



2020 2021

TENTATIVE BUDGET



Commitment to Excellence / Commitment to Leadership & Service / Commitment to Innovation

QUEST  R III
PUTTING STUDENTS FIRST

MARCH 2020

Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the Questar III Board of Education, it is our pleasure to provide our local school board members and superintendents with our annual Tentative Budget document. As you prepare a budget for the 2020-2021 school year, Questar III is prepared and ready to serve your needs, and to provide exceptional value, leadership and service through shared service and collaboration.


The structure and mission of the BOCES continues to demonstrate the power of intermunicipal cooperation to achieve economies, efficiencies, expand educational opportunities, close gaps in student achievement and engagement, improve educational equity and serve all children of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and interests.

Looking ahead, we are focused on expanding opportunities for students and strengthening our programs. It is our pleasure to invite

component district school board members to our Annual Meeting on April 1 at our conference center in Castleton. Every April we hold this meeting to review our tentative budget, in accordance with state law. We also invite you to learn more about next year's tentative program and service budgets by reading our redesigned publication.

We have always been driven by a mission to "change lives, realize dreams and do together what cannot be done alone." For more than six decades, our tri-county region has partnered with BOCES to put students first. Looking ahead, we will continue to work together to meet the varied and ever-changing needs of our students and communities.

Thank you for your interest and support for our continuing efforts to serve your school districts, students and communities. Please contact us at John.Hill@questar.org or gcruz@questar.org with any questions.



John C. Hill, *Board President*



Dr. Gladys I. Cruz, *District Superintendent*

Questar III Board of Education

Questar III board members are volunteers elected to three-year terms by our component school districts' boards of education. Questar III board members have more than 300 years of school board experience in our region.



John C. Hill
Board President
Hoosic Valley CSD



Marilyn Noonan
Board Vice President
Catskill CSD



Edmund Brooks
Ichabod Crane CSD



Lynn Clum
Germantown CSD



Mary Daly
Hudson CSD



Joseph Garland
Coxsackie-Athens CSD



Nadine Gazzola
Taconic Hills CSD



Jennifer Haggerty
Rensselaer CSD



Mark Mann
East Greenbush CSD



Mary Marro-Giroux
Troy CSD



Frank Zwack, Jr.
Berlin CSD



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The Leading Edge

ABOUT

Questar III BOCES serves 23 districts in Rensselaer, Columbia and Greene counties. Our region includes rural, suburban and urban school districts. Our districts range in size from North Greenbush with 20 students to East Greenbush and Troy with more than 4,000 students.

MISSION

Changing lives, realizing dreams and doing together what can't be done alone.

VISION

Creating a student-centered culture (putting students first) of excellence, leadership, service and innovation.



Core Values

Questar III is driven by three core values:

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

COMMITMENT TO LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION

Executive Summary

Questar III continues to manage its costs aggressively. We want to ensure that we provide valuable services to all participating school districts.

Subject to the approval of component school boards, the administrative budget provides for a variety of operational and support activities of the BOCES, as well as services to school districts. Details of the tentative administrative budget can be found on pages 8-10 of this document.

The 2020-2021 tentative administrative budget is equal to the contingency budget of \$6,710,997, as a result of the general operations portion of the budget remaining at the same level as 2019-2020. The increase in the administrative budget is directly attributed to the rising cost of Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB). During the last combined six-year period, the administrative budget was \$90,000 below a contingency budget. For most of that period, Questar III was at or below the contingency budget.

Proposed Administrative Budget vs. Administrative Contingency Budget

Year	Proposed Budget	Contingency Budget	Above (Below)
2015-2016	\$5,835,872	\$5,835,872	—
2016-2017	\$5,882,746	\$5,882,746	—
2017-2018	\$6,102,375	\$6,076,585	\$25,790
2018-2019	\$6,345,933	\$6,266,515	\$79,418
2019-2020	\$6,467,395	\$6,662,280	(\$194,885)
2020-2021	\$6,710,997	\$6,710,997	—

The 2020-2021 tentative rent and capital budget will also remain at the same level as 2019-2020 and continues to include funding for the renovation project at the Rensselaer Educational Center. Phase I was completed during the summer of 2019, Phase II will be completed during the summer of 2020, and Phase III is in the design stage and is anticipated to begin during the summer of 2021 or 2022.

The budget for a BOCES differs in several significant ways from that of a school district. The most noticeable difference is that its total budget is a collection of several independent budgets. Another difference is that BOCES budgets are strictly revenue-based. That is, they are determined by the revenue generated rather than by predetermined expenditures, as with school districts. Unlike school districts, BOCES does not have any taxing authority.

As a result, final program budgets for the 2020-2021 fiscal year will depend upon service requests from districts. Each tentative program budget is adjusted when there are fluctuations in program enrollments or district participation.

Budgets for services, programs and grants make up approximately 89 percent of Questar III's total budget. A large percentage of services are instructional programs that include career and technical education (CTE), special education programs and district support services.

The Total Tentative Budget charts, on pages 4 and 5, provide a summary of expenditures by program/service category and by object of expenditure category and includes the following financial data:

- The 2018-2019 Actual Expenditures represents the final actual costs for that year.
- The 2019-2020 Adopted Budget represents the budget adopted by the Questar III Board of Education based on initial service requests.
- The 2019-2020 Adjusted Budget represents the Adopted Budget increased by any additional requests for services that have occurred to date. Unlike a school district, over the course of the year, Questar III increases its budget in order to account for requests of additional purchased services from component and non-component school districts and other BOCES.
- The 2020-2021 Tentative Budget represents Questar III's estimate of purchased services based on historical trends and projected service requests.

