

April 2017

The Impact of School Spirit

*by Dr. Christopher R. Brown,
Superintendent of Schools*

In October we held School Spirit Week in each of our buildings as a lead up to Homecoming. I have been here for nine years worth of Homecoming Weeks; but this one was different. There was an extra excitement in the air everywhere I went. On pep rally day at the high school, the curtain rose in the refurbished large gym to reveal the senior class, and the noise from all of the students was next level.

As the year progressed, attendance was significantly up at local Marching Band shows and fall sporting events. As we entered winter we noticed two things. The first was that we have had a marked increase in student attendance (we always have great daily attendance so to improve upon it is special) and our key indicators of academic success were also on the rise (also significant considering how successful we have been). We began to make a connection between increased school spirit and student achievement. Then the winter came.

For the first time since I have been here, we actually "sold out" our large gym for an evening event; Boys Basketball. The gym holds well over one thousand people, yet we had to pull out folding chairs for people. When I scanned the crowd at those games we had plenty of students, but we also had hundreds of community members. The exact same thing happened for our musical, *Mary Poppins* leading us to know that our school spirit extends to everyone in our community, and we are very appreciative and humbled.

Budget Maintains Programs

As we developed the budget for next year, we were able to maintain the programs that parents and students have grown to appreciate and find value in. We were also able to add additional mental health support for our middle schools (we added these supports for the high school last year), and we were able to create a budget plan that falls within the tax cap.

In Closing...

We hope to continue and improve upon the success we have enjoyed. Thank you for your support, I certainly do not take it for granted.



<i>Inside this Budget Edition...</i>	
Summary, Bus, and Library Propositions	2
Budget Proposal	3
Budget Notice	4
Focus Areas	5
Candidate Bios	6-7
Voting Information	8

BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

Polls are open 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
High School Auditorium Lobby

PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, May 3, 2017
High School Library – 7:00 p.m.

Three-Part Budget Summary

New York State requires districts to present their proposed budgets in three categories: program, capital, and administrative. The chart below shows the dollar amount and percentage of spending in each of those three categories in the 2016-17 budget and the proposed 2017-18 budget. An explanation of what is included in each of the categories is provided below:

Program:

- 2016-17.....\$63,743,007....77.521%
- 2017-18.....\$65,742,038....77.147%

Capital:

- 2016-17..... \$12,275,021....14.928%
- 2017-18..... \$13,222,304....15.516%

Administrative:

- 2016-17..... \$ 6,209,142.....7.551%
- 2017-18..... \$ 6,252,528.....7.337%

Total:

- 2016-17..... \$82,227,170....100.000%
- 2017-18..... \$85,216,870....100.000%

Program includes:

- all instructional programs, transportation, community service, and associated employee benefits.

Capital includes:

- operation of buildings, maintenance of buildings, refunded taxes, debt service, transfer to capital, and associated employee benefits.

Administrative includes:

- Board of Education, central administration, finance, legal services, personnel, public information, central services, special items, curriculum development and supplies, supervision of instruction, and associated employee benefits.

Budget Proposal

Shall the Board of Education of the West Genesee Central School District at Camillus be authorized to expend a sum not to exceed \$85,216,870 for the fiscal year 2017-18 and to levy the necessary tax for the local contribution thereto?

- The proposed 2017-18 budget requires an estimated 2.15% tax levy increase which is within the calculated tax cap.
- Includes a \$100,000 transfer to the Capital Fund for preventative or emergency maintenance items. If utilized, the District will receive 77.4% state aid reimbursement.

Proposition #1 - School Bus/Snow Plow Purchase

Shall the Board of Education purchase and, at the option of the Board, finance nine (9) school buses at an estimated cost not to exceed \$1,110,305, and one (1) 2018 International Snow Plow at an estimated cost not to exceed \$195,000 including necessary furnishings, fixtures and equipment and all other necessary costs incidental thereto, and to expend a total sum not to exceed \$1,305,305 which is estimated to be the total maximum cost thereof, and levy a tax which is hereby voted for the foregoing in the amount of \$1,305,305, which shall be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education and in anticipation of the collection of such tax, bonds, notes or installment purchase contracts are hereby authorized to be issued or executed at one time, or from time to time, in the principal amount not to exceed \$1,305,305 and a tax is hereby voted to pay the interest on said obligations when due?

