

Dear Community Member:

Preparing the 2024-2025 school budget was among the more significant financial challenges we have faced as a school district in many years. External factors that influence our expenses and our subsequent spending needs, placed considerable pressure on our available resources and necessitated a thorough review of every dollar spent in an effort to identify ways we could be even more efficient. Inflationary pressures, and the rising costs of insurance, healthcare, pension contributions, special education, and BOCES expenses, coupled with the loss of access to our gas well that heats the MS/HS, and the projection for a substantive increase in student enrollment in the 2024-2025 school year based on housing starts in the Cayuga community, all coalesced to create a difficult financial environment to navigate as this budget was built.

Further, the Governor in her Executive Budget proposal, advocated for cutting school aid to Union Springs by more than one million dollars in the coming school year. Thanks to your advocacy and efforts with our state legislators, and the subsequent support of Assemblyman Gallahan and Senator May, those cuts have largely been deferred until a new formula can be devised that recognizes not only the demographic shifts in our population, but also the needs of our students and our broader school community. The State of New York anticipates a new school funding formula for the 2025-2026 school year and has given districts across the State this coming school year to prepare themselves financially.

Our proposed 2024-2025 budget of \$21,090,750 not only holds the line on spending, but represents a decrease from our current 2023-2024 budget of \$21,392,539 and acknowledges all of the increased expenses and fiscal challenges mentioned above. In doing so, the Board of Education worked to not only keep expense reductions away from the student experience, but also to increase and expand opportunities and educational experiences for our students where possible. One of the major goals in developing the financial plan for the 2024-2025 school year was to reduce the district's reliance on reserve accounts and fund balance to support our operations.

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BUDGET PUBLIC

HEARING

MONDAY, MAY 13, 2024

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

LOCATION: MS/HS Library

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Dote

If a qualified voter is unable to vote in person on May 21, 2024, an application for absentee/early voting can be obtained by calling the District Clerk at: 315-889-4100. Applications must be received by the Clerk no later than May 15, 2024, for a ballot to be mailed to each qualified voter. All absentee/early mail ballots must be returned at the Office of the District Clerk of the school district no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 21, 2024.

DATE OF ELECTION

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

TIME: 12:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

LOCATION: MS/HS Gym Lobby

Continued from page 1

Economic uncertainties, the end of federal COVID aid, upcoming fiscal challenges on a state and federal level with regard to available education spending supports, coupled with our need to be fiscally sustainable as an educational institution for years to come, necessitated that we adjust our spending to better align our expenses with our anticipated revenues. To this end, our proposed tax levy increase for 2024-2025 is 3.4%, which is below the tax cap, on par with the rate of inflation, and raises \$269,769 dollars in increased revenue to support our school district. For a home assessed at \$100,000, this would represent an approximate \$34 school tax increase before STAR.

Our last two school district surveys presented feedback on the need for increasing student engagement and fostering better connections and relevance between our educational program and our broader community. The 2024-2025 budget seeks to do just that. At the secondary level, in partnership with the Port Byron CSD and BOCES, we are launching an agricultural education program, with a certified agriculture education teacher at our MS/HS that will seek to expose our students to the careers, experiences, clubs, and opportunities available in our community and agribusiness in general. We anticipate that this program will only grow in the years to come, and provide our students with the ability to utilize Cook Forest in support of their educational pursuits.

Further, we are also launching in the 2024-2025 school year, a work-based learning program at the high school level that will foster connections between student employment experiences and their school curriculum. In the work based learning program, students will investigate the knowledge and skills associated with various careers, explore factors that impact success and satisfaction in careers, identify personal aptitudes, abilities, strengths, talents, and areas for growth as they relate to various occupations, and participate in activities that will help students develop and hone their work and employability skills (resumé building, interview skills, guest presentations, and field trips). Part of the student coursework will include job shadowing, internships, and related work experience opportunities.

At the middle school level, a consistent effort is being made to align our instruction in mathematics, to provide for more curricular continuity between the various grade levels, and enhance student performance. The transition in mathematical understandings, concepts, and skill level between elementary school and what students ultimately need to know and be able to do to be successful at the high school level, necessitates that middle school math instruction be more discretely scaffolded and supported. In 2024-2025, the district will support our math teachers with additional classroom resources and materials to support student learning and achievement. We are confident that these curricular supports coupled with meaningful intervention opportunities, will help us sure up our students' skill set.