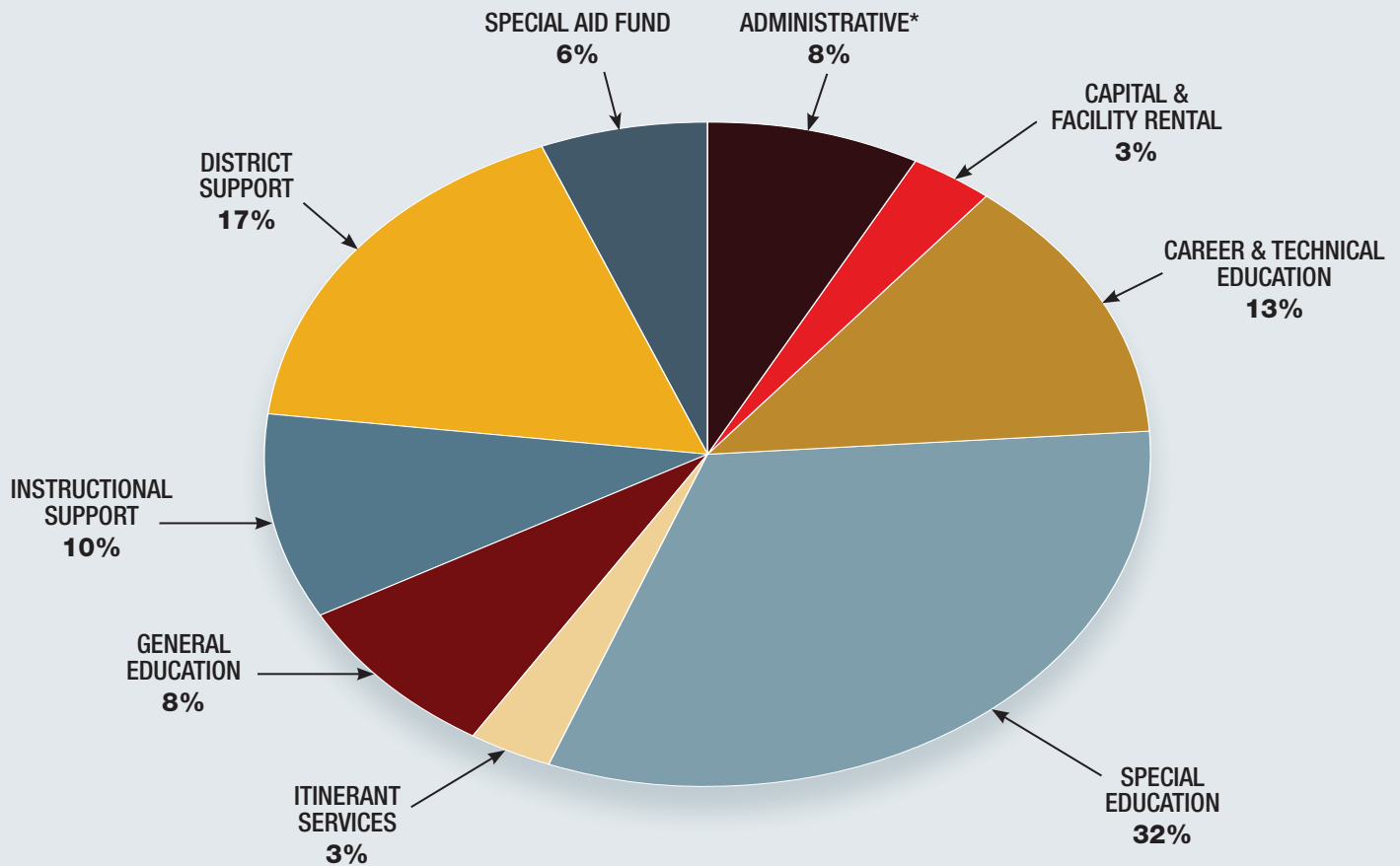
After districts complete and approve the Final Service Requests (FSR), due by May 1st, the 2020-2021 Tentative Budget, excluding the Administrative Budget, will be adjusted to the actual program and service requests approved.

STATE LAW REQUIREMENT: New York State Law requires the Boards of Education of each of our 22 component school districts to convene on Tuesday, April 21, 2020 to vote on the tentative administrative budget. ***The administrative budget is the only portion of the BOCES budget voted on.***



Total Tentative Budget

The Total Tentative Budget charts provide a summary of expenditures by program/ service category and by object of expenditure category.



2020-2021 Tentative Budget by Program/Service Category

PROGRAM/SERVICE CATEGORY	2018-19 Actual Expenditures	2019-20 Adopted Budget	2019-20 Adjusted Budget	2020-21 Tentative Budget
Administrative*	\$ 6,128,581	\$ 6,467,395	\$ 6,739,445	\$ 6,710,997
Capital & Facility Rental	1,669,365	2,205,217	2,219,217	2,205,217
Career & Technical Education	9,275,209	9,678,687	10,824,599	10,055,810
Special Education	22,134,569	24,742,921	27,667,859	25,808,457
Itinerant Services	1,731,784	1,927,748	2,030,151	1,980,422
General Education	5,842,597	5,828,218	6,061,588	6,466,599
Instructional Support	7,861,901	7,919,580	8,453,153	8,294,413
District Support	12,442,723	13,291,144	14,559,020	14,009,141
Special Aid Fund	4,427,163	4,333,666	4,743,804	4,880,150
Total	\$71,513,892	\$76,394,576	\$83,298,836	\$80,411,206

* The Administrative Budget is the only portion of the budget that component boards vote upon on April 21, 2020.



2020-2021 Total Tentative Budget by Expenditure Category

OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	2018-19 Actual Expenditures	2019-20 Adopted Budget	2019-20 Adjusted Budget	2020-21 Tentative Budget
Instructional Salaries	\$18,797,881	\$18,608,253	\$19,406,697	\$19,874,498
Non-Instructional Salaries	7,274,882	7,355,529	7,573,508	7,653,177
Equipment	5,122,703	3,510,296	4,378,406	3,179,520
Supplies & Materials	2,268,909	2,103,248	2,362,849	2,294,551
Contractual Services	3,043,626	3,385,973	4,414,452	3,890,481
Professional Service Contracts	1,704,081	1,717,928	2,574,600	1,818,930
Rental Of Facilities	1,179,893	1,226,287	1,240,287	1,226,467
Payments To School Districts & Other BOCES	14,007,415	14,515,694	15,168,814	15,453,521
Employee Fringe Benefits	10,401,889	13,691,685	13,685,818	14,449,510
Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB)	3,345,603	3,661,950	3,661,950	3,905,552
Transfer To Capital	523,825	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Transfer Charges From Operations & Maint.	2,257,793	3,359,684	5,416,613	3,386,227
Transfer Charges From Central Services	1,585,392	2,258,049	2,414,842	2,278,772
Transfer Charges From Other Services	1,883,412	1,208,270	1,281,043	1,213,321
Transfer Credits	(1,883,412)	(1,208,270)	(1,281,043)	(1,213,321)
Total	\$71,513,892	\$76,394,576	\$83,298,836	\$80,411,206

BOCES Overview

General Facts

62 YEARS OF SERVICE TO
LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

300 \approx PROGRAMS
AND SERVICES

400+ BUSINESS, EDUCATION
& COMMUNITY PARTNERS

690 \approx SCHOOL DISTRICTS
AND BOCES SERVED

1,652 SQUARE MILES IN THE
SUPERVISORY REGION

32,876 PUBLIC STUDENTS
SERVED LOCALLY

Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) are public education cooperatives that serve as extensions of local school districts. A BOCES provides programs and services that districts are unable to offer on their own or that are more economical to share with other districts.

Questar III BOCES serves 22 component districts (and one non-component) in Rensselaer, Columbia and Greene counties and provides approximately 300 shared services to approximately 690 school districts and BOCES statewide.

The New York State Board of Regents and the Commissioner of Education charge the state's 37 District Superintendents and BOCES with providing leadership and support to local school districts. Questar III focuses on developing the capacity of local schools to enable students to meet the state learning standards and graduation requirements.

New York State Law requires the Boards of Education of each of our 22 component school districts to convene on **Tuesday, April 21, 2020** to vote on the tentative administrative budget. The administrative budget is the only portion of the BOCES budget that boards vote on each year.

How Questar III Operates

Questar III BOCES provides shared educational programs to the school districts served. Partnerships with districts allow for the delivery of a broad range of programs and services that help meet the evolving educational needs of students. BOCES programs and services prepare diverse populations for roles in the local, regional, state, national and global economies, provide cost-effective shared services to districts and ignites collaboration to close gaps in student achievement.

Like public school districts, Questar III is governed by a policy-making board of education. The 11 members of the Questar III Board serve three-year terms and are elected by component boards through a special vote held each April. Questar III Board Members either serve or have served on local school boards. Most of them also have experience as board presidents in their districts of residence.

BOCES has been – and continues to be – an agent of change and a vehicle for family and student choice in our public education system. Through BOCES, school districts can provide a rich variety of learning experiences for students of all interests, ages and abilities. Also, Questar III strives to be the program of choice through its Commitment to Excellence, Commitment to Leadership and Service, and Commitment to Innovation.

