



# Newsletter

Spring 2020-21

Quakertown Community School Board

Proud of our Presidential Scholar, Page 5



## From the Board President

**A**s we approach the final weeks of the school year, we find ourselves in a different world after more than a year of dealing with this pandemic. We've been reminded our educators are more than just teachers in their classrooms. They are mentors and helpers. They are advocates and healers. They are artists and leaders. And for some students and families, they are the glue that holds their busy lives together.



Kaylyn Mitchell

**Who's on the School Board?**  
**See Page 3**

We asked a lot from our teachers this year, and they stepped up to the challenge. They did so even when it felt uncomfortable and uncertain. As a result, our kids had opportunities many other students didn't have across the Country: the option to learn in person, and safely.

We have a lot to be thankful for! From very early on, our School Board impressed a sense of ur-

See President on Page 2

## Projected Fund Balance

	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
<b>0% Tax Increase</b>					
Beginning Fund Balance	\$23.9m	\$20.1m	\$16.5m	\$13.2m	\$9.7m
Ending Fund Balance	\$20.1m	\$16.5m	\$13.2m	\$9.7m	\$6.0m
<b>1.75% Tax Increase</b>					
Beginning Fund Balance	\$23.9m	\$21.3m	\$19.0m	\$17.0m	\$14.8m
Ending Fund Balance	\$21.3m	\$19.0m	\$17.0m	\$14.8m	\$12.6m
<b>3.5% Tax Increase</b>					
Beginning Fund Balance	\$23.9m	\$22.6m	\$21.5m	\$20.8m	\$20.0m
Ending Fund Balance	\$22.6m	\$21.5m	\$20.8m	\$20.0m	\$19.1m

Data based on Proposed Final Budget

## Budget scenarios: 0%, 1.75%, 3.5%

School Directors made the case that the Final Budget they pass on June 10th will not include the maximum 3.5% tax increase.

**T**he Quakertown Community School Board passed a Proposed Final Budget for the 2021-22 school year on May 13th, but Directors were clear that one number would likely change when the Final Budget is adopted on June 10th: the potential tax increase.

While the Proposed Final Budget includes a 3.5 percent millage spike, the expectation is that it would be cut in half or even whittled down to zero for back-to-back years with no tax increase.

"It's pretty clear 3.5 percent was not going to happen," said Keith Micucci, chair of the Finance Committee. "Perhaps 1.75 percent, but zero percent is what we're after."

**Read about Act 1, PA's property tax law: Page 3**

That could be determined by what transpires at the June 3rd meetings of the Facilities and Finance Committees. Mem-

bers have been supportive of expanding QCSD's full-day kindergarten option, but seem wary of the costs of renovations to Quakertown Elementary School and the construction of a much-needed baseball field.

Full-day kindergarten "at the heart stays focused on our mission as a school district," Mr. Micucci said. Its annual cost is estimated at between \$300,000 and \$500,000. At a May 5th meeting of the Facilities Committee, presentations pegged renovations to QE at between \$16.5 million and \$26.5 million. A baseball field, depending on the site upgrades and multiple fields, could run between \$2.5 million and \$8 million.

See Budget on Page 2

# School Board 2020-21 Spring Newsletter

## Board fills vacancy at May 13th meeting

**T**he Quakertown Community School Board selected Jennifer Gross to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Jennifer Weed, who is leaving the area.

Mrs. Gross was among three candidates interviewed by the Board at the May 13th meeting, along with former Director Rob Diliberto and Glenn Iosue. Mrs. Gross and Mr. Iosue are candidates in the May 18th Municipal Primary for the seat in Region 2, which includes voters in Milford Township and Trumbauersville Borough. Two other applicants did not attend the meeting to answer Board questions: Malcolm Vinger and Dana Kwiecinski, who withdrew her application.

"I'm really honored to be chosen," Mrs. Gross said. "This is a crucial time with far-reaching decisions that will be made. I thank the Board for their trust in me. I knew with Rob and Glenn applying that they would be tough to beat."