In the elementary school, we will be launching a new reading series that builds upon the success we had with our previous Journeys curriculum. Journeys is being retired by the publisher, and as a result, our teaching staff at AJ has spent the better part of this school year evaluating different options aligned to science of reading, phonics instruction, and student language acquisition strategies. We are excited about our students' progress in literacy and reading, and look forward to the implementation of our new reading program.

The proposed 2024-2025 budget promotes fiscal restraint in a tough inflationary environment, builds upon our curricular efforts to support student learning and achievement, provides opportunities to enhance school to community connections, and supports our district in moving forward in the year ahead by ensuring that our 2024-2025 district expenses are more aligned with our revenue projections. As we continue to work to ensure the educational, fiscal, and structural health of our district in the year ahead, your help and continued support are key components of our success. Please vote on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, from noon to 9 p.m. in the MS/HS gym lobby.



Sincerely, Jarett S. Powers, Ed.D. Superintendent



2024 BUDGET NEWSLETTER

ESTIMATED REVENUE			
	2023-2024 REVENUE	2024-2025 PROJECTED	
TOTAL STATE AID	\$12,198,580	\$11,716,736	
TOTAL OTHER REVENUE	\$963,103	\$1,169,858	
FUND BALANCE	\$150,000	\$0	
RESERVES/TRANSFERS	\$200,921	\$0	
LOCAL PROPERTY/TAX LEVY (Includes 23-24 Capital Project and Truck Purchase)	\$7,934,387	\$8,204,156	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$21,446,991	\$21,090,750	

SUMMARY OF GENERAL FUND EXPENSE APPROPRIATIONS

	2023-2024 BUDGET	2024-2025 PROJECTED
ADMINISTRATIVE	\$2,431,886	\$2,218,518
CAPITAL	\$3,916,176	\$3,500,054
PROGRAM	\$15,044,477	\$15,372,178
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$21,392,539	\$21,090,750

ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT

	2023-2024 BUDGET	2024-2025 PROJECTED
BOE	\$35,104	\$23,804
CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION	\$275,217	\$272,060
FINANCE	\$401,064	\$405,593
STAFF	\$310,627	\$229,015
SPECIAL ITEMS	\$321,782	\$364,645
DISTRICT RESEARCH & PLANNING	\$147,737	\$62,410
SUPERVISION-REGULAR SCHOOL	\$574,484	\$455,843
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$365,871	\$405,148
TOTALS	\$2,431,886	\$2,218,518

The ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT provides for overall general support and management activities including Board of Education, central administration, business office, and legal and auditing services. Costs for administration and supervision of each of the district's schools are also included in this component.

Union Springs Central School District | 239 Cayuga Street | (315) 889-4101

UNION SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | SPRINGBOARD

CAPITAL COMPONENT			
	2023-2024 BUDGET	2024-2025 PROJECTED	
CENTRAL SERVICES	\$1,458,180	\$1,376,126	
CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION	\$61,939	\$67,399	
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$281,636	\$303,591	
DEBT SERVICE	\$2,114,421	\$1,752,938	
TOTAL	\$3,916,176	\$3,500,054	

The CAPITAL COMPONENT of the budget deals with all equipment, supplies, materials, and personnel for the operation and maintenance of district facilities. It also includes any judgments and claims, refunds of real property taxes, and all payments on principal and interest on short and long-term debt.

PROGRAM COMPONENT			
	2023-2024 BUDGET	2024-2025 PROJECTED	
TEACHING-REGULAR SCHOOL	\$6,127,080	\$6,365,053	
PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS W/ DISABILITIES	\$2,308,214	\$2,375,166	
LIBRARY	\$141,555	\$198,585	
COMPUTER IT	\$950,017	\$858,714	
GUIDANCE	\$417,151	\$424,925	
HEALTH SERVICE	\$155,609	\$132,744	
PSYCH SERVICES	\$193,021	\$216,136	
ATHLETICS	\$395,892	\$372,389	
TRANSPORTATION	\$1,079,142	\$1,088,963	
BENEFITS	\$3,276,796	\$3,339,503	
TOTALS	\$15,044,477	\$15,372,178	

The PROGRAM COMPONENT includes salaries of all teaching staff, as well as pupil transportation and employee benefits.