How Districts Purchase Services

All services and programs (except for administration and rent) must be requested, in writing, each year through a final service request (FSR) process approved by local superintendents. Therefore, districts only pay for their share of requested programs and services. All services offered by the BOCES have gone through the approval process of the Commissioner of Education through the submission of a proposed programmatic and financial operating plan for each service, known formally as a Cooperative Service Request, or "Co-Ser."

Every year, districts have the option to renew, increase or decrease any service. Questar III and the component districts enter into formal contracts through final service requests. Specified in each contract are the number and types of services to be furnished by the BOCES, the number of students to be served, and the amount to be paid to the BOCES.

Paying for BOCES Services

Questar III has no taxing authority. It is funded by the member school districts forming the cooperative. As an incentive to cooperate and share resources, New York State provides aid to partially reimburse districts for participating in BOCES programs and services. Commonly known as “BOCES Aid,” these funds are distributed to districts based on a state-approved formula. BOCES aid for Questar III’s component districts ranges from 36 to 80 percent, depending on each school district’s wealth ratio. Each district’s BOCES aid rate is calculated by the State Education Department (SED), annually.

Budget History and Philosophy

Questar III has been aggressive in controlling and containing costs for component districts despite being faced with the same economic challenges as our region’s schools. We continue to strive for fiscal responsibility, accountability and transparency in our program and budget development efforts.

Through our shared decision-making process, we have achieved greater participation by our component school superintendents. Superintendent subcommittees continue their active involvement in program development and rate setting. Through this collaborative process, new services are developed, or existing services are eliminated and/or refined to better meet district, school and student needs. This process has allowed Questar III to gain a better understanding of the shared services districts need and value.

Questar III’s core values – commitment to excellence, leadership and service, and innovation – drive how we develop, refine and evaluate our programs and services as part of our budget development process.

Through its budget development process, Questar III seeks to:

- Develop programs and services to meet the needs of our component districts and students in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- Improve its capacity to deliver educational programs that support student achievement and high academic standards.
- Be faithful stewards and make effective use of the financial resources entrusted to us by our component school districts.
- Move resources, both human and financial, closer to our students and points of service.
- Provide the best possible service to our customers as quickly as possible.
- Increase productivity and provide districts with value for their money.

Our Changing Landscape

In the past five years, we have welcomed a number of new leaders to our region, including:

13 NEW SUPERINTENDENTS

14 NEW BUSINESS OFFICIALS

14 NEW CHAIRS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

51 NEW SCHOOL COUNSELORS & LIBRARIANS

54 NEW PRINCIPALS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS & DEANS OF STUDENTS

80 NEW SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Tentative Administrative Budget

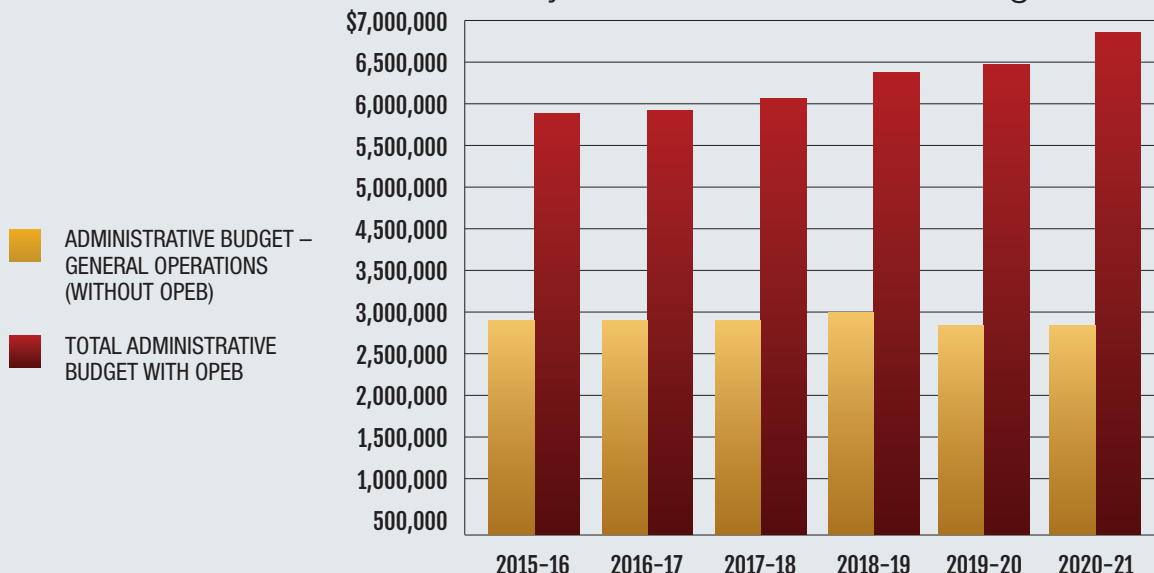
The Tentative Administrative Budget chart provides a summary of expenditures by object of expenditure category.

The Questar III administrative budget contains two components: (1) other post-employment benefits (OPEB) for retiree health insurance, and (2) the general administrative operations. The general administrative operations support the management, coordination and leadership provided by the BOCES. It includes the Office of the District Superintendent, central administrative expenses, Board of Education expenses, and a portion of the supervisors' and administrative personnel salaries and benefits necessary to carry out the administrative duties of the BOCES.

The administrative budget also contains funding to support activities associated with implementation of regional initiatives in advocacy, certification, communications support, district strategic planning, emergency management, grant research, superintendent searches, Annual Leadership Institute for Superintendents, business and operational support and professional development for boards of education, superintendents and staff.

OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	2018-19 Actual Expenditures	2019-20 Adopted Budget	2019-20 Adjusted Budget	2020-21 Tentative Budget
Instructional Salaries	\$ 147,830	\$ 155,533	\$ 155,533	\$ 177,547
Non-Instructional Salaries	845,617	813,800	818,938	862,208
Equipment	62,904	6,150	86,086	10,500
Supplies & Materials	60,206	74,175	87,547	94,200
Contractual Services	342,923	257,772	252,338	232,357
Professional Service Contracts	118,491	296,435	415,590	280,875
Employee Fringe Benefits	431,928	503,220	503,976	552,998
Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB)	3,345,603	3,661,950	3,661,950	3,905,552
Transfer Charges From Operations & Maintenance	57,324	80,078	104,433	84,378
Transfer Charges From Other Services	715,755	618,282	653,054	510,382
Total	\$6,128,581	\$6,467,395	\$6,739,445	\$6,710,997

History of the Administrative Budget



The administrative budget has been aggressively managed in an effort to minimize the effect of the cost of OPEB. This chart reflects the history of the administrative budget both with and without OPEB.



The Tentative Administrative Budget for 2020-2021 is equal to the contingency budget.

Questar III's tentative administrative budget for 2020-2021 is \$6,710,997, which is equal to the contingency budget. The other post-employment benefits (OPEB) costs, which account for 58 percent of the total administrative budget, are increasing by 6.65 percent. The general operational costs, which make up the remaining 42 percent of the budget, are equal to the previous year's budget. The resulting increase for the tentative administrative budget is \$243,602 or 3.77 percent from the previous year's budget.