Jennifer Gross

Board President Kaylyn Mitchell, who congratulated Mrs. Gross on her appointment, said the coming weeks will be a "baptism by fire" because of the significant decisions that will be made before the Board votes on the District's 2021-22 budget on June 10th.

"I am dedicated to making the best decisions for the children and the community," Mrs. Gross said. "I'm going to work my hardest to make sure we do that."

Mrs. Gross said she was born and raised in Hilltown and has lived in Quakertown for 17 years with her husband and daughter. She is a former elementary school teacher in Lancaster County and now works in the pharmaceutical industry. Mrs. Gross said her daughter received an "excellent education" in QCSD, attending Pfaff Elementary School, Milford Middle School and Quakertown Community High School.

## President

From Page 1

gency to get our students the option to return to the classroom in person. It wasn't always easy, and there were strong disagreements along the way, but we came together and worked through this unprecedented challenge to do what was best for our community and for our kids. Being able to accomplish what we have this year has been a joint effort.

There is no way I can properly thank all of you, but I would like to extend my thanks to all of our administrators, faculty and support staff who pulled together to help our students and our families, and each other. And to our families who have endured so much this year - I remain hopeful for normalcy next school year! A whisper of a dream...

Last but certainly not least, I want to recognize our students. While we can't celebrate your growth and achievements together as we did in previous years, that doesn't mean they didn't happen. You found ways to deal with stress that should have never been demanded of you, and you focused on mindfulness and your social and emotional wellness. You set new goals and adjusted when asked to do so. You have shown empathy and compassion toward others. We are so very proud of all of you!

## Budget

From Page 1

"Those numbers that they came at us with, at facilities, were astronomically high," Mr. Micucci said. "I'd rather see full day kindergarten. It's going to make the best impact on students and performance overall."

Director Jon Kern agreed. "We impact a lot more people. It's less money. It's our mission. That's a no brainer." He added that if the program is phased in it wouldn't have a significant impact on the budget.

"The community is still impacted greatly (by the pandemic)," he said. "I'd love to not impact them yet again with more taxes. ... We have to kick some of these down the road because we're not going to burden our taxpayers this year with those types of funding requests."

The 2021-22 spending plan of \$117.9 million is below the current budget of \$118.9 million. But this year's budget (fiscal year 2020-21) includes the use of the \$2 million in funds received from the sale of Tohickon Valley Elementary and Milford Middle School.

Without the sales, spending is up 0.9 percent in 2021-22. With the sales included, it's down 0.8 percent.

The projected fund balance on June 30, 2021 is expected to be \$23.9 million or 20.3 percent of the projected expenditures, the equivalent of 2.4 months of expenditures. It is recommended that a school district's fund balance be sufficient to cover between two and three months of expenditures in case of emergencies.

The fund balance would fall to \$22.6 million if taxes were raised 3.5 percent. A 1.75 percent tax increase would drop the fund balance to \$21.4 million a year from now. Zero percent would put the fund balance at \$20.1 million.

With a millage rate of 168.83, the resident with a home assessed at the district average of \$23,857 is paying a tax bill of \$4,028.

A tax increase of 1.75 percent would raise that number \$70.50 to \$4,098. At 3.5 percent, the maximum allowed under Act 1, the state's property tax law, the tax bite would be \$4,169, an increase of \$141.

## School start time schedule

Building Level	School Start Time	School End Time
Elementary Current	9:15 a.m.	3:50 p.m.
Elementary Proposed	9:10 a.m.	3:40 p.m.
SGC Current	8:00 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
SGC Proposed	9:10 a.m.	3:40 p.m.
Strayer Current	8:00 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Strayer Proposed	8:05 a.m.	2:50 p.m.
High School Current	7:10 a.m.	2:10 p.m.
High School Proposed	7:45 a.m.	2:30 p.m.