Candidates for Board of Education: Voting for 3; (3) three year terms



Carol Quill



Jeffrey Culver



Matthew Loveless

Proposition 2 - Plumbing Infrastructure Capital Project

On May 21, 2024, voters are asked to consider approving Phase Two of our plumbing project in the amount of \$1,450,000. Through careful stewardship of our capital reserve, the Board of Education is proposing this project which appropriates \$394,000 from our capital reserve and when combined with state aid, will result in **no additional tax levy increase** for our school community. If voters approve the project in May, drawings will be submitted to the State Education Department Office of Facilities Planning by late fall, where there is presently a six month backlog in issuing approvals and guidance to school districts for capital work. We anticipate the earliest we would be able to commence work on this project is late 2025.

This project will help support some of our interior plumbing needs such as: updating and replacing a first floor bathroom at the MS/HS which has seen better days; flushing, cleaning, and replacing water fountains and their associated piping; removing aged acid tanks and replacing them with smaller dilution tanks and extending vents on roof to reduce odors that often infiltrate the school building; adding additional water softener/filtration capabilities in our school kitchen to extend equipment life, and replacing aging pipes for domestic water, sanitary, and storm water from inside the building from 1936, 1952, and 1964 construction projects.

Additionally, this project will also help us to replace our MS/HS auditorium theatrical sound and lighting systems which have reached the end of their useful life and are now closing in on more than two decades of consistent use. Our auditorium is used for concerts, school musicals, award ceremonies, class meetings, assemblies, community meetings, and as a classroom space for students in our theater class. The sound system currently is run on a computer that utilizes a floppy disk, and is in need of constant repairs, and the light system uses lights for which replacement parts are no longer made and are hard to come by. Thus, we often find ourselves having to rent lights and audio enhancements at significant expense to make our shows and productions the caliber we want for students and school community. We appreciate your consideration in helping us to continue to improve our infrastructure and learning spaces.

A Look Into the Interior Plumbing Concerns



Please See More Photos on Page 6

A Look Into MS/HS Auditorium Concerns



The sound system currently is run on a computer that utilizes a floppy disk and is in need of constant repairs.



The light system uses lights for which replacement parts are no longer made and are hard to come by.



SCAN QR CODE to learn more all areas of needed improvements. () unionspringscsd.org

PROPOSITION #1 BUDGET VOTE

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Union Springs Central School District shall be authorized to expend the sum set forth in the budget for the 2024-2025 school year in the total amount of \$21,090,750 and to assess and levy upon the taxable property of the District the necessary tax thereof.

PROPOSITION #2 CAPITAL PROJECT

Shall the Board of Education undertake a capital improvement project consisting of the reconstruction and renovation of, and the construction of improvements, additions and upgrades to the District's Middle/High School building and campus, the purchase of original furnishings, equipment, machinery and apparatus required in connection with the purposes for which such buildings, facilities and sites are used, all to include site, access, parking, athletic field and playfield improvements, demolition, utility, mechanical, plumbing and electrical improvements as well as payment of professional fees and all other necessary costs incidental to such work (the "Project") at a total maximum estimated cost of \$1,450,000 and to pay for the Project by spending \$394,000 on deposit in the District's existing Capital Reserve Fund approved by the voters in May of 2022, and by the levy of a tax which is hereby voted in the amount of \$1,056,000, subject to available State aid or to any other revenues available for such purpose, which tax shall be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education and in anticipation of the collection of such tax, bonds and notes of the District are hereby authorized to be issued at one time, or from time to time, in the principal amount not to exceed \$1,056,000, and a tax is hereby voted to pay the principal and interest on said obligations when due?