However, the actual administrative charge to districts is \$5,439,815, representing an increase of \$171,271 or 3.25 percent from the previous year. The administrative charge for individual component districts is derived from the administrative budget of \$6,710,997 and is reduced by \$1,271,182 in revenues earned from administrative fees for statewide services, indirect costs from grants and contracts, interest income and other miscellaneous revenues. These revenues support 45 percent of the general operations portion of the administrative budget.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET SUMMARY	2019-20 Adopted	2020-21 Tentative	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Administrative Budget – OPEB	\$3,661,950	\$3,905,552	\$243,602	6.65%
Administrative Budget – General Operations (without OPEB)	2,805,445	2,805,445	—	0.00%
Total Administrative Budget	6,467,395	6,710,997	243,602	3.77%
Less: Other Revenues	1,198,851	1,271,182	72,331	6.03%
Administrative Charge to Components	\$5,268,544	\$5,439,815	\$171,271	3.25%

Tentative Administrative Budget

Administrative Revenues

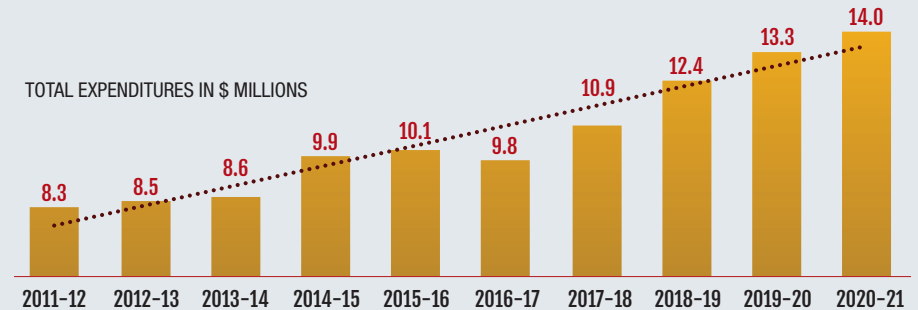
(excluding interest income)

The revenues from administrative fees charged to non-components for statewide services, indirect costs, interest and other miscellaneous revenues help Questar III contain administrative costs for its 22 component districts. As our statewide district support services grow, so does our administrative revenue (net of interest income), which in turn reduces administrative charges to our components. The chart below demonstrates the continued growth in administrative revenues over the last decade.

Year	Revenue	Year-to-Year % Change
2011-12	\$ 711,015	N/A
2012-13	\$ 728,313	2.43%
2013-14	\$ 769,683	5.68%
2014-15	\$ 778,147	1.10%
2015-16	\$ 813,252	4.51%
2016-17	\$ 828,731	1.90%
2017-18	\$ 844,199	1.87%
2018-19	\$ 987,866	17.02%
2019-20	\$ 1,138,851	15.28%
2020-21	\$ 1,246,182	9.42%

District Support Services Growth

The generation of administrative revenues are directly attributed to Questar III's drive to be the program of choice and to continue to develop new services to meet the needs of districts. This is demonstrated by the growth in Questar III's District Support Services provided to districts.



Office of the Superintendent

The District Superintendent serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Questar III BOCES and is the representative of the New York State Commissioner of Education in the Questar III Supervisory District. Both New York State and Questar III BOCES pay the District Superintendent's salary. The BOCES Reform Legislation of 1993 limits the salary and mandates the separate reporting of the District Superintendent salary and benefits as follows:

State of New York portion of salary and fringe:

District Superintendent Salary \$ 43,499
plus all Medicare and Social Security taxes

BOCES portion of salary and fringe:

District Superintendent Salary \$ 143,874
New York State Teacher Retirement \$ 14,748
Health, Dental & Disability Insurance \$ 28,950
Workers' Compensation Insurance \$ 2,158
Unemployment Insurance \$ 1,079



Rent & Capital Budget

Questar III occupies a number of instructional and office spaces in the tri-county region, including space owned and leased by the BOCES. Owned spaces include the two educational centers in Hudson and Troy, the Sackett Center in Schodack and the office/warehouse facility at 1070 Route 9 in Castleton. All other spaces are leased.

The tentative 2020-2021 rent and capital budget includes two components: (1) rent for leased spaces at schools and other entities and (2) transfers to capital. Rent to other entities includes the central office building located in Schodack, Tech Valley High School® and classrooms at colleges and other private entities for New Visions and special education programs.

Transfers to capital supports capital improvement needs at space owned by the BOCES.

Questar III also continues to lease instructional space with school districts for special education programs (Averill Park, Catskill, East Greenbush, Ichabod Crane, Rensselaer, Schodack). The classroom rental rate of \$7,000 per classroom (except new construction) is established by Questar III's superintendents.

Over the past decade, Questar III has worked with districts to better locate and cluster appropriate space for special education students. This work has resulted in better quality instructional space.



Rensselaer Educational Center Modernization Project

Over the past several years, Questar III has explored its options for creating a new state-of-the-art facility to house career and technical education (CTE) and special education programs.

After exploring various options based on the best value/location and much deliberation and discussion, Questar III moved forward with the renovation of the Rensselaer Educational Center in Troy. Renovations are being planned in three phases that began in June 2019 and are anticipated to continue

over the next two to three years. Phase I, completed in August 2019, was comprised of site work that improved drainage, provided new walkways, improved the bus loop and parking and included brick repointing of the building. The building rehabilitation will be broken into two phases in order to minimize disruption to students during construction. Approximately half of the building will be rehabbed under Phase II and the remainder of the building under Phase III.

Rent and Capital Budget Summary	2019-20 Adopted	2020-21 Tentative	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Rent Budget	\$1,205,217	\$1,205,217	—	0.00%
Capital Budget	1,000,000	1,000,000	—	0.00%
Total Rent and Capital Budget	2,205,217	2,205,217	—	0.00%
Less: Grant Revenue	5,670	5,850	180	3.17%
Total Rent and Capital Charge to Components	\$2,199,547	\$2,199,367	\$(180)	-0.01%

Administrative, Rent & Capital Budgets

Impact of the Administrative, Rent and Capital Budgets

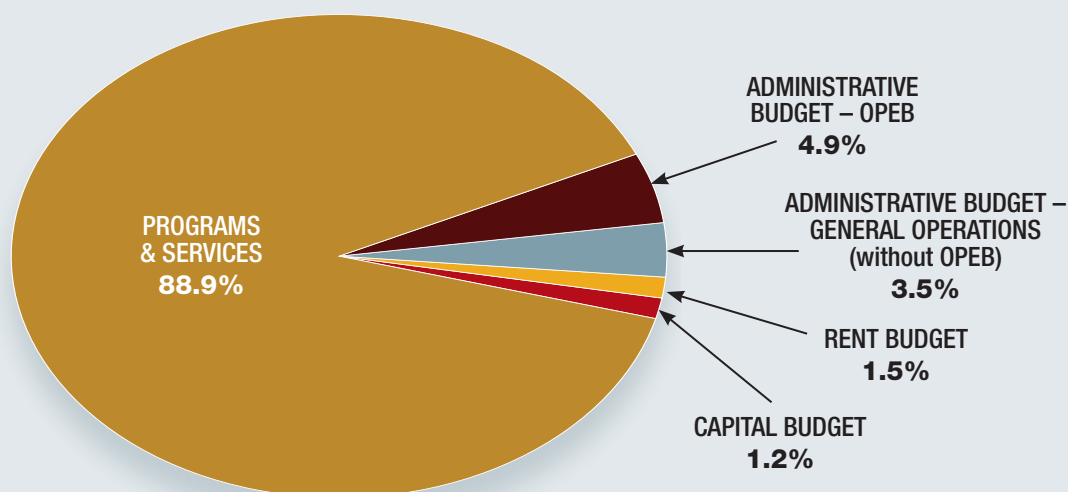
Sections 1950 and 1951 of the NYS Education Law established BOCES and the requirement of member or component districts to pay a proportionate share of the administrative, rent and capital costs.

