



Report on the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Budget Vote Exit Poll of May 17, 2011

Overview & Process

Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake offered an nine-question exit poll in two forms at the budget vote on May 17, 2011. Voters could answer the exit poll using either a paper survey form or an online form set up in SurveyMonkey. This was the fifth year we offered the poll in two forms. The questions were the same on both versions. Copies of the paper exit poll were sitting on the tables where voters signed in to vote to encourage them to participate in the poll after they voted.

The exit polling station was set up on a cluster of tables under a large “Exit Poll” banner inside the gym. The set-up is intended to be conspicuous as voters exit the gym. Online responses were collected on seven wireless laptop computers throughout the entire vote (7:00 am to 9:00 pm). Communications Specialist Christy Multer and Technology Facilitator Anne-Marie Mueller staffed the exit poll tables throughout the vote to assist respondents and keep an eye on the equipment. There were no problems with the SurveyMonkey software. The computers did lose their internet connection several times during the course of the day, but this was easy to fix.

Answers that voters wrote on the paper polling forms were entered into SurveyMonkey after May 17 in order to have all data in one database.

The Data

Results for all exit poll questions are shown in the charts below. A total of 388 people chose to answer the exit poll out of 2,702 people who voted in the gym on May 17.* The number of people who answered the exit poll in recent years is as follows:

Year	Number answering exit poll	Percent of those voting that day
2007	385	19%
2008	316	14%
2009	827	31%
2010	444	15%
2011	388	14%

In looking at the following charts, we need to keep in mind that every year Yes voters are more willing to answer the exit poll than No voters. Hence, once again this year, those who supported the budget are over-represented in the exit poll. Overall, 73% of the 388 exit poll respondents said they voted Yes on the school budget, while only 62% of the 2,748 actual voters voted Yes on May 17, 2011.

Percentages in the charts that follow are based on the number of respondents who gave an answer to each question and are rounded to the nearest whole percent. There were questions left blank here and there throughout the forms, which is why the “out of” numbers vary. Exit poll data is given below for all respondents in the “Overall” column. Results are then broken down based on whether respondents said they voted Yes or No on the school budget or based on a different factor as indicated.

* This does not count the 46 people who voted by absentee ballot.

Survey Questions

1. “In what town do you live?”

	Overall (out of 388)		Among those voting Yes (out of 277)		Among those voting No (out of 100)	
Ballston	38%	148	41%	114	30%	30
Charlton	15%	59	14%	38	20%	20
Clifton Park	4%	14	4%	11	3%	3
Glenville	43%	167	41%	114	47%	47

2. “Do you have children or grandchildren CURRENTLY attending the BH-BL Schools?”

	Overall (out of 388)		Among those voting Yes (out of 277)		Among those voting No (out of 100)	
Yes	50%	192	52%	144	45%	45
No	30%	118	30%	84	31%	31
Not now, but one or more has graduated from BH-BL	16%	63	14%	38	21%	21
Not now, but they will attend when they are older	4%	15	4%	11	3%	3

3. “Are you or your spouse an employee of the BH-BL school district?”

	Overall (out of 385)		Among those voting Yes (out of 274)		Among those voting No (out of 100)	
Yes, an employee	19%	73	23%	64	8%	8
No, not an employee	81%	312	77%	210	92%	92

4. “What age group are you?”

	Overall (out of 386)		Among those voting Yes (out of 275)		Among those voting No (out of 100)	
18 – 29 years	9%	35	12%	32	3%	3
30 – 44 years	19%	74	22%	62	12%	13
45 – 60 years	47%	181	47%	128	50%	50
61 & older	25%	96	19%	53	35%	35

5. “How did you vote on the Proposed 2011-12 Budget today?”

	Overall (out of 377)	
Yes, in favor	73%	277
No, opposed	27%	100

Note for comparison:

On the actual budget vote, we had 62% (1,691 people) vote Yes and 38% (1,033 people) vote No. Hence, Yes voters are over-represented in the exit poll.

6. “What were your REASONS for voting as you did on the budget?

