



# Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central Schools

Ensuring opportunities for learning, personal growth & social responsibility



## 2010-11 Budget Development & Communications Plan

### Context for the 2010-11 Budget

Last year's unprecedented economic problems continue, and Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake taxpayers are feeling the impact. The ongoing recession and uncertainty regarding the State's 2010 budget will make developing the upcoming school budget especially difficult.

Below are some factors that will impact development of the BH-BL budget. (Note: Every \$323,000 in new expense that is not balanced by new revenue or reductions elsewhere in the budget results in roughly a 1% increase in the property tax levy.)

- Many families in the district are increasingly stretched financially, and state unemployment is at its highest rate in years.
- The state is facing a \$3 billion budget deficit in 2010. State aid to BH-BL may decline by \$1 million or more, and the value of STAR tax exemptions may decline again as well.
- Other non-tax revenue sources will be lower as well. Interest on investments remains low, and Medicaid reimbursements are expected to decline still further. In 2010-11, BH-BL will also lose \$70,000 in rental income at the Hostetter Building.
- School districts have been told that the federal stimulus dollars the state is currently using to pay operating aid will end in 2011, potentially creating a funding cliff. In other words, we believe that 2011-12 will be even worse than 2010-11, and the Board of Education would be irresponsible not to tackle this as at least a two-year problem.
- Required pension costs will increase by an estimated 3 percent or more in 2010-11 due to stock market losses.
- Maintaining a comprehensive instructional program will require creativity and some different or reduced program delivery. This will be particularly challenging when our schools are already feeling the impact of more than \$1 million in cuts made in the 2009-10 budget.
- School infrastructure needs must be addressed even in tough economic times.
- Unlike many Suburban Council school districts, BH-BL has very little commercial development, and our tax base is 85 - 90% residential.

### Budget Objectives

In developing the 2010-11 budget, the Board of Education will:

- Cooperatively develop and implement new strategies to deliver a comprehensive education program and needed services at a lower cost. Doing this will require differentiating between essential programs and services as opposed to those that are desired program enhancements.
- Continue to ensure that BH-BL graduates can compete in a demanding and technologically sophisticated global marketplace.
- Work to spread reductions across the entire district with departments, programs, and schools being expected to share the pain.
- Reassure residents and staff that, even in extreme financial times, BH-BL can still deliver a high quality education if we all agree to make sacrifices and work together to do just that.
- Engage the community to develop solutions for areas where the district may reduce services.
- Urge state legislators to respond to our budgetary concerns with action.



### Calendar of Budget & Election Activities

- Nov. 10 & 24 Budget process discussed at Board meetings. (Note: budget development and communication will be an agenda item at all regular Board meetings from now until the May 18 vote.)
- Dec. 15 • Tu Approve budget calendar at Board meeting, 7:30 High School
- Dec. 18 • F Schools & managers submit budget requests to Business Office
- Jan. - Feb. Board members discuss the budget & budget process at PTA meetings
- Jan. 19 • Tu Finance Committee, 7:00 High School
- Jan. 22 • F Compiled budget requests & reference materials distributed to Board members
- Jan. 28 • Th Finance Committee, 7:00 High School
- Feb. 2 • Tu Public Forum on Fiscal Realities, 7:30 High School library — also broadcast live online**
- Feb. 24 • W Finance Committee, 7:00 High School
- Mar. 2 • Tu Public Forum on the Preliminary Budget, 7:30 High School library — also broadcast live online**
- March 9 • Tu Approve any referenda & notice of the annual mtg. at Board meeting, 7:30 Stevens Elementary
- March 12 • F Superintendent's recommendations distributed to Board members
- March 16 • Tu Present Superintendent's recommendations at Finance Committee, 7:00 High School library
- Mar. 25 • Th Public Budget Forum, 7:30 O'Rourke Middle School cafeteria — also broadcast live online**
- Mar. 31 • W Finance Committee, 7:00 High School library
- April 1 • Th Board members receive draft budget newsletter
- April 13 • Tu Adoption of the Proposed 2010-11 Budget at regular Board meeting, 7:30 Pashley Elementary**
- mid-April to mid-May Reach out to school & community groups about the budget
- April 19 • M Board of Education candidates' filing deadline
- April 20 • Tu Budget newsletter goes to press.
- April 27 • Tu Budget Hearing as part of regular Board of Education meeting, 7:30 High School
- April 29 • Th Budget newsletter mailed to residents
- May 4 • Tu Meet the Candidates night, 7:30 High School library
- May 11 • Tu Budget Hearing as part of regular Board of Education meeting, 7:30 High School
- May 12 • W Elementary Walkabouts, 7:00 at all three schools
- May 18 • Tu Public Budget Vote, 7:00 am - 9:00 pm, High School gymnasium**

To view & participate in Budget Forums online, go to: <http://bhbl.org/District/Board/onlineforuminfo.htm>