Proposition #2 - Fairmount and Maxwell Public Libraries

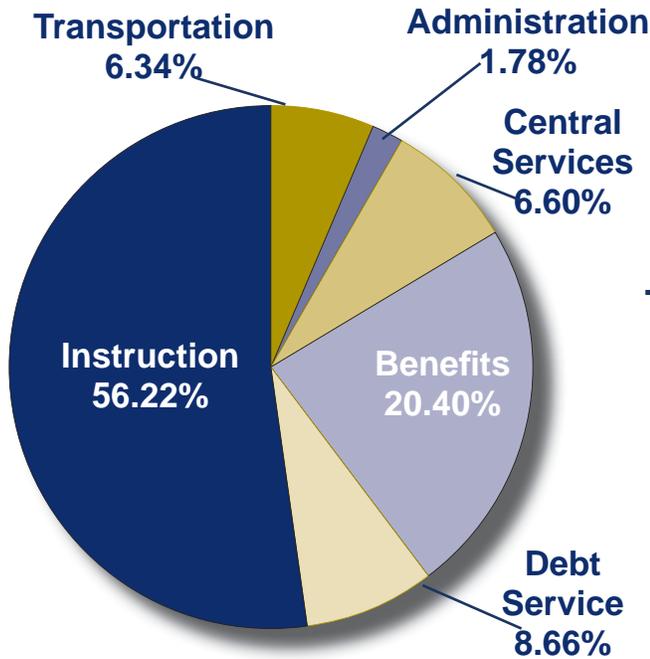
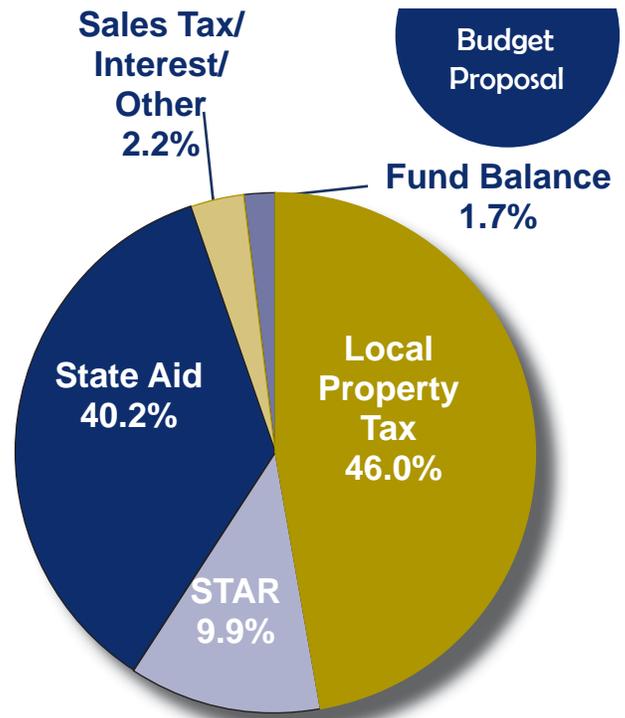
Shall the West Genesee Central School District levy and collect a tax, pursuant to Section 259 of the Education Law of the State of New York, in the sum of \$580,079 (which is an increase of \$89,000 from the combined levies in effect from 2016-2017 in the sum of \$491,079) for the continuing support and maintenance of the free library services offered to District residents by the public libraries historically supported by the West Genesee Central School District, with said monies to be apportioned as follows:

- \$291,000 to Fairmount Community Library (an increase of \$33,000)
- \$289,079 to Maxwell Memorial Library (an increase of \$56,000)?