Prior to the onset of the pandemic, a community committee examined and deliberated the research for school start times. Though their work was cut short due to COVID, their findings made a strong case for a later start time at the high school level, which Board President Kaylyn Mitchell stated at the April 29th meeting.

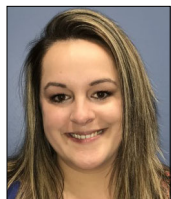
The chart above shows changes in starting times approved by the Board on April 29th for the 2021-22 school year. Some of the times may be tweaked depending on changes to QCSD's tiered bus schedule.

If you have questions or concerns, you may reach the School Board and Superintendent Dr. Bill Harner at [board@qcsc.org](mailto:board@qcsc.org).



# School Board 2020-21 Spring Newsletter

## Meet the Board



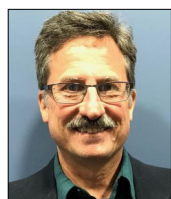
**Kaylyn Mitchell**  
President  
Tenure since 2017  
mitchell241@qcsd.org



**Ron Jackson**  
Vice President  
Tenure since 2014  
jackson764@qcsd.org



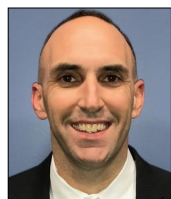
**Jennifer Gross**  
Tenure since 2021  
Gross189@qcsd.org



**Jonathan Kern**  
Tenure since 2015  
kern105@qcsd.org



**Steaven Klein**  
Tenure since 2020  
klein451@qcsd.org



**Keith Micucci**  
Tenure since 2017  
micucci824@qcsd.org



**David Ochmanowicz Jr.**  
Tenure since 2017  
ochmanowicz531@qcsd.org



**Brian Reimers**  
Tenure since 2019  
reimers688@qcsd.org



**Chris Spear**  
Tenure since 2019  
spear205@qcsd.org

To reach all Board members,  
please email [Board@qcsd.org](mailto:Board@qcsd.org)

## Calculating the Act 1 Index

Through Act 1, Pennsylvania's property tax law, an index is used to determine the maximum tax increase for each school district without an exception or voter approval. The base index is calculated by averaging the percent increases in the Pennsylvania statewide average weekly wage and the Federal employment cost index for elementary/secondary schools.

A school district's Act 1 index is first calculated using a three-year average of the Statewide Average Weekly Wage (SAWW) and the Federal Employer Cost Index (ECI). The resulting statewide number is the base Act 1 Index, which serves as the starting point in calculating each school districts' adjusted Act 1 index.

For each school district, the Act 1 base index is then adjusted by the school district's market value/personal income aid ratio (MV/PI AR) to calculate their adjusted Act 1 Index. To account for poverty, districts with an MV/PI AR greater than 0.4000 have their index adjusted upward by multiplying the base index by the sum of 0.75 and their MV/PI AR. The adjusted index represents the ceiling for property tax increases.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has calculated the Act 1 base index for the 2021-2022 fiscal year at 3.0 percent. In the above chart, note that of Bucks County's 13 school districts, five may increase taxes above the 3.0 percent threshold without seeking exceptions. Those are Bensalem, Bristol Borough, Bristol Township, Morrisville, and Quakertown.

District	MV/PI AR	Act 1 index
Bensalem	0.4124	3.5%
Bristol Borough	0.6375	4.1%
Bristol Township	0.5847	4.0%
Centennial	0.2799	3.0%
Central Bucks	0.1827	3.0%
Council Rock	0.1500	3.0%
Morrisville	0.4321	3.6%
Neshaminy	0.3403	3.0%
New Hope-Solebury	0.1500	3.0%
Palisades	0.1500	3.0%
Pennridge	0.3281	3.0%
Pennsbury	0.2959	3.0%
Quakertown	0.4238	3.5%

## Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

Pennsylvania's Property Tax/Rent Rebate program benefits eligible residents of the Commonwealth age 65 and older; widows and widowers age 50 and older; and people with disabilities age 18 and older.

