SOUTH SENECA 2023-24 BUDGET NEWSLETTER



LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear South Seneca Community,

After a lengthy strategic planning process and commitment to three broad priority areas, the Board of Education is pleased to bring a 2023-24 budget proposal to the community within the calculated tax cap of 2.31%.

Last spring and summer, the district became the first in the region to place a School Resource Officer—provided by the Seneca County Sheriff's Office—in each school building. An ongoing investment in mental health professional staff, combined with this initiative and a continued emphasis on building infrastructure, are just a few of the ways the district prioritizes Safety, Security, and Wellness.

Partnerships with our local BOCES, with Tompkins-Cortland Community College, and with a host of Seneca County area providers, assist us in improvements for both academic excellence and a strong connection to our community—the other two priority areas identified in strategic planning. Our buildings and grounds facilities continue to be regularly enjoyed by community members, as we can all benefit from capital improvements.

With the recent closure of the Willard Drug Treatment facility, our district is now the second largest employer in the south part of the county, and the Board has worked diligently to ensure wages are competitive across the region for all job descriptions.

In addition to this document, you can find all of this year's budget presentations on our website at the Board of Education page. We take great pride in being an active and positive part of the South Seneca community. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions you have about the budget presented here in this brochure; I can be reached by phone at 607-869-9636 or by email at szielinski@southseneca.org.

Stephen Parker Zielinski

Superintendent

VOTE!

2023-24
BUDGET VOTE & HEARING

BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, May 16
1:00-8:00 p.m.
Lower Cafeteria, Ovid

BUDGET HEARING

Tuesday, May 9
6:30 p.m.
ES Auditorium, Interlaken

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Adam Prentice, President
Ralph Malvik, Vice President
Ave Bauder
Dan Borst
Brenda Eastman
Mike Paparone
Peter Jennings

BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

MIKE PAPARONE

My name is Mike Paparone and I am seeking reelection to the South Seneca Board of Education. I have served on the Board of Education for the last three years, where our accomplishments include overseeing the district budget with consistent reductions in the local tax burden while also providing solid foundations for the school's future. A few examples of my contribution to these foundations include consistent advocacy in favor of employee wage increases as well as support for environmentally conscious options for our new bus garage.

I have a diverse employment background- including the service industry, the Marine Corps, a decade of teaching at the University of Georgia and smaller colleges, and now nearly a decade in the analytical chemistry industry- that informs my decision making as a Board member. I believe that my experiences provide insight into what students will face when joining the workforce and, in my work on the Curriculum committee, I have supported internship programs

and educational opportunities that will help all students reach their full potential. Additionally, I draw on my experience as an educator to advocate for teachers so that they have the resources and opportunities to create engaging learning environments.

Although my name might not be immediately familiar to everyone, I have lived in Seneca County for the last 8 years. During that time I have been an active member of the community, from coaching 4 Towns youth soccer teams, to organizing the Strawberry Festival 5k race, and chaperoning school field trips. My wife is a South Seneca grad and her family has lived in Ovid for generations. Our daughter attended South Seneca elementary and is currently a student at the middle school.

I hope to continue my service to the Board of Education, and to set up our schools for a thriving future, with your support and vote.

PETER JENNINGS

Peter Jennings, a 2004 SSCS Alumni, is looking to pursue a Board of Education position (BOE). He has been serving on the BOE since January of 2018.

As a former student, active community member, and father of six, whom all will be attending South Seneca next Fall, he is looking to preserve and extend the resources that are available to our students and community. He wants to see South Seneca continue to provide a variety of academic and extracurricular programs. He wants to help maintain a balanced budget, while first acknowledging how tax implications impact our community. He strives to remain open minded, and considers all opinions and concerns on what is best for our students and community.

His goal is to create a better precedence for communication between school and home. He wants parents, students, and staff to feel comfortable addressing the BOE with questions and concerns, and he would like to see more attendance at future BOE meetings.

As a product engineer, he is responsible for managing customer deadlines and evaluating a number of cost effective options in order to meet customer requirements.

The skills he has learned in both his personal and professional life make him a well rounded candidate, and he looks forward to serving the community, if elected.