(Check all that apply.) [The most frequent answers for each type of voter are highlighted in bold]

	Overall (out of 382)		Among those voting Yes (out of 276)		Among those voting No (out of 96)	
You are satisfied with the quality of the schools.	58%	221	74%	204	13%	12
You feel the quality of the schools is worth the cost.	66%	253	89%	246	2%	2
You have confidence in the School Board and administration.	41%	156	54%	148	3%	3
The spending/tax increase is reasonable.	50%	192	67%	186	1%	1
You have children in the schools.	34%	128	43%	119	8%	8
You believe in supporting the schools	67%	255	87%	240	10%	10
The budget addresses a service or area that's important to you	27%	103	36%	98	2%	2
You are NOT satisfied with the quality of the schools.	3%	11	2%	5	6%	6
You are NOT happy with the cost of the schools.	21%	79	2%	6	74%	71
You LACK confidence in the School Board & administration.	14%	55	5%	13	42%	40
The spending/tax increase is too high.	21%	81	2%	7	76%	73
You have no children in the schools.	7%	28	3%	9	20%	19
Your are concerned about the economy & rising costs.	24%	91	7%	19	72%	69
The budget is too LOW or fails to provide a service that is important to you.	4%	14	4%	11	3%	3
OTHER reasons	92 replies: see below		47 replies		42 replies	

7. “Do you feel that you had adequate information about the proposed budget?”

	Overall (out of 377)		Among those voting Yes (out of 272)		Among those voting No (out of 96)	
Yes, I had adequate information.	93%	352	95%	258	91%	87
No, I did not have adequate information.	7%	25	5%	14	9%	9

**8. “What were your sources of information about the school budget?
(Check all that apply.)”**

	Overall (out of 382)		Among those voting Yes (out of 272)		Among those voting No (out of 99)	
District budget newsletter	86%	330	87%	236	85%	84
District website	43%	165	46%	126	38%	38
PTA publications or meetings	10%	40	11%	29	11%	11
Watching Budget Forums ONLINE	15%	59	18%	49	10%	10
Attending Budget Forums or other Board of Ed. Meetings in person	29%	112	31%	83	29%	29
School district staff	32%	123	37%	100	21%	21
Friends & neighbors	26%	100	26%	71	25%	25
Local TV news	10%	40	8%	22	16%	16
<i>Daily Gazette</i>	27%	104	24%	64	36%	36
<i>Times Union</i>	8%	29	6%	16	12%	12
<i>Burnt Hills Spotlight</i>	17%	65	17%	46	16%	16
Other information source	15 replies: see below		11 replies		4 replies	

9. “How did you vote on the Bus Purchase Proposition today?”

	Overall (out of 376)		Among those voting Yes on budget (out of 272)		Among those voting No on budget (out of 96)	
Yes on bus purchase	75%	282	90%	245	32%	31
No on bus purchase	25%	94	10%	27	68%	65

Additional Data Charts

How people voted on the Proposed Budget sorted by Town of Residence

	Ballston residents (out of 144)		Charlton residents (out of 58)		Clifton Park residents (out of 14)		Glenville residents (out of 161)	
Yes, in favor	79%	114	66%	38	79%	11	71%	114
No, opposed	21%	30	34%	20	21%	3	29%	47

How people voted on the Proposed Budget sorted by Employee Status

	Yes, I or my spouse is a BH-BL employee (out of 72)		No, I or my spouse is not a BH-BL employee (out of 302)	
Yes, in favor	89%	64	70%	210
No, opposed	11%	8	30%	92

Newspapers cited as a budget information source sorted by Town of Residence

	Ballston residents (out of 148)		Charlton residents (out of 59)		Clifton Park residents (out of 14)		Glenville residents (out of 167)	
<i>Daily Gazette</i>	25%	36	24%	14	36%	5	29%	49
<i>Times Union</i>	9%	13	7%	4	29%	4	5%	8
<i>Burnt Hills Spotlight</i>	16%	23	12%	7	14%	2	20%	33

"Other" Comments

There were three spots on the exit poll where respondents could write in their own comments. All comments are printed in the Addendum below.

