



The Beacon



Shining a light on the Baldwinsville Central School District

Issue 115

May 2013

2013-2014 BUDGET NEWS

Residents Will Vote May 21

On Tuesday, May 21, Baldwinsville voters will decide on a \$94,992,417 spending plan for next year. This newsletter details the district's 2013-2014 budget proposal. The proposed tax levy increase is 2.9%, or \$2,576,235, which is an increase of approximately \$66.20 for a \$100,000 assessed property value. The tax levy increase of 2.9% is actually lower than the district's allowed tax levy cap of 5.16% for 2013-2014. (For more information on the tax levy cap, see page 4.)

Voters will also be asked to vote on the annual bus purchase, the annual school board elections, and a building project that will result in **no cost** to local taxpayers.

The district has developed a budget to reflect what the community

believes is necessary for a quality education, based on residents' input on advisory committees, at Board of Education meetings, and in phone calls and emails to board members and district administrators. The Board of Education and the district's administrators and staff members are committed to continuing to provide students with the best possible education, balancing our students' needs with the financial ability of the community to support those needs.

For details on the proposed budget, please attend the public budget hearing on May 14 at 7:00 p.m. in the cafeteria of Durgee Junior High School. The budget vote will be held in the auditorium of Baker High School on May 21 from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.



Abundant Achievement in the District

District, student and staff achievements are good indicators of how well the district has spent the tax dollars the community has entrusted to it. The following accomplishments are just a sample of how our students are flourishing and the district's educational excellence is continuing to grow.

District #1 in Efficiency in County

In October 2012, *Business First*, a Buffalo-based publication, named the district the most efficient school district in Onondaga County and number 20 out of 430 Upstate school districts. Districts with low spending, high pupil-staff ratios and a small percentage of debt service received the best scores and ranked higher on the list of Upstate school districts.

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▶ District ranked 1st in efficiency in Onondaga County by *Business First*

▶ District ranked 9th in academics in the Central New York area by *Business First*

▶ District ranked 42nd out of 430 Upstate districts for academics by *Business First*

▶ National Merit Honors
*Finalists -2 *Commended Students - 3

Continued on page 8

Proposition 1: 2013-14 Budget

Budget Expenditures

Public Budget Hearing
May 14 - 7 P.M.
Durgee Cafe

State law requires the 2013-2014 budget to be presented in three parts: program, capital and administrative. Please see page 4 for information on the projected tax impact, and page 6 for budget highlights.

	2013-14 proposed budget	2012-13 final appropriation	Dollar difference	Percent difference
Program	\$73,994,750	\$71,302,680	\$2,692,070	+3.77 %

The program component is intended to provide every student with educational experiences and opportunities to foster the full development of his or her potential. This budget category includes all instructional personnel and programs: regular school, special education, library, media, instructional technology, guidance, student health services, school psychologists, attendance and census costs, music, co-curricular activities, athletics, in-district and out-of-district pupil transportation, and staff development.

Capital	\$13,152,293	\$13,545,461	\$393,168	-2.9%
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The capital component is intended to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students, staff and the community. This budget category includes all personnel, equipment, supplies and materials for the operation and maintenance of district facilities. Any judgments and claims, refunds of real property taxes, and all payments of principal and interest on short- and long-term obligations are included in this category. In the 2013-14 budget is a small (\$100,000) capital project to replace carpeting at Ray Middle School and resurface a parking lot there as well. We will receive building aid for this project from New York State in 2014-15.

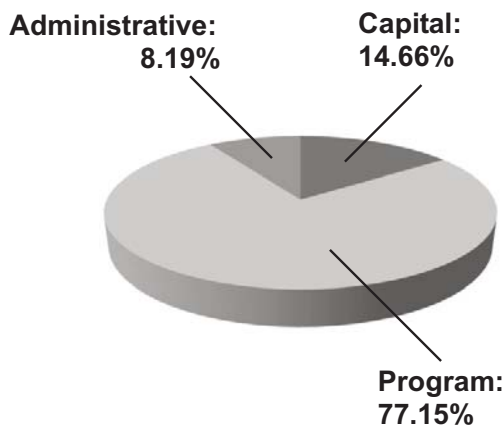
Administrative	\$7,845,374	\$ 7,568,041	\$277,333	+3.66%
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The administrative component is intended to provide the necessary support for district functions. This category includes all expenses for the Board of Education, superintendent, business office, auditor, tax collection, fiscal agent, legal services, personnel office, records management, public information, central printing and mailing, property and casualty insurance, school association dues, BOCES administrative share, and supervision of instruction.