BRENDA EASTMAN

As an experienced SSCS board member, I strive to be committed to the district in which I have always lived and the communities that comprise it. My husband (Dave) and I have been blessed to farm and raise our family here. We have always acted on and impressed upon our family the importance of being involved and active within their schools and the communities in which they live. In fact, our son teaches high school science and our oldest daughter is an elementary teacher. Both are active in each of their schools and communities. Our other daughter and husband are raising their family in the SSCS district, are active in extra activities of the district as well as our communities and are

continuing to take over the operation of the family farm as well as operating The Pumpkin Stand.

I believe our district can and should be a place to be safe without bullying. Also there is always need for improvement in the area of communication overall throughout the district.

I encourage you to vote on May 16 and would welcome the opportunity to serve one last term on the board. As always, I am available and willing to talk with anyone who has questions of me. Please call or text my cell and I will return your call (607-592-0864).

BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

WHAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION DOES:

- · Convenes for bi-monthly meetings
- · Addresses District academic and fiscal concerns
- · Advocates for education, locally and statewide
- Serves the District voluntarily

SHANNON BROCK

South Seneca CSD matters to me because I'm a local business owner, a resident, and a parent of two current students. Our district is facing many challenges, including student mental health, COVID learning loss, school safety concerns, staffing shortages and inflation. At the same time, we need to prepare students for success in a rapidly changing world. As a school board member, I will support all the positive things happening at South Seneca. I will also help set the direction for the future while maintaining a responsible budget.

For the past year, I have served as South Seneca's appointed representative to the Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES Board of Education in Ithaca. Part of that role includes reporting to South Seneca's Board, so I have been attending some of our board's meetings. I have completed New York State's mandatory training for new board members, so I will be ready to serve on day one.

I am the co-owner and general manager of Silver Thread Vineyard, a small winery in Lodi. Before entering the wine industry, I was an elementary school teacher. I have a Master's Degree in School Administration and Supervision K-12 from University of Virginia. I am no stranger to working on a board; I have been a board member of Finger Lakes Wine Alliance for over five years and am the current Vice Chair. My volunteer work at South Seneca and in the community has included Music Boosters, South Seneca Falcon Players and Cub Scout Pack 78 Den Leader.

If elected to the school board, I am especially interested in helping to strengthen the ties between the school and local industries so that South Seneca graduates have pathways to participate in the local economy. I am also committed to keeping budget increases within the property tax cap set by New York State. I will work hard to represent the interests of children, residents and the business community of South Seneca.

ED GRANGER

Ed Granger, a 1975 SSCS alumni is looking for your support for position on the South Seneca Board of Education. Ed and his wife Mary (also SSCS alumni) have been lifelong residents of the South Seneca School District. Their son Lee currently attends South Seneca. Ed regularly attends board meetings so is up to date on issues the board has been working on and future issues the board may face. "For years I have sat in the audience observing the board meetings. I often use the podium to speak on subjects that are important to me, my wife and my son. I look forward to joining the board and becoming part of the solution." As an alumni, a lifelong resident and a father of a school age child he wants to work to keep and expand academic and extracurricular activities. He also believes an open line

of communication is crucial for the success and safety of our children. Also, it is very important to him to help provide the best education possible for our children while being a responsible caretaker with our tax dollars. For the past year there has been a lot of discussion and changes regarding communication and parent's ability to share their concerns. He will make it a priority not only to keep those lines open but to create policies that will expand communication, not restrict them. He believes being open and transparent is crucial in building trust with the community. Ed would love the support of the taxpayers, friends and neighbors of South Seneca for the honor to sit on the board of education.





2023-2024 BUDGET REVENUE

WHAT IS THE TAX CAP?

In 2010, NYS created the tax cap law.

The intent was to keep local property tax increases from schools and other municipalities below an allowable threshold, controlled by the same well defined factors in a budget. One of these factors is the Consumer Price index (CPI), which is a rough measurement of inflation to consumers. The state recognizes that schools and municipalities have many expenses that increase at a rate higher than CPI, so there are other factors included as well.

Please notice the calculation below. As you can see, there are multiple pieces that control the final tax cap number, which results in a final allowable increase, which turns out to be different for each school district in the state, each year. This year, South Seneca's tax increase is 2.31%.