School districts pay an annual assessment toward the support of the administrative budget based upon their Resident Weighted Average Daily Attendance (RWADA). District charges vary based upon increases or decreases in student enrollment.

In summary, the administrative charge of \$5,439,815 is increasing by \$171,271 or 3.25 percent and the rent and capital charge of \$2,199,367 is decreasing by \$180 or 0.01 percent. The net administrative, rent and capital charge to components for 2020-2021 is \$7,639,182, representing an increase of \$171,091 or 2.29 percent from the previous year's budget. **The 2020-2021 tentative administrative budget is equal to the contingency budget.**

Administrative, Rent & Capital Budgets & Charges to Components	2019-20 Adopted	2020-21 Tentative	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Administrative Budget – OPEB	\$3,661,950	\$3,905,552	\$243,602	6.65%
Administrative Budget – General Operations (without OPEB)	2,805,445	2,805,445	—	0.00%
Total Administrative Budget	6,467,395	6,710,997	243,602	3.77%
Less: Other Revenues	1,198,851	1,271,182	72,331	6.03%
Administrative Charge to Components	5,268,544	5,439,815	171,271	3.25%
Rent Budget	1,205,217	1,205,217	—	0.00%
Capital Budget	1,000,000	1,000,000	—	0.00%
Total Rent and Capital Budget	2,205,217	2,205,217	—	0.00%
Less: Grant Revenue	5,670	5,850	180	3.17%
Total Rent & Capital Charge to Components	2,199,547	2,199,367	(180)	-0.01%
Total Administrative, Rent & Capital Charge to Components	\$7,468,091	\$7,639,182	\$171,091	2.29%

Together the administrative, rent and capital budgets equate to 11.1 percent of the total Questar III Tentative Budget. The remaining 88.9 percent represents the programs and services purchased by districts and other BOCES.



Program Budgets & Highlights

The budget for a BOCES differs significantly from that of a school district. The most noticeable difference is that a BOCES has no taxing authority. Also, the budget is a collection of several independent budgets. Another difference is that most BOCES budgets are strictly revenue-based. That is, they are determined by the revenue generated by purchases of programs and services annually, rather than predetermined expenditures. As a result, final program budgets depend upon district requests in May of each year.

Whereas school district budgets are fixed, the demand for BOCES services leads to staff (and thus budget) increases or decreases during the year. Services are added or reduced based on district needs and demand.

Questar III continues to work hard to contain costs and to minimize rate increases for school districts. Striving to be the program of choice, Questar III's program participation remains strong despite pressures from regional student enrollment declines. This chart demonstrates how cost containment and strong participation results in the majority of program rate increases within the districts' tax cap limitations.

Year	% of Programs with No Rate Increase	% of Programs with a Rate Increase of 2% or Less
2016-17	79.80%	91.30%
2017-18	63.49%	86.31%
2018-19	62.23%	86.30%
2019-20	66.48%	75.64%
2020-21	57.02%	77.53%



Career & Technical Education (CTE)

4 ▶ Programs recognized by the CTE TAC of NY as model programs

8-15 ▶ College credits available to New Visions students

65 ▶ Students inducted in the National Technical Honor Society last year

92.2% ▶ Tech assessment passage rate

99.4% ▶ Graduation rate

200 ▶ Consultant committee partners help us to align curriculum and equipment to industry trends

7,556 ▶ Hours of student internships last year

Program Offerings

CTE

- Automotive Technologies
- Aviation
- Certified Nurse Aide
- Construction Technologies
- Cosmetology
- Criminal Justice
- Culinary Arts
- Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) & Health Careers
- Heavy Equipment Operation & Maintenance
- HVAC & Renewable Energies
- Pathways in Education program
- Welding/Metal Fabrication/Machine Tool

New Visions

- Medical (Samaritan Hospital)
- STEM (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute)
- Scientific Research & World Health (University at Albany's Health Sciences Campus)
- Visual and Performing Arts (The Arts Center of the Capital Region)

Career Studies

- Automotive Services
- Building Trades
- Hospitality & Lodging/Skills, Tasks and Results Training (START)
- Introduction to Employment
- Introduction to Food Services



The Career and Technical Education budget is comprised of three areas of programming including CTE, New Visions and Career Studies. The Career and Technical Education rates are below a 2 percent rate increase for 2020-2021.

Budget for Career and Technical Education Programs

PROGRAM/SERVICE CATEGORY	2018-19 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	2019-20 ADOPTED BUDGET	2019-20 ADJUSTED BUDGET	2020-21 TENTATIVE BUDGET
CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION	\$9,275,209	\$9,678,687	\$10,824,599	\$10,055,810

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Questar III CTE programs provide students in 11th and 12th grades with the academic and technical skills necessary to succeed in future careers and to become lifelong learners. Our CTE programs are based out of two schools, Rensselaer Educational Center in Troy generally serving students in Rensselaer County, and Columbia-Greene Educational Center in Hudson, generally serving students in Columbia & Greene Counties.

The programs combine classroom learning with hands-on training in a wide range of high-need career fields. These programs are equipped with industry-recommended tools and equipment, have articulation agreements for students to earn college credit, and provide opportunities for students to obtain industry certification or credentials.

All CTE programs integrate academic learning into the CTE instruction giving students a deeper understanding of applied math, science, and/or English Language Arts concepts and skills needed in that career area, while affording students the opportunity to earn academic credits towards Regents graduation requirements.

The Pathways in Education program (formerly known as the Academy for Educational Careers) was launched at Columbia-Greene Educational Center in September 2019. This program, designed to prepare the next generation of educators and school leaders, will expand to the University at Albany in September 2020.

NEW VISIONS

New Visions students gain valuable insight into career options from a real-world perspective. A one-year, honors-level program, New Visions turns area businesses, health care facilities and government buildings into classrooms for highly motivated, academically successful high school seniors.

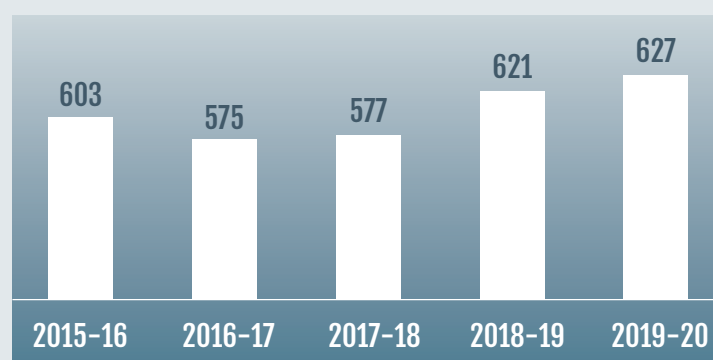
New Visions students learn and explore career options through mentoring, internships, interactions with professionals, group discussion and creative projects, as well as more traditional methods. New Visions students earn

four academic credits including one credit each for English and social studies and two elective credits. Students have graduated from these programs and gone on to top universities throughout the country and become highly successful in their chosen career paths. Last year, three of the four New Visions programs received the "Model Program" award from the CTE Technical Assistance Center of NY for their innovation and academic rigor.