Budget Proposal

Revenues...where the money will come from...

Revenues	Actual 2016-17	Proposed 2017-18
State Aid	\$32,451,395	\$34,282,490
Local Property Taxes	37,946,170	39,229,135
STAR	8,822,560	8,443,125
Fund Balance	1,400,000	1,400,000
Sales Tax/Interest/Other	1,607,045	1,862,120
Total Revenue	\$82,227,170	\$85,216,870



...and what it will be spent on...Expenditures

Expenditures	Actual 2016-17	Proposed 2017-18
Instruction	\$45,902,790	\$47,903,895
Administration	1,468,030	1,515,085
Central Services	5,535,475	5,625,875
Transportation	5,227,855	5,403,495
Debt Service/Interfund	6,417,050	7,381,020
Benefits	17,675,970	17,387,500
Total Expenditures	\$82,227,170	\$85,216,870

What effect will the proposed budget have on my school taxes?

Actual tax rates are set in August and are based on the final assessment figures that are provided by towns and equalization rates for each town as provided by the state Office of Real Property Services. However, our District has estimated the true value tax rate for towns within our District. The true value tax rate is the estimated tax rate that a property owner with full value assessment and an equalization rate of 100% would pay per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Estimated Tax Rates per \$1,000 of assessed value

Town	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Projected	\$ Change in Rate	Percent Increase	Percent of Tax Base
Camillus	\$23.05	\$23.55	\$0.50	2.15%	76.2%
Elbridge	\$23.07	\$23.57	\$0.50	2.15%	0.1%
Geddes	\$25.16	\$25.70	\$0.54	2.15%	5.3%
Onondaga	\$23.43	\$23.93	\$0.50	2.15%	15.6%
Van Buren	\$23.07	\$23.57	\$0.50	2.15%	2.8%

The tax rates and increases for next year that are displayed in the chart are only estimates. Estimated rates and increases DO NOT reflect any STAR or other tax exemptions that may reduce an individual's tax bill.

School District Budget Notice Summary

Each school district must mail a "School Budget Notice" to qualified voters in the District, as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2016-17 <u>School Year</u>	Budget Proposed for the 2017-18 <u>School Year</u>	Contingency Budget for the 2017-18 <u>School Year *</u>
Total budgeted amount	\$82,227,170	\$85,216,870	\$84,213,340
Increase/decrease for the 2017-18 school year		\$2,989,700	\$1,986,170
Percentage increase/decrease in proposed budget		3.64%	2.42%
Change in the consumer price index		1.26%	
<hr/>			
A. Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Including Levy to Support Library Debt, if applicable	\$46,668,730	\$47,672,260	
B. Levy to Support library Debt, If Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable**	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Yr Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A+B+C+D)	\$46,668,730	\$47,672,260	
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$1,550,020	\$1,470,889	
G. Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Not</u> Including Levy for Permissible Exclusions or Levy to Support Library Debt	\$45,118,710	\$46,201,371	
H. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Not</u> Including Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$45,118,710	\$46,201,371	
I. Difference: A - B (Positive Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval-See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)	\$0	\$0	
<hr/>			
Administrative component	\$ 6,209,142	\$ 6,252,528	\$ 6,174,059
Program component	\$63,743,007	\$65,742,038	\$64,916,977
Capital component	\$12,275,021	\$13,222,304	\$13,122,304

* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2017-18 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. All contingent items would be removed. Public use of buildings and grounds would be eliminated. Administrative Component would be capped at 8.68%. Program reductions of \$825,061 would need to be made.

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption savings based on a hypothetical home within the school district with a full value of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). (The Basic STAR Exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.)

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings Under the Budget Proposed for the 2017-2018 School Year \$ 710

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2017-2018 by the qualified voters of the West Genesee Central School District, Onondaga County, New York, will be held at West Genesee High School in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2017 between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., prevailing time in the Auditorium Lobby, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot.

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

What is a contingency budget?