The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters. Half of Social Security income is excluded. Spouses, personal representatives, or estates may also file rebate claims on behalf of claimants.

The maximum standard rebate is \$650, but supplemental rebates for qualifying homeowners can boost rebates to \$975.

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is one of five programs supported by the Penn-

sylvania Lottery.

Since the program's 1971 inception, older and disabled adults have received more than \$6.9 billion in property tax and rent relief. The rebate program also receives funding from slots gaming.

In Quakertown, 1,175 participated in this program, collecting \$557,033. Property tax rebates are increased by an additional 50 percent for senior households in the rest of the state, so long as those households have incomes under \$30,000 and pay more than 15 percent of income in property taxes.

If you would like more information about the program, call 1-888-222-9190.

## For forms & free assistance

Property Tax/Rent Rebate application forms and assistance are available at no cost from Department of Revenue district offices, local Area Agencies on Aging, senior centers and state legislators' offices.

### Homeowners Receive

Income	Maximum Rebate
\$0 to \$8,000	\$650
\$8,001 to \$15,000	\$500
\$15,001 to \$18,000	\$300
\$18,001 to \$35,000	\$250

### Renters receive

Income	Maximum Rebate
\$0 to \$8,000	\$650
\$8,001 to \$15,000	\$500

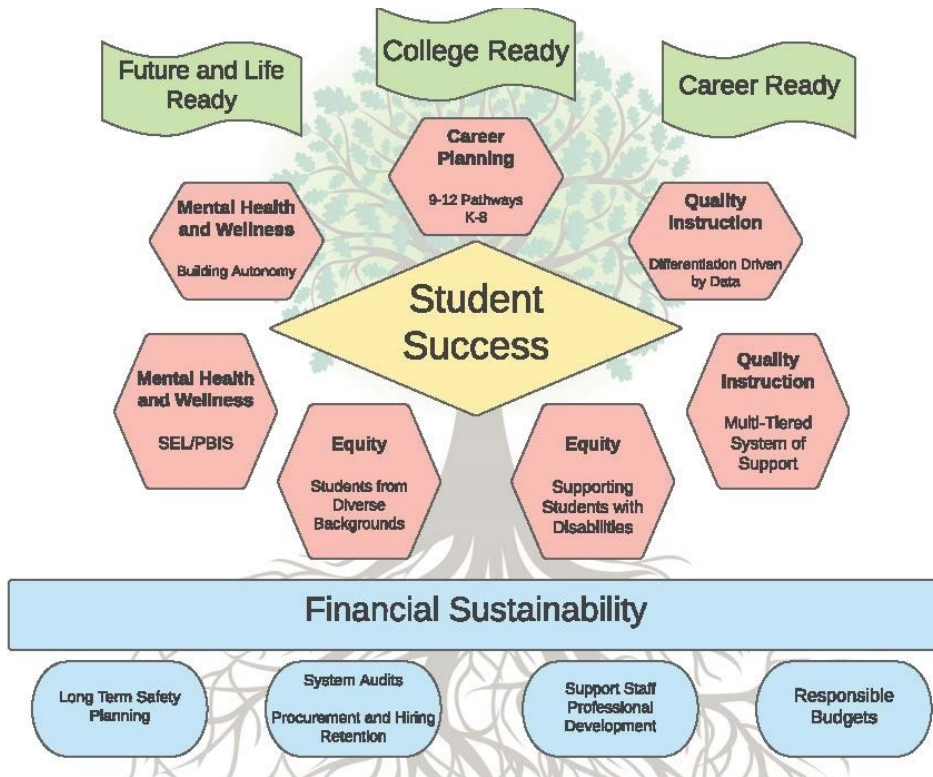
## About this newsletter

The Quakertown Community School Board's Spring 2020-21 newsletter is part of the Superintendent Goals and can be found on the qcsd.org website in the School Board section.

At the request of the School Board, it is being mailed to all households in the school district.