CAREER STUDIES

Career Studies programs provide high school students (ages 16-21) with entry-level training in a technical area or trade at an alternative learning pace. These programs are designed to provide more customized career instruction and experience in a supportive learning environment. Career Studies programs have a small student-teacher ratio and are taught by certified teachers with substantial real-world experience in their given trade. The smaller class size provides an individualized course of instruction that helps students to become successful in the world of work.

CTE & New Visions Enrollment



Special Education

A longtime leader in special education, Questar III provides an array of services for students with disabilities, based on their individual academic capabilities and social/behavioral needs in response to each student's individualized educational plan (IEP). Local school districts, including those outside the BOCES, refer students to Questar III programs through their Committee on Special Education (CSE) process.

Budget for Special Education Programs

PROGRAM/SERVICE CATEGORY	2018-19 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	2019-20 ADOPTED BUDGET	2019-20 ADJUSTED BUDGET	2020-21 TENTATIVE BUDGET
SPECIAL EDUCATION	\$22,134,569	\$24,742,921	\$27,667,859	\$25,808,457

The Special Education Department provides individualized instruction to students, ages 5 through 21, in different academic settings including academy, CTE centers, district-based classrooms and a community arts center.

In recent years, Questar III has sought to find ways to explore more effective and cost-efficient ways to meet the ever-changing needs of

our students. This includes addressing greater mental health needs and moving students to a less restrictive environment in accordance with state regulations. Tuition rates are differentiated based on the level of service and class size ratio. All special education programs rates are below a 2 percent rate increase for 2020-2021.

Questar III offers the following Special Education programs:

Spectrum Program

The Questar III Spectrum Program is a district-based program designed for students with an autism spectrum diagnosis. As appropriate for each individual student, classes are mainstreamed in general education classes for much of the day. Students also have a "home base" where they receive support for their academics and where instruction is provided where mainstreaming is not appropriate. There is a focus on developing social skills, problem solving skills and conflict resolution skills.

Career Academy

The Questar III Career Academy is for students in 11th and 12th grades working towards a Regents Diploma, with an opportunity to obtain a CDOS credential, by spending half of their day taking academic classes and the other half of the day attending a CTE or Career Studies program at the Columbia-Greene Educational Center. Generally, students have social-emotional needs that are not being met in a district-based program and require the support of a smaller setting.





50 ▶ Classes in three counties

100% ▶ Of the Class of 2019 completed their graduation requirements (Regents, local diploma, CDOS or Skills and Achievement Commencement credential)

80+ ▶ Individual physical therapy sessions per week

111 ▶ Students receive occupational therapy

212 ▶ Students receive psychological counseling

250+ ▶ Individual speech and language sessions every week

1,992 ▶ Hours of work-based learning, internships, service learning and school-to-work paid employment by students

2,357 ▶ Years of service and experience by Questar III staff

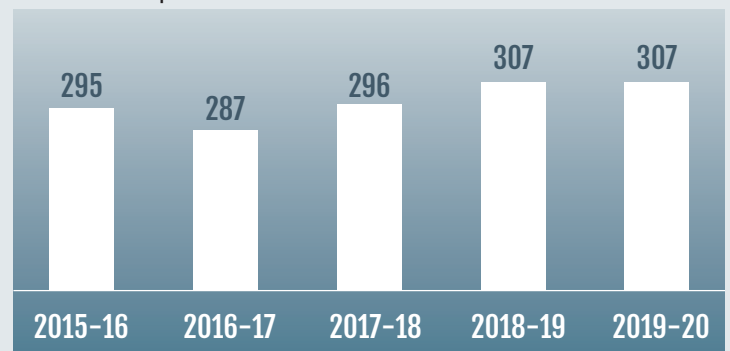
Questar III Facilities

- Academy at Rensselaer Educational Center
- Catskill Academy
- Columbia-Greene Educational Center
- George Washington School
- Sackett Educational Center
- Columbia High School

District-Based Classrooms

- Columbia High School
- Rensselaer Jr.-Sr. High School
- Ichabod Crane High School
- Maple Hill Middle School
- Robin Sobol Transition Academy at the Arts Center of the Capital Region

Special Education Enrollment



Special Education *(continued)*

Questar III offers the following Special Education programs *(continued)*:

Regents Programs

The Questar III Regents 4:1:2 and 6:1:2 programs are designed for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities whose behaviors interfere with their ability to complete the Regents requirements. Students require multiple levels of support for extended periods of time on developing social skills, conflict resolutions, and problem solving.

Therapeutic Youth Program (TYP)

The Questar III TYP 6:1:1 classrooms are designed for students with a mental health diagnosis that interferes with success in school, which may include school phobia and anxiety. This Regents-based program is for middle and high school students with a focus on academics and coping strategies.

Workforce Readiness

Questar III offers an array of opportunities for students to become better prepared for their future after they graduate school. While a student is enrolled at Questar III, they can participate in work-based learning, service learning and CDOS (Career Development Occupational Studies) classes. These opportunities will cement the soft skills they'll need to become successful when they transition into the workforce.

Robin Sobol Transition Program

The Robin Sobol Transition program is an 8:1:2 class located at The Arts Center of the Capital Region in Troy. Students ages 18-21, who have completed their New York State Assessments, have the opportunity to participate in a life skills curriculum and work-based learning.

New York State Alternate Assessment Programs (NYSAA)

The NYSAA 4:1:2, 6:1:2 and 8:1:1 classes allow students with significant cognitive disabilities as well as social, behavioral and physical disabilities and academic delays to demonstrate their performance toward achieving the NYS Learning Standards for English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics and science.

Students attending the 4:1:2 and 6:1:2 classes are in academy settings, which in addition to providing social work and psychologist support, also have crisis support. Students work on functional academics in all areas, including activities of daily living and life skills.

Students attending the 8:1:1 classes are in district-based buildings as they do not exhibit behaviors that require supports and resources available in an academy setting. Students focus on daily living and life skills along with academics.

All of our Special Education programs assist families in connecting to local mental health resources.



Itinerant Services

Questar III staff members are shared between school districts through itinerant services. Specific schedules or student assignments are determined by school district needs. The cost of individual itinerant services is impacted by the salaries and benefits of the individuals providing the service. Furthermore, due to district purchases and changes in staff, the costs of these services may have significant year-to-year fluctuations.

Budget for Itinerant Services

PROGRAM/SERVICE CATEGORY	2018-19 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	2019-20 ADOPTED BUDGET	2019-20 ADJUSTED BUDGET	2020-21 TENTATIVE BUDGET
ITINERANT SERVICES	\$1,731,784	\$1,927,748	\$2,030,151	\$1,980,422

103 ▶ Business engagement opportunities through School & Business Partnership Service

44,000 ▶ Likes/follows on social media accounts managed by Questar III

Instructional itinerant services include consultant teaching, music therapy, occupational therapy, orientation and mobility, physical therapy, adaptive physical education, school psychologist, psychological counseling, speech and language therapy, speech improvement, teacher of the blind/visually impaired, and English as a second language (ESL). District services such as claims auditing, communications/public information coordinator, and business and education partnerships are also provided as itinerant services.