HOW IS THE TAX CAP CALCULATED?

2022-23 Tax Levy	\$8,653,365
Levy Adjusted w/ Tax Base Growth Factor	\$8, <i>7</i> 19,131
Add: Pilots Receivable in 2022-23	\$5,000
Subtract: 2022-23 Capital Exclusions	\$560,796
Adjusted Prior Year Tax Levy	\$8,163,335
Multiply by CPI (2.00%)	\$8,326,601
Less: Pilots Receivable in 2023-24	\$4,949
Tax Levy Limit	\$8,321,652
Add: 2023-24 Capital Exclusions	\$531,545
Tax Levy Threshold	\$8,853,197
Allowable Increase in Dollars	\$199,832
Allowable Increase in %	2.31%

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES?

Revenues come from a variety of sources, district generated, state government, federal government and from local property taxes. New York State law requires that a school district's planned budget expenditures must equal their estimated revenues. The total local property tax, or tax levy, is calculated by subtracting district-generated revenues and state aid from the district's proposed budget. The tax levy proposed is an increase of 2.31% from last year.

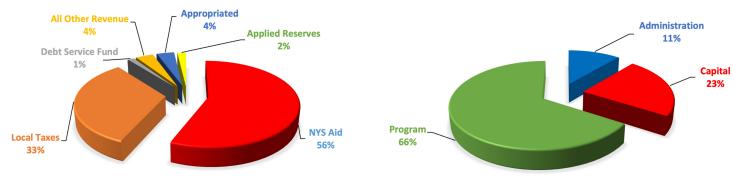
ITEM	2022-23	2023-24	DIFFERENCE
NYS Aid	\$14,959,469	\$15,160,646	\$201,177
Local Taxes	\$8,653,365	\$8,853,197	\$199,832
Debt Service Fund	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$0
All Other Revenue	\$800,000	\$1,000,000	\$200,000
Appropriated	\$607,833	\$1,000,600	\$392,767
Applied Reserves	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$0
Total Revenue	\$25,870,667	\$26,864,443	\$993,776

MAXIMUM 2023-2024 STAR SAVINGS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT: SOUTH SENECA

MUNICIPAL NAME	BASIC	ENHANCED
Town of Covert	\$367	\$855
Town of Hector	\$364	\$855
Town of Lodi	\$369	\$908
Town of Ovid	\$369	\$908
Town of Romulus	\$369	\$908

2023-2024 REVENUE BREAKDOWN

2023-2024 EXPENSE BREAKDOWN



2023-2024 BUDGET EXPENDITURES

WHERE THE FUNDS GO

Expenditures are incurred by the District to provide general support to instructional programs, transportation services, cleaning and maintenance, community services, employee benefits, athletics and debt service operations of the District. There is a 3.84% increase in the 2023-2024 budget compared to the 2022-2023 budget. Below are the details by department.

DESCRIPTION	2023-24 BUDGET	2022-23 BUDGET	CHANGE
Board Of Education	71,515	69,363	
Central Administration	241,137	234,932	
Business Administration	526,401	453,623	
Legal and Public Information	86,066	81,480	
Central Printing & Mailing	365,610	355,689	
Insurance and Administrative Costs	362,006	355,448	
Supervision and Benefits	1,392,032	1,354,726	
Total Administration	3,044,767	2,905,261	139,506
Operation of Plant	1,095,758	1,097,468	
Maintenance of Plant	621,950	483,100	
Refund on Real Property Taxes	5,000	2,731	
District Transportation Services	400,000	400,000	
Employee Benefits	530,366	503,104	
Debt Service	3,388,638	3,382,838	
Transfer to Capital Fund- Capital Outlay Project*	100,000	100,000	
Total Capital	6,141,712	5,969,241	172,471
Teaching-Regular School	5,166,353	4,999,449	
Program For Students with Disabilities	4,043,221	3,833,064	
Occupational Education (Grades 9-12)	917,753	897,907	
Teaching-Special Schools	56,057	52,197	
School Library & AV	240,167	239,125	
Computer Assisted Instruction	1,289,254	1,222,616	
Guidance/ Health Services	492,039	460,758	
Psychological & Social Work Services	260,700	252,791	
Co-Curricular Activities	50,000	55,000	
Interscholastic Athletics	342,570	328,387	
District Transport Services / Garage	1,197,105	1,127,292	
Employee Benefits and Transfers	3,622,745	3,527,579	
Total Program	17,677,964	16,996,165	681,799
Total Budgets	26,864,443	25,870,667	993,776
			3.84%