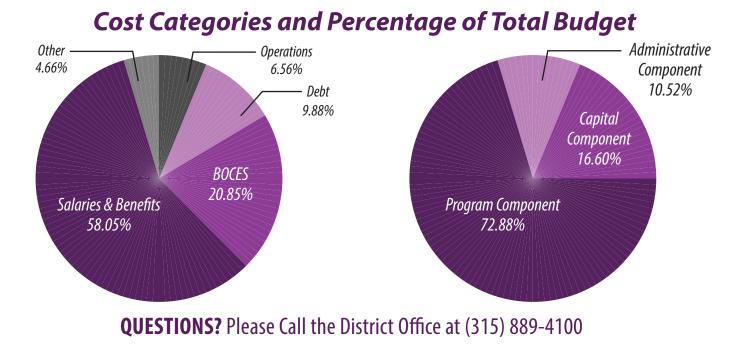
PROPOSITION #3 SPRINGPORT FREE LIBRARY

Shall the sum of \$95,500 dollars, an increase of \$3,500.00, from \$92,000.00 be raised by an annual tax levy upon the taxable real property within the Union Springs Central School District for the purpose of funding the Springport Free Library?

Union Springs CSD Mission Statement



ALL MEMBERS positively and respectfully encourage one another to succeed, inspiring pride in accomplishments. With everyone ultimately responsible for his or her life-long learning and behavior, the pursuit of excellence is our mission.



Progress Report on 2023 Capital Project

In May of 2022, the voters approved an \$850,000 technology infrastructure project to support our networking and data security infrastructure. This project is just concluding and is in the punch-list phase of close-out. The work that has been done to help us re-cable, identify ports, ground our servers, and provide appropriate cooling and security enhancements has truly made a difference in the quality of the network and the stability of our internet. This project had no additional tax levy impact to our school community and was funded with our capital reserves and state aid.

In December 2022, in response to our desire to improve our physical security on our school campuses in light of the tragedies and horrific violence that have all too often impacted schools around the country, voters authorized a \$2,815,000 security enhancement project that will, when complete, help us in hardening our structures, and provide much needed upgrades such as replacing classroom doors, rekeying and changing locks in our buildings, increasing the number of fobs on doors for better access controls, providing lock-down alarms that connect with emergency responders, clearing evacuation pathways, the installation of window film to hinder intruder entry, and bollards to prevent automobiles from accessing our glass door entry ways and sidewalk spaces. This project had no additional tax levy impact and was paid for with state aid and an appropriation of funds from our capital reserve. This project will break ground immediately after graduation at the start of this summer. Contracts have been awarded, supplies and materials are on order, and we expect that all of the upgrades and work will be complete by late fall.

In May of 2023, voters approved Phase One of our plumbing project in the amount of \$3,210,000, which was paid for by state aid, our capital reserve fund, and with a tax levy increase of 0.37%. This project will address some immediate concerns regarding water infiltration into our MS/HS building, our drainage capabilities, close leaks in our steam heat system, replace our sanitary mains, MS/ HS water main, expand our sump-pump capabilities, and take on some of our bathroom challenges. It will also help us mill and overlay our MS/HS parking lot that will be disrupted by the exterior plumbing work, and also address the North Drive which is now riddled with potholes. This project is currently under review with the State Education Department Office of Facilities Planning. This project will support our plumbing infrastructure rehabilitation but mainly focuses in on drainage components. We anticipate this project being able to break ground later this summer and into the fall semester.

Please See Photos on Page 8

Progress Report on 2023 Capital Project

Before and After:



Before: Union Springs MS/HS IDF-4 is a dedicated space that was poorly configured. Floor AC units blocked rack access and cables entered the ceiling unsupported by conduit nor protected by firestop.



After: Our re-cabling, as well as our new mounted cooling enhancement, have truly made a difference in the quality of our network and the stability of our internet.

Security Improvements:







Providing lock-down alarms that connect with emergency responders.



Site Deterrents - Prevent automobiles from accessing our glass door entry ways and sidewalk spaces.



Window Fortification - the installation of window film to hinder intruder entry.

Plumbing Improvements:

Clogged, compressed, or broken pipes have led some of our bathrooms and other spaces that students utilize to be closed.







Union Springs HS Reveals Valedictorian and Salutatorian for the Class of 2024

In a much-anticipated announcement, Union Springs High School has officially named the Valedictorian and Salutatorian for the graduating Class of 2024. The honors were awarded to two outstanding students who have demonstrated exceptional academic achievement, leadership qualities, and dedication to their studies throughout their high school careers.

