanner Rhinehart.



Middle School Variety Show

Mexico Middle School students Jolie Pelow and Aliza Deasy acted as a comedy duo as well as emcees during the 7th and 8th Grade Variety Show March 26, 2015. Approximately 600 students watched, laughed, clapped and cheered when their schoolmates brought one talented act after another to the stage. The acts included music, comedy, dance, a Rubik's cube challenge, a ballet class (with teachers as students!), and more.



Father Daughter Dance

Well over 100 girls, with fathers and grandfathers, attended the Annual Father-Daughter Dance at Mexico Middle School on Friday, March 27, 2015. This event, now in its fifth year, is hosted by the CSEA (Civil Service Employees Association), Mexico Chapter 8022, as a fund-raiser for the American Cancer Society. Pictured are brothers, both MACS graduates, Dan Smith, left, and Kevin Smith, with their daughters, from left to right: Juliana Smith, Nataleigh Smith, and Caiden McLymond. Juliana and Nataleigh attend Mexico Elementary and Caiden attends New Haven Elementary.