The newsletter was written and designed by Gary Weckselblatt, QCSD's Director of Communications.

# School Board 2020-21 Spring Newsletter



## Redistricting committee: Renovate QE

After more than four months of meetings, QCSD's Elementary Redistricting Committee made its recommendations to the School Board on Thursday, February 11.

The committee which was charged by the Board to:

- ◆ Develop options for the grade level configuration and redistricting of elementary (or K-6) students to be implemented at the start of the 2021-22 school year.
- ◆ Evaluate those options based on impact on academic program, impact on students and families, cost-effectiveness, efficiency, impact on facilities (including the future use of Quakertown Elementary and the Sixth Grade Center), requirement for construction, renovations, or modular classrooms, impact on transportation, impact on personnel savings, and other criteria as the Committee deems appropriate.
- ◆ Report its findings, decision matrix, and recommendations to the Board.

Despite the district's declining enrollment, the committee elected to maintain five elementary schools, grades K to 5, and renovate Quakertown Elementary School.

School Board President Kaylyn Mitchell praised the committee for its "spot on presentation. You guys presented so well. Super clear. I just want to thank you again so much."

Assistant Superintendent Nancianne Edwards, who facilitated the committee, commended the group. "They are characterized by their thoroughness," she said. "And the same is true of how they built their presentation. ... They spent tremendous time and effort trying to come to a decision on what is the right recommendation to make to you."

The School Board has not committed to renovations. At a May 5th meeting of the Facilities Committee, presentations pegged renovations to QE at between \$16.5 million and \$26.5 million. Finance Committee Chair Keith Micucci described the numbers as "astronomically high."

## QCSD's proposed Comprehensive Plan

The School Board was presented with the district's proposed Comprehensive Plan on May 13th. Formerly known as the Strategic Plan, the Comprehensive Plan is a requirement of the Pennsylvania Department of Education to shape Superintendent Goals and guide the district over three years.

A Steering Committee of more than 50 parents, teachers, students, administrators, Board and community members drove the process, which included a community survey developed by the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. Feedback from the survey was used to guide discussions, goal-setting sessions, and action plans.

"This makes me so proud," said JoAnn Perotti, the BCIU's Director of Services and external facilitator of QCSD's Comprehensive Plan development. "It wasn't just one or two people developing the plan. You have such a great group of stakeholders. This is so important to every child who walks through every door in the district.

For several years, Ms. Perotti has facilitated Strategic Plans/Comprehensive Plans for schools, organizations and businesses throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Delaware. In addition, she facilitates workshops on consensus building, school board governance, team building, motivation, and superintendent searches.

The focus areas of the Comprehensive Plan include Student Success and Financial Sustainability. Under those umbrellas, action plan headings are:

- ◆ Culture for Learning
- ◆ Quality Instruction
- ◆ Historically Underperforming Students/Equity
- ◆ Career Planning
- ◆ Mental Health/Social Emotional Learning
- ◆ Fiscally Responsible Budget
- ◆ System Audits
- ◆ Long-term Planning/Funding for Safety
- ◆ Support Staff Professional Development

Assistant Superintendent Nancianne Edwards, the plan's internal facilitator, told the School Board the words "focus, simplicity, connection, and continuation" will help you see the theme that extends throughout the different areas of the plan. The idea was not to do millions of new things but to continue to invest in the things that we have in progress that are working well and want to keep improving."

The process, which began in January, 2020, includes a 28-day public review of the plan that can be found on the front page of the district [qcsc.org](https://www.qcsc.org) website. It's up for Board approval on June 10th and must be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education by November 30th.

Superintendent Dr. Bill Harner called the Steering Committee's effort "Extraordinary. It's postdoctoral work."

## For more info

<https://bit.ly/2QuSXUr>



# Our Presidential Scholar

*Raymond Slifer is PA's first CTE student to merit this exceptional designation.*

**R**aymond Slifer, a senior at Quakertown Community High School and Upper Bucks County Technical School, has been named a 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholar, one of the highest awards the nation can bestow upon a graduating senior.