^{*}This year's Capital Outlay Project will focus on Facilities Improvements in both the Middle-High School Building

2023-24 BUDGET PROPOSITIONS

Proposition #1: RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the South Seneca Central School District shall be authorized to expend the sum set forth in the budget for the 2023-24 school year in the total amount of \$26,864,443 and to assess and levy upon the taxable property of the District the necessary tax therefore.

Proposition #2: RESOLVED, that pursuant to Education Law, Section 259, the Board of Education of the South Seneca Central School District is authorized to levy and collect an annual tax, year after year, separate and apart from the annual school district budget, in the amount of \$244,000, which shall be paid for the support and maintenance of the Interlaken Public Library (\$80,000); for the support and maintenance of the Lodi Whittier Library (\$80,000); and for the support and maintenance of the Edith B. Ford Memorial Library (\$84,000).

Proposition #3: To elect three members of the Board for a three-year term to succeed Mike Paparone, Peter Jennings and Brenda Eastman commencing on July 1, 2023 and expiring on June 30, 2026.

Proposition #4: Shall the Board of Education of the South Seneca Central School District be authorized to purchase motor vehicles for use in the transportation program of the District, including up to three (3) school buses and one (1) van, and expend therefore an aggregate sum not to exceed \$400,000 and be it further authorized that the sum of \$400,000 being the aggregate of the aforesaid maximum estimated amounts, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the appropriation of the amount not to exceed \$400,000 from the School Bus Reserve Fund or available budget fund balance.



SCHOOL PRIDE AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and Response to Intervention meeting all student needs

Full-day UPK supported through grant funding

BOCES used for curricular and professional development needs

Social, Emotional and Behavioral Student and Family Support

- School Counselor, Psychologist, Social Worker, Dean of Students (School Counselor), MTSS Coordinator and Seneca County Mental Health Counselor
- Teachers trained in Responsive Classroom and Zones of Regulation

Maintaining strength in Special Areas

- All students, PK-5 receive Art, Library, Music and Physical Education classes
- Grades 4 and 5 participate in Band and Chorus

Extended Day Program for all K-5 students supported through grant funding

- After-school and summer program offering a variety of opportunities including, but not limited to:
 - Arts and Crafts, Book Club, Children in the Stream, Clay, Comic Book Club, Cooperative Games, Cornell 4-H, Dance, Drama Club, Fitness, Fine Motor Skills, French Club, Gardening, Lego Club, Library of Things, Mad Science, Mindfulness, Music Enrichment, Outdoor Exploration, Performing Arts, School Community, Sewing Club, Tutoring, Writing Club

Additional Opportunities for our students

- Free breakfast and lunch for all students
- 1:1 chromebooks for all students K-5
- Composting Club, Swing Chorus, Marching Band, Jazz Band, Post Office Club, Safety Patrol, Student Council, Peer Mediation, Book Store

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Our mission is to work together as a community to support, encourage, and provide opportunities for middle school children as they grow and change. We believe that middle school is student-focused and middle level education is unique. The needs of the middle school student are different from those of elementary or high school students and that middle school is a team effort involving all students, their homes, their community, and the school. Communication between home and school is a priority in the middle grades and every individual involved in our community has a valuable contribution to offer.

We recognize that middle school students are in a process of constant change, and are dedicated to supporting them in this growth. It is each person's responsibility to work hard to create and foster a positive climate in our middle school. We strive to meet every student's individual needs through flexibility and creativity.

HIGH SCHOOL

South Seneca High School focuses on tailoring programs based on student interest. We work to inspire our young people to hone the skills that will help them succeed in college and careers, and we strive to offer students courses that will inspire as well as fulfill requirements.