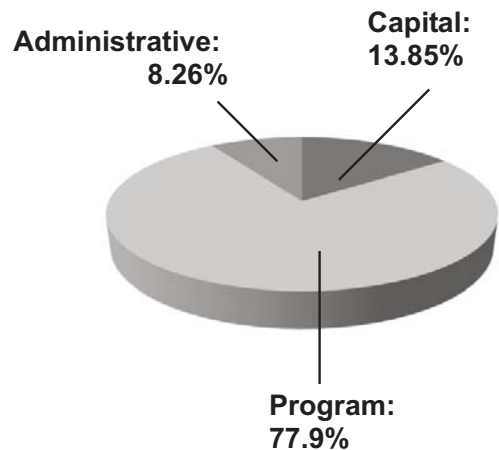
Total Budget	\$94,992,417	\$92,416,182	\$2,576,235	+2.79
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Appropriations Comparisons

2012-2013



2013-2014



Copies of the budget can be reviewed in the district business office at 29 East Oneida Street, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Budget Revenues

Budget Vote
May 21 - 6 A.M. to 9 P.M.
Baker Auditorium

Non-Property Tax Revenues

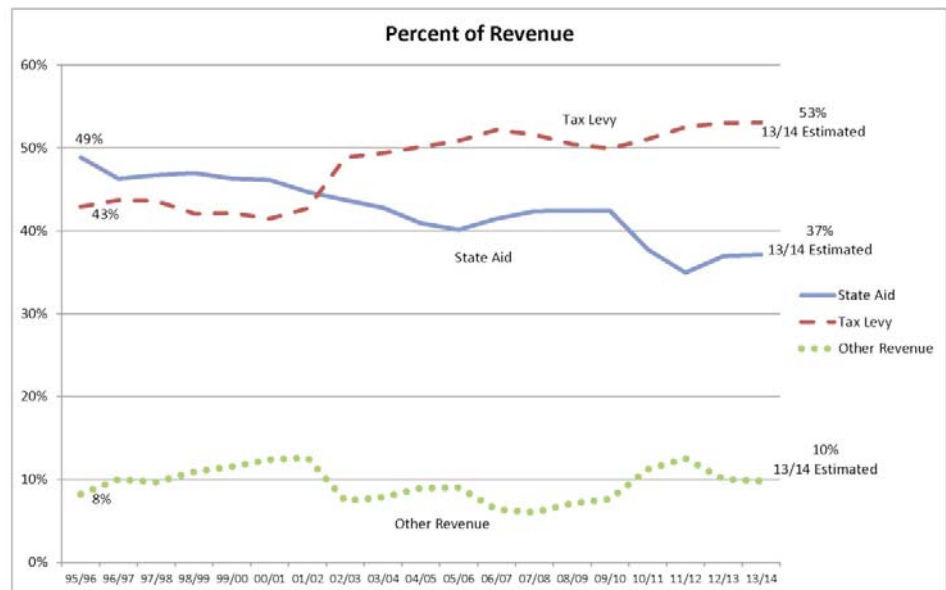
Account	2012-2013	Estimated 2013-2014
In lieu of tax	\$1,589,954	\$1,589,954
County sales tax	\$223,438	\$106,250
Tuition -- other districts	\$50,000	\$50,000
Interest income	\$110,000	\$85,000
State aid (including BOCES aid)	\$28,528,045	\$30,544,629
State aid -- building aid	\$5,611,868	\$4,725,102
All other income	\$ 355,500	\$490,500
Subtotal	\$36,468,805	\$37,591,435

Real Estate Property Tax

Budget	\$92,416,182	\$94,992,417
Less: Estimated revenues	\$36,468,805	\$37,591,435
Less: Appropriated fund balance	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Less: Appropriation from reserves	\$5,446,757	\$5,479,344
Amount to be raised by tax levy:	\$49,000,620	\$50,421,638

Historical Revenue Data

The chart at right illustrates the percentages of district revenue from New York State aid, the local tax levy, and other revenue over the past 18 years and the estimated revenue for 2013-2014. As you will note, the local portion of education costs, represented by the dashed line, has increased over the last 18 years as state aid has decreased.



Budget Exit Survey

District residents will have the opportunity to participate in an anonymous budget exit survey after voting on May 21. Before you leave the polls, please look for the short survey to share your opinions with the district.