Claiming the prestigious title of Valedictorian for the Class of 2024 is Tyler Lutkins, a remarkable individual whose academic prowess and commitment to excellence have set a shining example for his peers. Known for his insatiable curiosity and passion for learning, Mr. Lutkins has consistently excelled in the classroom, mastering challenging coursework and earning top marks across a diverse range of subjects.

Beyond his stellar academic achievements, Mr. Lutkins has also distinguished himself as a leader within the school community. Whether through involvement in extracurricular activities, volunteering efforts, or mentoring fellow students, he has made a lasting impact and earned the respect and admiration of teachers and classmates alike.

"Being valedictorian showed me that I was acknowledged for the hard work and dedication I put into the classroom during my four years in high school," remarked Mr. Lutkins. "It was a goal I set for myself freshman year, and it came to fruition!"

After graduation, Mr. Lutkins plans on obtaining a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering at either Virginia Tech or Penn State University Park. A member of the Union Springs golf team, he says he is excited to hit the links this spring with the team. He's also looking forward to spending time with his friends this summer before leaving for college.

Equally deserving of recognition is the Salutatorian for the Class of 2024, Isabel Gilmore. A dedicated and driven individual, Miss Gilmore has consistently demonstrated a strong work ethic and a genuine passion for academic excellence. Through determination and perseverance, she has achieved outstanding academic success while also contributing positively to the school community.

Upon receiving the news of being named salutatorian, Isabel expressed gratitude and reflected on the journey that led to this achievement, saying, "I'm really proud of myself for being named Salutatorian. It's been a goal that I have been working towards for a long time and being able to achieve that goal has been really rewarding!"

After graduation, Miss Gilmore plans to attend the University at Buffalo and major in Business Administration with a

concentration in Human Resource Management. She says between the senior trip and graduation, she is excited for the rest of her senior year.

As they prepare to address their fellow graduates and guests at the commencement ceremony on June 27th, both Mr. Lutkins and Miss Gilmore are poised to deliver inspiring speeches that reflect on their journey, express gratitude to those who have supported them along the way and offer words of wisdom and encouragement for the future.

Please join us in congratulating Tyler Lutkins and Isabel Gilmore on their remarkable accomplishments. They serve as shining examples of the academic excellence and outstanding character that define the students at Union Springs Central School District.



Union Springs Boys Golf Team Refines Their Game at Bethpage State Park

In the world of high school golf, honing one's skills often involves seeking out top-tier courses that offer both challenge and opportunity for growth. For the Union Springs boys golf team, the journey to elevate their game led them to Bethpage State Park on Long Island from April 5th to 7th. Nestled within this renowned golfing haven, the team embarked on a quest to refine their abilities on one of the finest public golf courses in the United States.

Bethpage State Park, a golfer's paradise boasting five 18hole courses, including the famed Black Course, presents a formidable yet rewarding battleground for players of all levels. Renowned for its undulating fairways, challenging bunkers, and formidable roughs, the Black Course has played host to numerous prestigious tournaments, including the U.S. Open, PGA Championship and next year's Ryder Cup. For the Union Springs boys golf team, it represented not only a test of skill but also an opportunity to immerse themselves in the legacy of the sport. The team's trip to Bethpage State Park was more than just a chance to play on world-class courses; it was a testament to their dedication, passion, and love for the game. And as they look to the future, they do so with the knowledge that they are capable of achieving greatness, both on and off the golf course.

"The golf team was able to do this in thanks to a fundraising tournament last fall," said Athletic Coordinator and Boys Golf Head Coach Todd Salls. "We would like to thank all of the sponsors of that tournament. Now we are ready for IAC golf!"





We proudly celebrate the remarkable achievements of Stephanie Berry, a cherished member of our educational family. A beacon of inspiration, Stephanie, a distinguished alumna of Union Springs High School's class of 1995, has illuminated the minds of countless students as a dedicated librarian for over two decades. She says when she thinks of USCS, she thinks of family. Stephanie also said that she has been able to connect with different generations of families of friends, classmates, former students, and her own family. She said she will always bleed purple!