He is Pennsylvania's first career and technical education Presidential Scholar since the program began recognizing those abilities and accomplishments in 2015.

"This is insane," said Raymond, who found out when he checked his email during a break from running his milling machine at Bracalente Manufacturing Group. He read the letter from the U.S. Department of Education and "I had a big, old smile on my face."

He immediately contacted his parents on a group chat and they expressed how proud they were. "They were very, very excited," he said. "I had to control my excitement and go back to running my machine. It's a really fun time."

Raymond is one of 161 seniors chosen for the prestigious honor. Only 20 have demonstrated ability and accomplishment in the fields of career and technical education. Raymond is one of those 20. The challenge to attain these heights is significant. Consider, there are 3.6 million students expected to graduate from high school this year. Just over 6,000 of them qualified for the 2021 awards determined by outstanding performance on the College Board SAT or ACT exams.

"This is an extraordinary achievement and Raymond is an extraordinary student and leader," QCHS Principal Mattias van't Hoenderdaal said. "Raymond has earned this accomplishment through hard work and dedication, and is certainly worthy of this recognition. I couldn't be more proud of him. He is a fine example for our students to follow and he is certain to have wonderful opportunities in the future."

Jeff Sweda, Executive Director at UB-CTS, said "I am so proud of Raymond and the entire staff. This is just another testament of the work that is put in will always shine. Congratulations to everyone."

Michael Herrera, Assistant Director at UBCTS, said "We are very proud of Raymond's accomplishments. His academic success, community service, technical



**Raymond Slifer: CTE Presidential Scholar.**

abilities, strong work ethic, and commitment to excellence are without peer. Raymond embodies the value of receiving a Career and Technical Education."

A press release from the Pennsylvania Department of Education noted Raymond's feat as a Keystone trailblazer.

"I am proud of Raymond for becoming Pennsylvania's first U.S. Presidential Scholar in Career and Technical Education since the inclusion of CTE in the Presidential Scholars program in 2015," said PDE's Director of the Bureau of Career and Technical Education Lee Burket.

"Raymond demonstrated his academic accomplishments, ingenuity, and problem-solving, and is being recognized at the national level. I congratulate him for being an outstanding student who demonstrates excellence in CTE."

Scholars are selected annually based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as evidence of community service, leadership and demonstrated commitment to high ideals.

They are comprised of one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large, 20 Scholars in the arts and 20 Scholars in career and technical education.

The Scholars Program was established in 1964 to recognize and honor some of our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative, and performing arts.

A Machining Technologies student, Raymond is a Cooperative Education student trainee employed by Bracalente in Trumbauersville. He is a tool room technician and has received all excellent evaluations from his employer. He has also excelled in the Machining Technologies Program, earning the OSHA 10 Safety Certification and several National Institute of Metal Working Skills Certifications. He was named a member of the National Technical Honor Society and has competed and placed at SkillsUSA machining competitions at the district and state levels.

Raymond, an Eagle Scout, is a junior firefighter with the Richlandtown Fire Co. He is enrolled in the UBCTS/Bucks County Community College Technical Entrepreneurship Program and will seek his associate's degree upon graduation. He will then transfer to Pennsylvania College of Technology and major in Manufacturing Engineering.

Raymond said he looked back today at how

**"Raymond demonstrated his academic accomplishments, ingenuity, and problem-solving, and is being recognized at the national level. I congratulate him for being an outstanding student who demonstrates excellence in CTE."**

**Lee Burket, PDE's Director of the Bureau of Career and Technical Education**

he continued to advance through the rounds of the Scholars program. "When I think about it, it's like, 'Wow, a lot of people started in this and they're just as smart as me but I got selected to win the award, which is insane to me.' I want to thank the people around me because I couldn't have gotten where I am without them."