General Education

Questar III offers a wide array of general and alternative educational offerings such as Tech Valley High School®, distance learning, arts in education, and pre-kindergarten. While many rates are not increasing, some will have a 2 percent increase. The Targeted Pre-kindergarten state grant has remained at the same level for nearly a decade, which has increased the local share for participating districts.

Budget for General Education Programs

PROGRAM/SERVICE CATEGORY	2018-19 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	2019-20 ADOPTED BUDGET	2019-20 ADJUSTED BUDGET	2020-21 TENTATIVE BUDGET
GENERAL EDUCATION	\$5,842,597	\$5,828,218	\$6,061,588	\$6,466,599

106 ► Courses available through Distance Learning

770 ► Students attend courses through Distance Learning

1,200 ► Students participate in Online Learning courses year-round





Distance Learning

Questar III works closely with the Northeast Regional Information Center (NERIC) to offer access to a distance learning network that expands the offerings of districts in our cooperative. This allows participating districts to share courses that cannot be offered in most districts and offers students the opportunity for Advanced Placement (AP) and college courses.

Alternative Learning Program

The Questar III Alternative Education programs (ALP) offer options for students who are in danger of not completing high school, who have difficulty with attendance, grades or motivation, or need assistance to pass Regents exams required for graduation. ALP is an option for students that are struggling in the traditional educational setting.

Pre-Kindergarten

For nearly three decades, Questar III has been partnering with districts to create and deliver a model program for pre-kindergarten educational services. Two types of pre-kindergarten programs are offered: Targeted Pre-Kindergarten programs (TPK) and Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) programs. Both programs incorporate high quality curricula to prepare students for future school success through strong foundational skills in early literacy and numeracy, social interaction and kindergarten readiness.

Arts in Education and Exploratory Enrichment

Questar III coordinates arts and enrichment programs for participating districts. Through dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual arts, and writing, students learn from cultural and performing artists, authors and illustrators.



Tech Valley High School (TVHS) is a four-year regional public high school that is built on the principles of project-based learning and collaboration. Students have ample access to technology, participate in Student Learning Teams, and can earn college credit with College in the High School courses as well as the College Ready partnership with Excelsior College.

- ▶ 140 students from 30 school districts
- ▶ 2-week annual career exploration program (called I-Term)
- ▶ 4 years of math and science (and 2+ years of Mandarin Chinese)
- ▶ 19 college credits earned, on average, by graduating seniors
- ▶ 20+ monthly interactions with business, non-profit and higher education leaders
- ▶ 60-credit associate degree available through Excelsior College
- ▶ 100 hours of community service in order to graduate
- ▶ 100+ presentations delivered across four years of school



Instructional Support

The Questar III instructional support services provide high-quality professional development, technology services and other instructional support services that benefit students, teachers and administrators across the region. The majority of these services will have rates that remain unchanged for the 2020-21 school year. Increased participation, along with deploying a model of continuous improvement, has mitigated the need for additional rate increases.

Budget for Instructional Support Services

PROGRAM/SERVICE CATEGORY	2018-19 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	2019-20 ADOPTED BUDGET	2019-20 ADJUSTED BUDGET	2020-21 TENTATIVE BUDGET
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT	\$7,861,901	\$7,919,580	\$8,453,153	\$8,294,413

4 ▶ Teams advanced to the Odyssey of the Mind world finals last year (and 27 in the past decade)

100+ ▶ Unique workshops and trainings offered annually by School Improvement

6,802 ▶ Hours of embedded professional development provided by content specialists

21,207 ▶ Student assessments scored during Regional Scoring

114% ▶ Increase in student checkouts thanks to Overdrive/Sora, an ebook and audiobook service provided by the School Library System

192,000+ ▶ Vetted educational media resources, including streaming video and royalty free music, available through Media Library Service

432,000+ ▶ Titles in Follett catalogs supported by the School Library System

5 million+ ▶ In devices and technology assets managed for school districts

School Improvement

Embedded Professional Development

The Questar III School Improvement Office offers services and programs to assist all stakeholders in the education community. School Improvement programs and services support best practices guided by New York State learning standards and current research. Programs and services are tailored to meet the needs of school districts and individual schools. Content specialists have expertise in many content areas, including English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Social-Emotional Learning, Mental Health, Restorative Practices, and, new in 2019-2020, Special Education. The School Improvement Office also offers services in the following areas:

- Grant Writing
- Home Instruction Review Service
- Leadership Coaching
- Program Evaluation
- Regional Scoring
- Regional PD Day

Data Coordination and Analysis

The Data Coordination and Analysis service provides onsite expertise in data analysis and reporting. In-district professional development is offered in the area of data interpretation to inform practice. Qualtrics is used to develop surveys capturing qualitative and quantitative data in easy-to-understand reports. The service also provides expertise relating to ESSA Accountability.

School Library System and Related Services

School districts may purchase shared services that expand access to resources beyond the walls of the library. Services include building enhanced library collections, providing full library automation support and online resources. The Multimedia service continues to add products for streaming video and music licensing, with NBC Learn to be included in 2020-21. Movie Licensing, through SWANK, provides districts with a license to show popular movies in school without violating copyright laws.

Model Schools

Model Schools assists districts with integrating technology into the curriculum, training faculty and staff on a wide variety of software, and presenting on a wide variety of relevant topics. Robotics, virtual reality technology and coding materials can be borrowed from the service and includes embedded professional development. Virtual reality in the classroom allows all students the opportunity to explore simulated experiences.

Odyssey of the Mind

Odyssey of the Mind is a worldwide educational program that helps students develop creative problem-solving skills through teamwork. Questar III is the New York State Region 4 coordinator of this program, the second largest in the state. Questar III teams advance to state and world final competitions each year.



Technology Services

The Department of Technology Services is comprised of a team of computing professionals dedicated to creating student success by leveraging 21st century technologies within a cost-effective shared services framework. The Department of Technology Services organizational structure is comprised of three units: Enterprise Help Desk, Field Operations and Systems Administration. From simple to complex requests, staff provide innovative solutions that leverage student success and increase teacher/staff collaboration. Participating districts have access to a fully redundant and secure data center with hosting capacity, a certified ethical hacker and robust device management.

District Support

Questar III's district support services extend and enhance the capacity of participating districts by providing innovative solutions or a high level of technical expertise. For 2020-21, many of these services will have rate increases at 2 percent or less that are driven by employee costs, while some rates will remain unchanged. Increased participation, along with deploying a model of continuous improvement, has mitigated the need for additional rate increases.

Budget for District Support Services

PROGRAM/SERVICE CATEGORY	2018-19 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	2019-20 ADOPTED BUDGET	2019-20 ADJUSTED BUDGET	2020-21 TENTATIVE BUDGET
DISTRICT SUPPORT	\$12,442,723	\$13,291,144	\$14,559,020	\$14,009,141

90% ▶ Of all school districts (and all 37 BOCES) served by the State Aid & Financial Planning Service – the largest BOCES service in the state

995 ▶ Students from 37 private and parochial schools received textbooks purchased and coordinated by Questar III

27,726 ▶ Students' safety impacted by our Health & Safety Service

5.6 ▶ Million square feet of fire inspections in 153 buildings

\$43.5 ▶ Million in excess cost aid secured by the STAC service for district clients

\$865.3 ▶ Million in successful school budget and capital project communications provided by Questar III last year

\$4.2 ▶ Billion in assets inventoried and managed by our Asset Management & Valuation Service in 855 buildings totaling 30.5 million square feet

\$14.7 ▶ Billion in OPEB liability valuation for 181 school districts served by our GASB 75 service



Asset Management & Valuation

The Asset Management & Valuation Service has teamed up with Asset-Works, Inc. to provide school districts and BOCES across the state with a comprehensive solution managing fixed assets that includes a complete physical inventory with building appraisals, annual re-inventory, and a web-based inventory software system.