A.J. Smith Elementary School Choir Steals Hearts with National Anthem Performance at Syracuse Crunch Game

In a heartwarming display of talent and patriotism, the A.J. Smith Elementary School Choir recently captivated audiences at The OnCenter with their rendition of the national anthem before a Syracuse Crunch game. The young performers, with their innocence and charm, delivered a performance that left a lasting impression on everyone present.

The stage was set for the young choir to shine in front of thousands as they took their positions amidst the excitement of the hockey game. Clad in their matching black A.J. Smith T-shirts, the students exuded confidence as they sang arguably one of the most challenging and revered songs.

What truly made the performance special was the genuine enthusiasm and joy radiating from the students. Their faces lit up with excitement as they sang, their small but mighty voices filling the arena with a sense of unity and pride.

The A.J. Smith Elementary School Choir's performance at The OnCenter not only showcased their musical talents but also highlighted the positive impact of arts education on young minds. Through their inspiring rendition of the national anthem, these talented students reminded us all of the enduring power of music to inspire, uplift, and unite us as a community.





Union Springs Middle School Delights with Announcement of 2024 School Play: Willy Wonka Jr.!

Union Springs Middle School is abuzz with excitement as the school proudly announces its upcoming production for 2024 - none other than the enchanting tale of "Willy Wonka Jr."! With its rich history of fostering creativity and talent, Union Springs Middle School continues its tradition of excellence in the performing arts.

The announcement of "Willy Wonka Jr." has sparked enthusiasm among students, teachers, and parents alike. This timeless classic, based on Roald Dahl's beloved novel "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," promises to captivate audiences with its whimsical charm and heartfelt story.

Directed by the school's esteemed drama department, led by Mrs. Gordon and Ms. Reed, and featuring a cast and crew of dedicated students, the production of "Willy Wonka Jr." is set to be a showcase of talent and creativity. From dazzling musical numbers to colorful set designs, every aspect of the performance is meticulously planned to transport audiences into the magical world of Willy Wonka's chocolate factory.

The casting process will begin in June for fifth graders, before the end of the school year, and there will be a meeting for all interested students on June 4th at 3:30 p.m. at A.J. Smith. Auditions will certainly draw in a flurry of hopeful performers eager to bring their favorite characters to life. From the sweet and earnest Charlie Bucket to the eccentric and enigmatic Willy Wonka himself, each role presents an opportunity for students to shine on stage and showcase their acting, singing, and dancing abilities.

Get ready to embark on a journey filled with pure imagination, laughter, and maybe even a golden ticket or two!



UNION SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | SPRINGBOARD | 2024 BUDGET NEWSLETTER

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Mark Your Calendars

Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Ceremo
Budget Hearing
Board of Education Meeting
Concert Night Grades K & 1
Junior Prom
Pre-K - 12 Art Show
Budget Vote
Concert Night Grades 2 & 3
Memorial Day - No School
Board of Education Meeting
HS Academic Awards
MS/HS Spring Band Concert
Scholarship Dinner
Concert Night Grades 4 & 5
HS/MS Spring Chorus Concert
Board of Education Meeting
Juneteenth - No School
Graduation

FOR A FULL LIST OF EVENTS, VIEW OUR

CALENDAR ON WWW.UNIONSPRINGS.ORG

Dr. Jarett Powers Superintendent

Valerie Castiglia Secretary to the Superintendent

Mike Wurster Assistant Superintendent

Board of Education

Robin McKay, **Board President** Daniel Testa,

Vice President

Jeffrey Culver

Ann Marie Daum

Ross Lawton

Carol Quill

Barry Schwarting

Erin Tones

Pre-K Registration Information

Pre-Kindergarten registration packets have been sent out to eligible students. Please return as soon as possible to the AJ Smith Elementary office.

If you did not receive a packet and have an eligible student, please call the school's office.

Eligible students need to turn 4 years old by December 1, 2024.



Home of the Wolves! UNION SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 239 Cayuga Street Union Springs, NY 13160

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CONTACT US:

239 Cayuga Street

Union Springs, NY 13160

Phone: (315) 889-4101

Fax: (315) 889-4108

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