# Quakertown Community

## School District



# Panther Profile

**2020-  
2021**

## Our mission

*To prepare all students with the knowledge, habits and skills they need to graduate ready for college or career and for engaged citizenship, all at the best value to our community.*

## Dream ... Inspire ... Achieve



Located in Upper Bucks, QCSD sits in a mixed setting of suburban, rural and urban communities. The district population of just under 4,900 students enjoys a diverse curriculum that boasts the most Advanced Placement courses in Pennsylvania, pre-engineering classes, a state champion music program, World Languages in K-12 and both pre kindergarten and full day kindergarten. High school students have access to a state-of-the-art TV production studio, cooking lab, dance studio, and other specialized learning environments.

## Find Us

100 Commerce Drive,  
Quakertown, PA 18951

215-529-2000

Facebook: QCSD News

Twitter: @QCSDnews

YouTube: QCSDTVNews  
and QCSD Board

## Our Schools

### Enrollment

Elementary School (K-5) ..1,920  
Middle School (6-8) .....1,212  
High School (9-12).....1,692

**Total Enrollment**  
as of April 30, 2021 **4,824**

- ⇒ Quakertown Community High School
- ⇒ The Academy at Quakertown
- ⇒ Strayer Middle School
- ⇒ Sixth Grade Center
- ⇒ Neidig Elementary School
- ⇒ Pfaff Elementary School
- ⇒ Quakertown Elementary School
- ⇒ Richland Elementary School
- ⇒ Trumbauersville Elementary School

**WWW.QCSD.ORG**



## STUDENTS

Economically Disadvantaged...	33.8%
Receiving Special Education...	19.8%
Countries Represented.....	36
Languages Spoken.....	20
Caucasian .....	78%
Black.....	3%
Hispanic.....	10.5%
Asian.....	3%
Multi-racial.....	5%
Other.....	0.5%

## 2020 GRADUATES

Scholarship Dollars.....	\$1.7M
4-Year College/University.....	60%
2-Year College.....	25%
Employment.....	12%
Military Service.....	3%

## ACHIEVEMENT

QCHS Average SAT Score.....	1,116
State Average.....	1,076
QCHS Average ACT Score.....	23.25
State Average.....	23.57
Proficient/Advanced on the Algebra Keystone.....	76.6%
State Average.....	63.3%
Proficient/Advanced on the Biology Keystone.....	74.6%
State Average.....	63.2%
Proficient/Advanced on the Literature Keystone.....	82.3%
State Average.....	71.5%
Proficient/Advanced on the PSSA in English Language Arts.....	68.1%
State Average.....	60.9%
Proficient/Advanced on the PSSA in Mathematics.....	53.4%
State Average.....	42.2%
Proficient/Advanced on the PSSA In Science .....	79.5%
State Average.....	68.0%
In 2019-20, 422 students took at least 1 Advanced Placement Exam	
Percentage of Scores 3 or Above on AP Exam for college credit .....	65%

## STAFF

Professional Staff.....	345
<i>(Includes Teachers and specialists, such as Counselors, Social Workers, Behavior Analysts, Nurses, Speech Therapists, etc.)</i>	
Support Staff.....	231
<i>(Includes Aides, Secretaries, Supervisors, Technology, etc.)</i>	
Professional Staff Avg Experience: 16 years	
Master's Degree or Higher.....	93%



The Quakertown Community High School Pathway Program empowers students to shape their postsecondary future by engaging learners through active inquiry, personalized learning experiences, and rigorous academic programming aligned to the ever-changing workforce trends.

Opportunities for exploration, skill development, and cultivating connections with local and national industries will prepare students to positively contribute to and lead a competitive global workforce.