It is a budget which the Board of Education may establish without voter authorization in order to provide for an education program in the next school year. Under State Law, Boards can only pass a contingency budget that does not increase the tax levy over the prior year. Also, administrative expenses are capped at the same percentage as approved for 2016-17, or the percentage that was proposed for 2017-18, whichever is less.

What happens if the budget is defeated?

The Board of Education could decide to hold another vote on the same or a revised budget, to adopt a contingency budget, or to present one or more specific propositions.



We Strategically Focus our Resources to Enhance Learning

Embed the New York State Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts into Grades 6-12 Curriculum and Instruction.

- Continue to align grade level scope and sequences with the New York State Standards.
- Enhance professional learning communities for teacher training.

Refine Academic Support at All Instructional Levels with an emphasis on English Language Learners and the Response to Intervention Model, specifically on Tier I interventions.

- Provide teacher training on differentiated instruction to support all students' academic growth.
- Utilize research-based interventions to close gaps in student achievement.

Implement NYS K-12 Social Studies Framework and analyze NYS Science Learning Standards.

- Provide teacher training on the new Standards and Framework to begin a methodical understanding and incorporation.
- Create professional learning communities for teacher training.

Refine academic and social emotional counseling services to maintain a safe and supportive environment promoting the dignity and achievement of all members of the school community.

- Celebrate our diversity and help all stakeholders understand that our differences make us stronger.
- Continue to enhance safety and security in all school buildings.
- Increase student and family support through school and community connections that can minimize hurdles to academic success.

Increase support and access to instructional technology including but not limited to professional development, human resources, and equipment.

- Enhance the District's technology plan to incorporate support for increased connectivity and computing needs of the 21st Century classroom.
- Incorporate instructional technologies into curricula to support learners on all levels.



Our Vision:
West Genesee continues to focus on improving, every day, the educational opportunities and academic performance of each student.

Demographics of our Graduating Seniors

Class	Number of Students	Graduation Rate	Percent of Class Receiving Special Education Services	Percent of Class Receiving Free or Reduced Lunch
2016	386	92%	9.3%	21.8%
2015	437	92%	9.2%	21.3%
2014	420	92%	8.6%	19.8%
2013	396	93%	8.1%	18.2%
2012	414	90%	9.4%	16.9%

BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

Residents may vote for a maximum of three (3) candidates. The vacancies are three (3) three-year terms. Candidates will be invited to speak at the Budget Public Hearing, Wednesday, May 3, 2017.

Responsibilities of the Board

The West Genesee Board of Education is the elected policy-making body of the District. At West Genesee, the Board consists of nine members who serve without pay. The term of office is for three years, (July 1 - June 30), with three positions elected at the annual election each year.

The Board of Education is responsible for establishing the quality of education in the District. It serves as liaison between the schools and the community.

The Board of Education:

- Defines the philosophy of the District
- Establishes the policies for the operation of the District
- Recruits and hires the superintendent
- Sets goals and objectives to achieve educational progress
- Evaluates the effectiveness of District programs and services
- Adopts and monitors a budget consistent with educational needs and community resources
- Communicates the needs and progress of the District to the community, educational governing boards, and legislators
- Acts on recommendations set forth by the superintendent regarding financial, personnel/operational and curriculum items

Shawn J. Mitchell



Shawn J. Mitchell of 320 Hornady Drive, Syracuse, is a candidate for re-election to the Board of Education.

He has been a Social Studies Content Specialist/Government Teacher at Solvay Union Free School District since 1997. Shawn received his Bachelor of Science degree from SUNY Oswego and his Master of Science degree from University at Albany.

His wife, Pam, a West Genesee High School Graduate, is a Spanish teacher at Fayetteville-Manlius High School. Their daughter, Gabrielle, is an eighth grader at West Genesee Middle School, and their son, Cameron, is a junior at West Genesee High School.

He is a member of Holy Family, a volunteer Basketball coach, and a Varsity Girls Basketball and Softball coach at Solvay High School.