Tax Impact

Estimated Tax Rate

In Lysander and VanBuren, the tax rate is projected to increase by 2.9% as assessments are not expected to rise. The estimated tax rate will be as shown below. Please note that the district will not receive assessments and equalization rates for the towns of Van Buren, Lysander and Clay until August. At that time, **the actual tax levy and tax rates will be calculated.**

	Change in tax bill on a \$100,000 house, without STAR (no change in assessed value)	Change in tax bill on a \$100,000 house, with STAR (no change in assessed value)	Estimated tax rate increase
Lysander and VanBuren (assuming equalization rate remains at 100%)	\$66.20	\$66.20	2.9%
Clay (assuming equalization rate remains the same)	\$66.20	\$66.20	2.9%

About Equalization Rates

An equalization rate represents the average level of assessment in each community. For example, an equalization rate of 50% means that, on average, the property is being assessed at 50% of its market value. The equalization rates are determined by the New York State Board of Equalization and Assessment. One of the most important uses of the equalization rate is to divide the tax levy fairly among municipalities in the same school district. In the Baldwinsville Central School District, the municipalities are the towns of Lysander, Van Buren and Clay.

About STAR

The state's School Tax Relief Program, or STAR, provides a basic exemption that allows property owners with income under \$500,000 to receive a \$30,000 full-value exemption on their home's assessed value. Senior citizens with incomes of less than \$36,400 gross are eligible for larger exemptions on a sliding scale; senior citizens with incomes of less than \$79,050 (not including IRA distributions) are eligible for the state's "enhanced" exemption of \$62,200 on their home's assessed value.

Property Tax Cap Explained

Q: New York's property tax levy cap is 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower. Why is the district proposing a budget for 2013-2014 with a tax levy increase of 2.9 percent?

A: New York's property tax cap law, often referred to as the "2 percent property tax cap," allows school districts to increase their property tax levy by 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is less, based on a state mandated multi-step formula.

However, school districts are allowed to take certain exemptions for costs that are not subject to the tax levy limit. These exemptions can boost a school district's tax levy limit to more than 2 percent or the rate of inflation, which is the case for the Baldwinsville Central School District for 2013-2014. Due to increases in pension and debt service costs the district's tax levy limit for 2013-2014 is 5.16 percent. However, the district's **proposed 2.9 percent tax levy increase is actually LOWER than the district's calculated tax levy limit.** Mindful of the financial challenges community members are facing, the district has developed a budget that preserves instruction and is balanced with the community's ability to support it.

Q: May a school district ever raise its tax levy increase above its limit?

A: Yes, a school district may raise its tax levy increase above its limit; however, it will need a supermajority, which is more than 60 percent of voters, to pass the budget. If a district's tax levy increase is within its limit, it needs only a simple majority, which is more than 50 percent of voters, to pass the budget. Since the Baldwinsville Central School District's proposed tax levy increase is within its limit, the district needs a simple majority to pass the 2013-2014 budget.

Q: The district's tax levy limit for 2012-2013 was .65 percent. Why is there such a big difference in the tax levy limit from this year to 2013-2014?

A: The figures used in the state mandated multi-step formula for calculating the tax levy limit can vary from year to year. This can result in a different tax levy limit each year.

Q: Does a 2.9 percent increase in the tax levy mean my taxes are going to increase by 2.9 percent?

A: Not necessarily. The school tax levy is only one part of the total tax equation to determine tax bills. The district only controls one-third of the tax rate equation. Tax bills are determined by using a property's assessed value, the school tax levy and the equalization rate in each town.

Propositions 2 & 3

The 2013-2014 budget, Proposition 2, and Proposition 3 stand alone. No proposition is contingent on the passage of the others.

Proposition Two: Annual Bus Purchase

In addition to voting on the 2013-2014 budget proposal, district residents are also asked to vote on the annual bus purchase proposition:

Annual bus purchase and replacement program

The bus fleet consists of 79 large (54-70 passenger) buses, 27 medium (15-48 passenger and wheelchair capable) buses, and eight 8-passenger buses. Large buses are used for about 12 years, the medium buses for about 10 years, and the 8-passenger buses for about 7 years. In order to maintain a consistent replacement schedule, approximately 11 to 14 buses should be replaced per year. However, given the economic pressure facing the district, we are proposing the purchase of fewer buses.

The district would like to purchase:

- ▶ Two Suburbans
- ▶ Four 65-passenger buses
- ▶ One 30-passenger bus
- ▶ Two 30-passenger wheelchair buses

**Total maximum cost of
Proposition 2 = \$918,000**

Less state aid = \$726,138

Local cost = \$191,862

This proposition is not contingent upon the passage of the budget or the passage of Proposition 3.

Budget Exit Survey

District residents will have the opportunity to participate in an anonymous budget exit survey after voting on May 21. The survey will provide the district with useful feedback from residents about the budget and the school district. Before you leave the polls please look for the short survey to share your opinions with the district.