Absence Management & Substitute Calling

The Absence Management & Substitute Calling Service is an automated system which allows school district staff to report absences by phone or online. The automated system then places calls to substitutes based on employee request and substitute availability.

Central Business Office

The Central Business Office provides the core functions of a district's business office to allow the Business Official to focus on the long-term financial plans of the district. The core functions include payroll, accounts payable, and general ledger accounting. Additional functions can be added and customized to meet the needs of the district.

GASB 75 Valuation

The GASB 75 Valuation Service assists school districts and BOCES across New York State in the valuation and management of their OPEB liability. The Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement No. 75 with the primary objective of improving accounting and financial reporting by state and local governments for postemployment benefits other than pensions (OPEB).

State Aid & Financial Planning

The State Aid & Financial Planning Service has grown, both in the number of staff and types of services provided to NYS school districts and BOCES. At a time when school business and school district administrators have more requirements than ever before, and the state providing historic levels of state aid, knowledge and fast, accurate information are essential.

Special Education Aid Assistance

The Special Education Aid Assistance Service works collaboratively with school districts to maximize their excess cost aid. The service provides training and shares best practices to ensure all reporting requirements are met in order to capture all available aids.

Health & Safety

The Health & Safety Service strives to be a clearinghouse of information that is pertinent to districts in providing a safe and compliant environment for education. Through various levels of cost-effective support, the service continues to assist districts in complying with federal, state and local regulations as well as school safety planning and emergency management.

Communications

The Communications Service supports 23 school districts throughout the year, from one-time requests to ongoing projects. In recent years, Questar III has added new services in response to district needs, including video production and drone videography/photography.

Questar III provides coordination for the Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene Health Insurance Trust and the Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene Workers' Compensation Consortium. These separate entities are governed by representatives of the participating school districts and Questar III.

Special Aid

The Special Aid Fund accounts for state and federal grants and other contracts that should not be accounted for in the General Fund. The availability of funding creates challenges for these programs, which creates budgetary variations from year-to-year. The Special Aid Fund represents anticipated funding for programs such as the Special Education Extended School Year Program, Internal Audit Service, Library programs, Title III Consortium, Targeted Pre-Kindergarten, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (Perkins V), and Adult Literacy Education Programs.

In addition, two programs are funded with contracts through the New York State Education Department – the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) and the Puerto Rican / Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute (PR/HYLI). The RBERN supports multilingual learners (MLLs) in English as a New Language (ENL) programs across eight BOCES in New York State. PR/HYLI serves more than 400 Puerto Rican and Hispanic students throughout

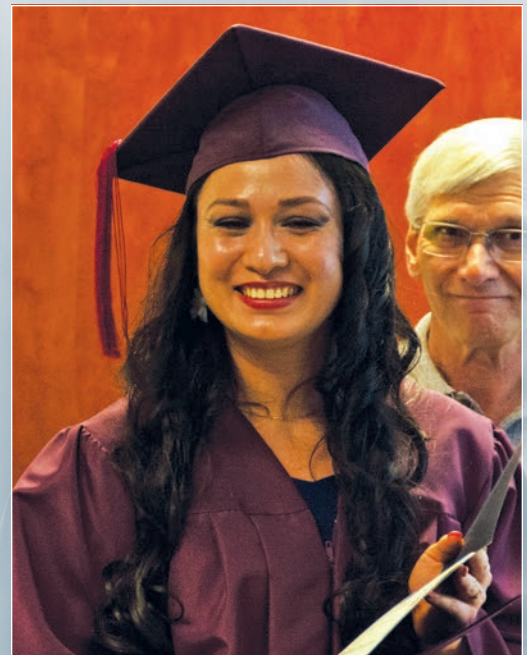
the state each year. The culminating activities include a three-day institute in Albany featuring a mock session in the Assembly chamber.

Contracts and grants funded through the New York State Education Department are charged a state approved indirect cost rate. The revenue generated assists in reducing the administrative budget charge to component school districts.

Budget for Special Aid Fund Programs

PROGRAM/SERVICE CATEGORY	2018-19 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	2019-20 ADOPTED BUDGET	2019-20 ADJUSTED BUDGET	2020-21 TENTATIVE BUDGET
SPECIAL AID FUND	4,427,163	4,333,666	4,743,804	4,880,150

- 11** ▶ Locations for adult High School Equivalency (HSE) Preparation and English for Speakers of Other Languages courses in our tri-county region
- 50** ▶ Languages spoken by English language learners (ELLs) in the RBERN region
- 149** ▶ School districts with a total of 3,843 ELLs served by RBERN
- 250** ▶ Special Education students served in our extended year program
- 400** ▶ Puerto Rican and Hispanic students served throughout NYS each year
- \$2.5+** ▶ Billion in school district and BOCES funds audited by Questar III



Our Service Area & Locations



- SCHOOL DISTRICTS WE SERVE
- QUESTAR III LOCATIONS



www.questar.org

NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE: Questar III does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, weight, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or other characteristic protected by federal or state law in its programs and activities, including but not limited to admission, access to and participation in educational programs, course offerings and student activities.

Questar III provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. The following persons at Questar III have been designated to handle inquiries regarding Questar III's non-discrimination policies and the application of regulations prohibiting discrimination:

- TITLE IX COMPLIANCE OFFICER – QUESTAR III BOCES, 10 Empire State Blvd., Castleton, NY 12033 | 518-477-8771
- 504 COMPLIANCE OFFICER – QUESTAR III BOCES, 10 Empire State Blvd., Castleton, NY 12033 | 518-477-8771
- SCHOOL ATTORNEY – QUESTAR III BOCES, 10 Empire State Blvd., Castleton, NY 12033 | 518-477-8771

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, or to inquire regarding the application of regulations prohibiting discrimination, contact the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

Please contact the Questar III Business Office for additional information on the 2020-2021 Tentative Budget at 518-477-8771.

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Jeremy Engelin, Board Vice President
Judy Kusminsky, Board Clerk

COXSACKIE-ATHENS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Randall Squier, Superintendent

Board of Education

Tara Bachner, Board Member
Nicole Canning, Board Member
Jamie Dorr, Board Member
Maureen Hanse, Board Member

COXSACKIE-ATHENS CSD (continued)

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Barton Wallace, Board Member
Michael Donahue, Board President
Michael Petramale, Board Vice President
Judith Zoller, Board Clerk

GREENVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ms. Tammy J. Sutherland, Superintendent

Board of Education

Raymond Albin, Board Member
David Finch, Board Member
Jay Goodman, Board Member
Duncan Macpherson, Board Member
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Patricia Macko, Board President
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Daphane Pearson, Board Clerk



2020 – 2021 TENTATIVE BUDGET

Commitment to Excellence / Commitment to Leadership & Service / Commitment to Innovation



THE BOARD OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR RENSSELAER, COLUMBIA & GREENE COUNTIES

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