When asked why he wanted to continue to participate on the Board of Education, Shawn shared, "I'm hoping my experience as a teacher and curriculum specialist will continue to bring invaluable insight to this position. Everything from unfunded mandates that place unfair financial burdens on local school districts to testing and curriculum changes that are not good for children are troubling.

"I still have concerns regarding the excessive and unnecessary amount of testing placed upon our children; as a result, students are losing their love of school and learning. It is vital that students become life-long learners, and my goal every day is to help foster this love of learning."

To ACCESS UP-TO-DATE
INFORMATION ABOUT THE
DISTRICT, CHECK OUT OUR
WEB SITE ALONG WITH
THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL
NETWORKING SITES:



TWITTER



FACEBOOK



BLOGGER

Our Mission: "The mission of the West Genesee Central School District, in partnership with the community, is to ensure that each student attains the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary, not only for lifelong learning, but also for becoming a cooperative, self-directed, productive, caring citizen."

Visit Your School Online at
westgenesee.org

YOU CAN ALSO ACCESS UP-TO-DATE
NEWS AND INFORMATION DIRECTLY
FROM WESTGENESEEE.ORG OR OUR
MOBILE PHONE APP.



James M. Soper



James M. Soper of 4011 West Langerwood Lane, Syracuse, is running for re-election to the Board of Education.

He and his wife Barbara have two children. Daughter Julia is in the ninth

grade in the West Genesee High School and son James is a successful graduate from West Genesee High School.

Soper has worked professionally as a technical service engineer for the past 23 years. He is currently employed by Philips Healthcare and has worked in the ultrasound division for the past 9 years where he has received numerous customer service achievement awards.

A Marcellus High School graduate, he has an Associate's Degree in Electrical Engineering from Onondaga Community College and a Bachelor of Science in Business Management from Charter Oak State College.

He is a current member of the church board at Christ Community Church where he volunteers in various ways including: computer set up, buildings and grounds, VBS. His family volunteers at the Rescue Mission by delivering holiday meals.

James would like to be re-elected on the Board because, "I love to have the opportunity to serve on the Board of Education so I can be more involved in the decisions that take place within the district. I am a listener, and a true communicator. I enjoy sharing ideas and coming up with positive solutions.

"I have two children that have attended schools within this district, one that is still in the high school, I love being involved in all aspects of our daily school function, programs, and academics including sports."

**Regular Meetings:
Board of Education
Meetings are generally
held the first and third
Wednesday of each
month at
7:00 p.m. in the
West Genesee
High School.**

Neil B. Widrick



Neil B. Widrick resides at 108 Munro Drive, Camillus, is running for re-election to the Board of Education.

He has been employed by St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center for 27

years and is currently the Manager of the Sleep Laboratory.

While at St. Joseph's Hospital he has held a variety of roles including: Coordinator of Respiratory Care, In-service Education, and the Coordinator of the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program. Neil Widrick is also an adjunct faculty member of the Respiratory Care Education Program at SUNY Upstate Medical University.

His community involvement includes being a member of the John Pepper/Wildcat Lacrosse committee, pit dad for Marching Band, house manager for the yearly high school musical productions, chairperson of the bottle drive for the marching band, WOYSA Board of Directors serving as Registrar/Division Director/Coach, and as a coach for CYBA.

Neil and his wife, Arisa, have two children. Their son Benjamin is a 2013 graduate of West Genesee High School, and their daughter Katherine is a 2015 graduate of West Genesee High School. Both are attending Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Neil is a graduate of Lowville Central High School, has a Bachelor's Degree in Advanced Cardio respiratory Care from SUNY Upstate Medical Center. He is a Registered Polysomnographic Technologist (RPSGT), a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT), and a Registered Pulmonary Function Technologist (RPSGT).