Proposition Three: Capital Project

Estimated cost = \$500,000

Cost to taxpayers = \$0

Scope of Project:

The district would like to increase the bandwidth at Elden Elementary School and Van Buren Elementary School to match the bandwidth of the district's six other academic buildings. In order to do this the district must upgrade the data wiring in these schools.

Currently Elden and Van Buren have only 10% of the capacity that the other schools have to transmit data. With the increased integration of technology into all subject areas, these schools require more bandwidth to provide staff and students with the capability to effectively use technology for instruction and learning.

The community will be voting on the project proposal as well as if the district may use money from its capital reserve to pay for the project.

**Total maximum cost of
Proposition 3 = \$500,000**

Less state aid = \$395,000

Local Cost = \$105,000 from Capital Reserve

The district would like to use money from its capital reserve to pay for the local portion of the project, resulting in **no cost to taxpayers**. Per state law, the district may only use its capital reserve for building projects, and voters must approve the use of the capital reserve.

If voters approve Proposition 3, there will be **no cost to taxpayers** because the project will be paid for with capital reserve funds and with state aid.

This proposition is not contingent upon the passage of the budget or the passage of Proposition 2.



Budget Highlights

The 2013-2014 budget seeks to support the district's long-range plan, which strives to provide quality academic programs and maintain facilities while remaining fiscally responsible to taxpayers. The following highlights illustrate how the budget will support the long-range plan.

Program

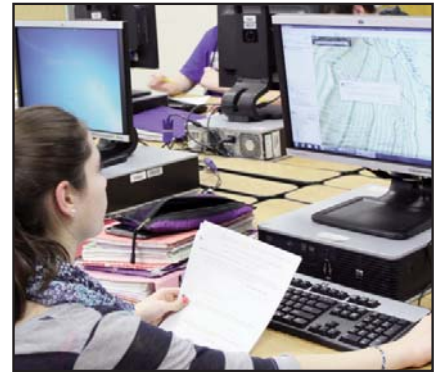
▶ Offer a large number of college-credit courses at the high school. The district has significantly increased the number of students receiving credit for college level courses:

2010-2011 = 269 students
2011-2012 = 492 students
2012-2013 = **1,068 students**

- ▶ Maintain existing student program opportunities (instructional and extra-curricular)
- ▶ Maintain effective class sizes
- ▶ Support efforts to increase the number of students receiving Advanced Designation diplomas.
- ▶ Continue the district's data-analysis process
- ▶ Ensure continued improvement in teaching through the district's mentoring program and other professional development initiatives

Technology

In the area of technology, the budget continues to support ongoing needs in the district to include general network hardware and software upgrades, the programmed replacement of older equipment and installation of various peripheral instructional equipment to include video projectors, SMART Boards, Symposiums, other presentation devices, and mobile computing devices, such as iPads.



Equipment & Maintenance

The budget supports the district's cleaning and preventative maintenance program and the community use of buildings. It also supports necessary repairs, including building infrastructure, mechanical and electrical repairs, HVAC upgrades, athletic field maintenance, and energy conservation upgrades. Examples of new equipment include lawn maintenance and snow removal equipment, and building maintenance and floor care equipment.

Public Budget Hearing
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Durgee Cafe

Budget Vote
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What happens if the budget is defeated?

If the budget is defeated, the Board of Education has three options:

- 1.) Put the same budget back before voters;
- 2.) Reduce the budget and ask voters to approve that budget; or
- 3.) Go directly to a contingent budget with no re-vote.

If the budget is defeated twice, the board must adopt a contingent budget. The contingent budget may not increase the cur-

rent tax levy by any amount, which would be a zero percent tax cap.

How will a contingent budget affect the school district?

Under a contingent budget, there will be no instructional or non-instructional equipment purchases and no community use of facilities unless groups or organizations pay all associated costs. Further cuts would be required to conform to spending caps and would come from programs.



School Board Elections

Board of Education Candidates

The order of the candidates is *the order in which they will appear on the ballot*. Three seats on the Board of Education are up for election. They are for three-year terms. The three candidates who receive the three highest vote totals will be elected to the three-year terms.