**Education Starts Here**  
Pre-K & Kindergarten  
**QCSD.org 215-529-2023**

## FINANCES

Total Budget.....	\$118.9M
Average Assessment.....	\$26,300
Assessed Valuation.....	\$425.4M
Local Tax Rate.....	168.8308 mills
Average Tax Bill.....	\$4,440

## REVENUE

Local Sources.....	73.4%
State Sources.....	25.1%
Federal Sources.....	1.5%

## EXPENDITURES

Salaries.....	36.8%
Benefits.....	24.2%
Debt Service.....	10.1%
Purchased Services.....	7.9%
Tuition.....	7.0%
Other.....	14.0%

## COST PER PUPIL

Regular Education.....	\$15,417
Special Education.....	*\$34,315
*Charter school tuition rate	

## CAREER PATHWAYS





**Quakertown Community School District**  
**100 Commerce Drive**  
**Quakertown, PA 18951**

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Doylestown, PA  
Permit No. 640

## POSTAL CUSTOMER

# Board chooses Levy as transportation provider

**T**he Quakertown Community School Board voted unanimously on March 25th to award a five-year transportation services contract - contingent upon successful contract negotiations, to Levy School Bus Co.

Following a Request For Proposal (RFP), after Levy opted out of its contract last year, Levy and First Student, Inc. were selected as finalists by



the Board's Transportation Committee of Board President Kaylyn Mitchell, Vice President Ron Jackson, Steaven Klein and Brian Reimers. The QCSD Administration agreed with the Committee's recommendation.

Based on the proposals of the two companies, Levy is expected to

cost \$1.23 million less than First Student over a five-year period. Prior to the meeting, First Student offered to reduce its cost by \$600,000. That did not sway the Board. More information can be found on the [qcsc.org](http://qcsc.org) website under Departments and Transportation.

The district is close to working out final details of a contract with Levy, said Zachary Schoch, QCSD's Chief Operating Officer. The vote was 8-0. Director Jennifer Weed was absent.

Mrs. Mitchell said Directors heard from the community about Levy's "loyalty and trust." That community voice played a significant role in helping Levy overcome its presentation, which several Board members were critical of. Mr. Reimers, for example, described it as "less than inspiring."

Mrs. Mitchell praised the RFP process, which "really does lay out what criteria we have in place and what we're going to expect. We will be able to have accountability with that." She said the process has shown that Levy is "willing to step up to the challenge, and that's really encouraging for me to see."

Wayne McCullough, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials, helped facilitate the RFP process for the district. Mrs. Mitchell described him as "a top-notch professional helping us navigate through all of this."

**Levy School Bus Company is hiring.**  
**Call 215-536-4567, ext. 121, for information.**

RFPs are a formal document that outlines an organization's intent to purchase a good or service. The buyer, in the case QCSD, issues the RFP to provide background information and invite potential vendors to submit a proposal. The RFP allowed the district to create a rubric comparison of important factors. The office of the Pennsylvania Auditor General has advocated for RFPs to help protect taxpayers.

"The RFP process helped us make some really good improvements in our transportation services," Superintendent Dr. Bill Harner said. Those improvements include cameras and upgraded technology on each bus; enhancements to services for transporting students with special needs.

As part of the agreement, the district was to hire a Transportation Coordinator to oversee all aspects of the administration and operation of QCSD's transportation department and serve as the liaison between the district and transportation company.

Mr. McCullough said the position "will bring a return on investment that will exceed your investment" through a combination of increased routing efficiencies and improvements in the accuracy of transportation cost reporting to the Department of Education for subsidy reimbursement. A Transportation Coordinator would also provide an important internal control as recommended by Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials and the Auditor General.

**Update:** At the May 13th School Board meeting, Director Chris Spear motioned to suspend the hiring of a Transportation Coordinator and after a discussion a majority of the Board agreed to Mr. Spear's motion. In the 5-4 vote, President Kaylyn Mitchell, David Ochmanowicz, Brian Reimers and newly sworn-in Director Jennifer Gross supported Mr. Spear.

The Board intends further discussion about a Transportation Coordinator at its June 3rd Finance Committee meeting.

**School Board videos can be found on**  
**[YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com). Search QCSD Board.**