Our high school focuses on a strength-based learning environment that fosters exploration, passion for learning, perseverance, collaboration, resourceful problem-solving, self-esteem, and civility that ensures students are ready for the future of their choices.

SPECIAL EDUCATION:

Our Special Education Department continues to provide a continuum of services for students with special needs ages 3 – 21. South Seneca is committed to providing special education services in an inclusive setting. We strive to provide programs and services to meet the needs of all students while providing equal access to classes, curriculum and activities. We are excited to continue offering an Integrated Special Education Program for our Pre K students with disabilities as well as related services and Special Education Itinerant Services at our Elementary School. Each year, the Special Education department customizes programs and services to meet the needs of all students. We will continue to offer a continuum of services ensuring the instructional and social/emotional needs of students are being met. Services include Integrated co-taught classrooms in grades K - 2, Consultant Teacher services and self-contained classes in both buildings. These programs will allow our students the opportunity to stay at South Seneca and allow them opportunities to build relationships with staff and students while providing supports and services to meet their needs.

ATHLETICS

South Seneca provides wonderful opportunities for our student-athletes and community through sports. Our students work hard to excel at athletics with the proud support of our community. Over the 22-23 school year, South Seneca has had several athletes honored as all-league athletes, league champions, state representatives, and a state champion. The positive effects athletics have on our student-athletes are unmeasurable and provide a lifetime of skills and memories. We are very proud of our athletes, coaches, and our fans for making South Seneca athletics a great experience.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities play a key role in a school's community and culture. South Seneca is a small school in the heart of the Finger Lakes where activities such as music, drama and other clubs create positive opportunities for students. The programs that South Seneca offers reach people near and far, as our groups continue to make their mark representing our school and community with pride. Our facilities are an amazing draw to what our small school has to offer. As we continue to offer extracurricular activities of the highest quality at South Seneca, our students will benefit from a spirit of cooperation and perseverance they learn now and need to succeed in the future.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. HOW IS THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM BEING IMPACTED IN 2023-24?

South Seneca will continue to offer athletic programs to best support our students. We hope to maintain the same programs and continue to encourage participation throughout all our levels.

Q. WHAT ARE SOME OTHER AREAS OF THE BUDGET THAT ARE INCREASING/ DECREASING?

The budget contains increases in contractual costs, including utilities, pension costs and health insurance. Some of these increases were offset by reductions in contingencies and savings. Each department has reviewed their actual costs from the past and their needs for the future and have been able to maintain their budgets within 3.84%. Therefore, our budget to budget increase is \$993,776 more than current budget.

Q. HOW WILL THE LIBRARY LEVY BE UTILIZED AT THE THREE LIBRARIES?

The Edith B. Ford Memorial Library will use an increase in funding to continue to provide a high level of community service, including technology and programming, for all residents of the South Seneca Central School District. The Interlaken Public Library will use this funding to continue educational and entertaining programs, materials and support to inspire a lifelong love of learning for all residents. The Lodi Whittier Library continues to increase community engagement through essential services and support. Increased funding will be used to support staff and operating hours of the Libraries that serve the South Seneca Community.

Q. WHAT AM I VOTING ON IN THE BUDGET PROPOSITION?

You are voting to authorize the South Seneca Central School District to budget \$26,864,443 for the 2023-24 school year. This represents a 3.84% increase in spending from the previous year.

Q. WHAT IS THE ESTIMATED INCREASE IN THE TAX RATE PER THOUSAND DOLLARS OF ASSESSMENT?

The tax rate per thousand is based on property assessments and equalization rates provided by NYS Real Property Office and may be different depending on the town where your property is located. Actual tax rates will be determined after the real property tax rolls, as prepared by the (5) Towns' Assessor, have been finalized in August. The tax rate is calculated by dividing the total tax levy by the total assessments by town.

Q. WHAT IS THE PROPERTY TAX CAP?

NYS has enacted a Property Tax Cap using an 8-part formula. The tax cap may be different each year. For 2023-24, South Seneca's Property Tax Cap is 2.31%. Since the Proposed Budget is at the cap, a 50% simple majority of voters is required to approve the 2023-24 budget.