Bob Morse

Born in Fulton, Bob grew up in LaFargeville, NY where he worked on a dairy farm for 8 years. After graduating from LaFargeville C.S. in 1982, Bob attended St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY and then earned a bachelor's degree in science education from Syracuse University in 1986, a master's degree in science education from S.U.N.Y. Oswego in 1991, and studied educational administration through S.U.N.Y. Cortland. Since 1986, Bob has taught science in Fulton where he has served on numerous committees, coached many academic teams and worked with and educated thousands of students from the elementary through college level including Syracuse University. Bob has also taught chemistry for Cayuga Community College since 2002 and previously taught for Oswego County BOCES for 6 years. Bob has lived in Baldwinsville since 2003 with his wife Kathy (Arcaro), has two children who graduated from the high school in Fulton, two stepchildren who graduated from Baker High School and one grandchild.



Steven Schweitzer

Steve has been a resident of Baldwinsville since 1993 and a member of the Board of Education since 2010. He currently serves on the Facilities Committee, Insurance Committee, and participated on the Building Feasibility Committee. Steve earned a bachelor of engineering degree from the State University of New York Maritime College and a master of science degree in mechanical engineering from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He is a licensed professional engineer and a senior project engineer working in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy technology. Steve and his wife, Kim, have two children, a daughter, Krystina, who graduated from Baker High School in 2007 and a son, Paul, who graduated from Baker High School in 2010. Steve also serves the community as a lieutenant with the Moyers Corners Fire Department.



Victor Jenkins

Victor Jenkins has lived in Baldwinsville since 1980. He is a private client advisor with M&T Bank/Wilmington Trust. He has been with them since 1999. He previously worked for Sagemark Consulting and as a controller for Xerox Corporation. Victor's management and financial experience is extensive, and he holds several professional designations. Victor has two daughters who attended Baldwinsville schools, and he previously spent six years on the Baldwinsville Board of Education, from July 2005 until June 2011. During that time, he served as an officer of the board, as well as on the Audit and Insurance committees. He has long been active in his community and currently serves as a board member on the Baldwinsville Community Scholarship Foundation, as well as a member of the Session for his church. In addition, he is vice president of the Estate Planning Council of CNY.

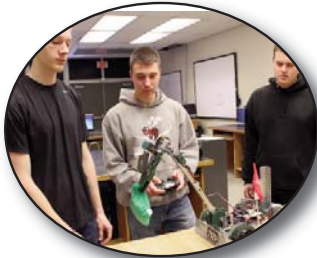


Joan Reeves

Joan Reeves has been a member of the Board of Education since 1981. She served as vice president for 12 years, president for five years, and is currently the vice president. She serves on the OCM BOCES Board of Education, is a member of the Board of Directors of the Central New York School Boards Association, a member of the Board of Directors of the Onondaga Madison School Boards Association, and is a member of the St. Mary's Parish Council. She was past president of the Baldwinsville Basketball Boosters and has been a volunteer for Baldwinsville Little League. While on the Board of Education she has served on numerous committees including but not limited to Long Range Planning, Facilities, Policy, Contract, Insurance, Transportation, Audit, Sustainability, Legislative, Negotiations, BCEPT, and Intermunicipal. Joan is a graduate of Baldwinsville Schools as are her eight siblings and parents, Cecil and Dorothy Reeves. She attended SUNY Oneonta and Oswego majoring in political science and was formerly employed as an assistant manager for Reeves Farms and by Plainville Farms in charge of purchasing, regulatory compliance and product development. She raised three children, all of whom are products of Baldwinsville Schools: Lieutenant Commander Eric and Laura Reeves, naval aviators in Anacortes, WA; Jamie and Erica Banuski, project manager for Springfield Mass. Schools and special education teacher for the Gill-Montague Regional School District; and son Ryan, who passed away February 2012. She has six grandchildren.

POINTS OF PRIDE: Achievement 2012-2013

Continued from page 1



- ▶ AP Scholar Awards
 - *National AP Scholar Awards - 1
 - * Scholars with Distinction - 20
 - *Scholars with Honor - 11
 - *Scholar Awards - 38

▶ Tony Cardamone named a 2012 National Distinguished Principal by the NAESP

▶ District awarded 2013 School Safety Excellence Award

▶ District named a 2013 Best Community for Music Education designee for 4th consecutive year

▶ Baldwinsville Marching Band - 1st Place, Large School 2 Class, NYS Field Band Championships

▶ Boys Volleyball - Regional Champions

▶ Girls Volleyball - Regional Champions

▶ Tyler Rouse named 2012-2013 Gatorade New York Football Player of the Year

▶ Boys Varsity Wrestling - Section III, Division 1 Championship Team



Photo by Hal Henty

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The Beacon is an official publication of the Baldwinsville Central School District.

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James Rodems
Assistant Superintendent for Management Services
Matthew McDonald
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

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POSTAL PATRON
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Learn Today Explore Tomorrow Create the Future