He shared that he is interested in continuing on the Board of Education because, "I have spent the last 6 years serving on a number of committees including the Policy Committee Chair, Audit Committee, and Ad-Hoc Benefits Committee. Consequently, I have always maintained the desire to actively serve my community as a Board member.

"West Genesee School District has an outstanding academic, athletic, and fine arts program that my children have had the privilege of experiencing first hand. I wish to assist in any way I can to maintain this excellent program, especially with the financial, social, and academic challenges we face in our future."

Tonya D. Wilson



Tonya D. Wilson of 4 Meadow Lane, Camillus, is a candidate for election to the Board of Education.

She and her husband Jim have lived in the Camillus area for 17 years. They have three

daughters who are enrolled in the West Genesee Central School District.

She has embraced the opportunity of working as a stay-at-home mother, a supporter of community children's groups, and a parent advocate. She has established a rapport with the community through her part-time work at Maxwell Memorial Library. Her background includes Dental Practice Management and training.

She has been an active, valued volunteer at East Hill Elementary School, and a member of the Camillus Middle School PTO, West Genesee High School PTSO, and West Genesee Special Education PTSA. She is familiar with the school families and staff. Most recently, her community service has been dedicated to the advocacy of public education and support of Opt Out CNY, a group of parents and educators dedicated to informing the Central New York public about the impact that Common Core State Standards, high stakes testing, and data mining are having on public education.

Wilson believes she can leverage her relationship with parents and teachers to help the Board make effective policy decisions. She has the experience to recognize what is working and what needs to be improved.

When asked why she would like to be on the West Genesee Board of Education Tonya stated, "Local Board decisions in public education and education policies are vital to our community. It's not an exaggeration to say that decisions our local Board makes often have a greater long-term impact on our communities than those of any other elected body at any other level of government.

"When elected, I will further advocate for the concerns of parents across the District and keep the public informed of the District's progress and challenges. I am not afraid to ask the hard questions. I am proud to be a part of West Genesee's successful and academically enriched community."

WG Communicator

2017-2018 BUDGET PROPOSAL

WEST GENESEE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Publications Office
300 Sanderson Drive
Camillus, NY 13031
Telephone 315-487-2179
Web site: westgenesee.org
e-mail: brussell@westgenesee.org

Christopher Brown, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Brian Kesel, Assistant Superintendent
for Curriculum & Instruction
Paul Pelton, Assistant Superintendent
for Management Services
Debra Miller, Assistant Superintendent
for Human Resources
Bonnie Russell, School Information Officer

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Roberta Herron, President
Shawn Mitchell, Vice President

Eric Bacon
Vladimiro Hart-Zavoli
Joseph Simon
Neil Widrick

Karen Fruscello
Kimberly Sacco
James Soper

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CAMILLUS, NY
PERMIT NO. 8

ECRWSS
Postal Customer

Voting Information...

Who is eligible to vote?

You are eligible to vote on May 16, 2017 if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years or older, and have been a District resident for at least 30 days prior to the vote. No pre-registration is required although personal identification may be requested at the polls. Questions? Call the District Clerk at 315-487-4563.

Can I vote by absentee ballot?

Residents who will not be in the area on May 16, 2017 may apply for an absentee ballot at the District Office.

If the absentee ballot is to be mailed to the voter, the application must be submitted at least seven days prior to the vote. If the absentee ballot is to be picked up by the voter in person, applications will be accepted until May 15, 2017.

Absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 16, 2017.

When and where is the vote?

The Annual School District Board of Education Election and Budget Vote will take place from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 16, 2017, in the West Genesee High School Auditorium Lobby.

Please note: We will again be using a computerized registration system this year. The voting will take place on paper scanners.

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Below is a schedule of visual presentations by Superintendent Dr. Christopher Brown of the proposed 2017-2018 school budget at these PTA/PTO and public meetings:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting & Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
April 25	PTA/PTO Presentations at WGHS LGI Room	7:00 p.m.
May 3	Budget Public Hearing at the WGHS Library	7:00 p.m.

The public is invited to attend any of these presentations.