Q. WHERE ARE TAXES COLLECTED?

For the 2023-24 tax year, South Seneca will continue to engage the Central Business Office at TST BOCES for its tax collection services. Property owners will be directed to send payments to TST BOCES. Taxpayers can view updated payment status on www.taxlookup.net.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF THE DISTRICT VOTERS DO NOT APPROVE THIS BUDGET?

The Board of Education may either propose a new budget in June or would go to a contingent budget. Under a contingent budget, all equipment purchases including buses, computers, science and musical instruments would be eliminated. A fee may also apply to previously free facility use and classroom-provided supplies for students may need to be provided by parents instead. The tax levy would increase by 0%, and necessary cuts may be made to staff and programs to balance the budget.

Q. WHAT WORK IS PROPOSED IN THE 2023-24 CAPITAL OUTLAY PROJECT?

One line item in the budget pertains to our \$100,000 annual Capital Outlay project. Each year, the capital outlay must focus on one of the two buildings, and in 2022-23, work is in the Elementary building. For 2023-24, we will be doing facilities improvements in the Middle-High School. This annual project allows the District to conduct needed repairs and receive 81.5% of its cost with state aid the very next year instead of the 15 year aided program of other capital projects.

DID YOU KNOW?

If the budget is defeated, the District will operate under a contingency budget. The following would be excluded by law from a contingency budget:

- New buses
- Computer equipment
- Musical instruments
- Maintenance equipment
- Science equipment
- Security cameras
- Free use of facilities
- School-provided supplies may be reduced
- Tax increase of 0%, up to \$619,595 in cuts may be made to staff and programming.

QUESTIONS?

For more information regarding the budget, please contact:

Miguel A. Andrade

Business Administrator 607-869-9636, ext. 3102

or see the complete budget on display at your local library, school building office or on our website.



SOUTH SENECA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



7263 MAIN STREET | OVID, NY 14521

#FOREVERFALCONS

f **¥** @SOUTHSENECACSD



TUESDAY, MAY 16 1:00-8:00 P.M. LOWER CAFETERIA, OVID

2023-2024 SCHOOL BUDGET NOTICE

	BUDGET ADOPTED FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR	BUDGET PROPOSED FOR THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR	CONTINGENCY BUDGET FOR THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR
Total budgeted amount	\$25,870,667	\$26,864,443	\$26,244,848
Increase for the 2023-24 school year		\$993,776	\$374,181
Percentage increase/ decrease in each proposed budget		3.84%	1.45%
Change in the consumer price index (CPI)		8.00%	
School Tax Levy Limit		\$8,321,652	
Proposed School Year Tax Levy (without permissible exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit)		\$8,321,652	\$8,653,365
Total Permissible Exclusions		\$531,545	
Proposed School Year Tax Levy (including permissible exclusions to the School Tax levy Limit)	\$8,653,365	\$8,853,197	\$8,653,365
Administrative component	\$2,905,261	\$3,044,767	\$2,950,938
Capital component	\$5,969,241	\$6,141,712	\$6,141, <i>7</i> 12
Program component	\$16,996,165	\$17,677,964	\$17,152,198

Statement of Assumptions for contingency budget for the 2023-24 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

Should the district go to a contingency budget, the district must cut non-contingent items from the budget. In a contingent budget, there would be no purchase of new equipment unless purchase was deemed for health and safety reasons, no new capital expenditures, except in emergency situations, no non-essential maintenance and outside organizations would have to pay for facilities use. The Board of Education must exercise its best judgment in determining what the minimum expenditures shall be within the limitations imposed by the administrations and the contingent budget caps.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Applications for absentee ballots will be obtainable between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday from the District Clerk.

The District Clerk must receive absentee ballots no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday May 16, 2023.

VOTER QUALIFICATIONS

In order to vote, individuals must meet the following requirements:

- Resident of the District for 30 days preceding vote
- The residence in the School District must be the individual's primary place of residence
- United States citizen
- 18 years or older

NEED MORE INFO?

For more information or to request an application for an absentee ballot, contact the District Clerk:

Shelley Reynolds 607-869-9636, ext. 4147

Or visit us on the web at: www.southseneca.org