Question 6 allowed respondents to choose from among 14 possible reasons for voting the way they did on the budget, and also allowed them to write in their own reason. Three-quarters of the people who answered this question were content with the reasons provided, and one-quarter wrote in an "Other" reason. This included 47 Yes voters and 42 No voters.

The most frequent "Other" reasons for their vote provided by **YES Voters** can be grouped into the following four themes:

1. Support for education in general and/or the quality of education here at BH-BL. Desire to keep the quality of BH-BL education high and the quality of this community strong.
2. Support for the Board's budget decisions and/or the process used in creating the budget.
3. Belief that a budget defeat would be worse than the proposed budget, or statement supporting a higher budget or tax increase than what was proposed.
4. Concerns about the salaries, pay raises, taxes or lack of staff concessions in the proposed budget (even though the person voted yes).

The most frequent "Other" reasons for their vote provided by **NO Voters** can be grouped into the following three themes. Almost all comments related to costs rather than the quality of school programs.

1. Concerns about contracts, negotiations, and the lack of concessions by the teachers.
2. Costs and/or taxes in general are too high. Respondent cannot afford the increase.
3. District salaries, benefits or services are too expensive.

Question 8 asked about respondents' sources of information on the school budget. In addition to choosing from 11 possible information sources, a small number of respondents (4%) added a comment or an "Other" information source here. These other sources included NYSUT, the www.BallstonPatriot.com blog, and www.seethroughny.net

At the end, the survey form also invited respondents to write down additional comments on any topic, and 61 people did so. Many of these comments echoed the themes given above. A few were compliments on the quality of district programs. Since this general comment opportunity was positioned right after the question on the Bus Purchase Proposition, several people included opinions about buses, either pro or con. Others used this as an opportunity to air a specific complaint or advocate for another personal value.

Conclusion

The data and opinions collected in the 2011 exit poll are largely similar to what we have seen in previous exit polls at BH-BL. There were few complaints about the quality of BH-BL school programs, but many concerns about the continuing poor economy and its impact on our schools, community and residents .

People who took the time to answer the exit poll appear to be voters who also took the time to read about the school budget and/or participate in the budget process. A significant percentage (30 – 40%) of poll respondents say they attended budget meetings either in person or online. Both yes and no voters also said they rely much more heavily on district sources of information about the budget (the budget newsletter and district website) than any other information source, including the media, district staff and friends and neighbors.

In 2010 we received several negative comments about the voting process (long lines, etc.), prompting improvements in this year's process. There were no such complaints this year.

*Prepared for the Board of Education by:
Christy Multer
Communications Specialist
July 8, 2011*

ADDENDUM: Comments collected on the BH-BL Exit Poll of May 17, 2011

All comments received in the exit poll are reprinted below. They are grouped to show whether the respondent voted Yes or No on the budget.

How did you vote on the school budget today?		Question 6: Other reasons for voting as you did on the budget (please specify)
1	Yes	A strong educational system is important to the town, state & country.
2	Yes	I would have supported a higher tax rate over the past 3 years to maintain/expand programs. Cutting the elementary library aids was a bad idea - a great loss to a wonderful program.
3	Yes	It is obvious that the school board works very hard to balance good education with a good school budget.
4	Yes	Have 3 grandchildren in school.
5	Yes	Saratoga has -0- increase. Investigate how to do this. <i>[Editor's note: The respondent included a copy of the Saratoga Springs City School District budget flyer.]</i>
6	Yes	Grandaughter at Charlton Heights. Daughter graduated in 1987.
7	Yes	The school is directly related to peoples perception of the community. I want to keep our community one I can be proud to live in.
8	Yes	It is important to support education.
9	Yes	The school is an important part of our community and the reason why people live here. We need to invest in the education of our children as they are the future!
10	Yes	supporting teachers and school programs. Want to provide students with the best opportunities to do well in the world. Which means they need more individualize instruction that can only be provided with small class sizes and extra-curricular activities.
11	Yes	This school district cannot maintain the current salary and benefit structure that the teachers have in place. 3% annual increases will result in unsustainable cost increases. Automatic increase + step increase will require that the # of teachers will need to be cut in order to bring our future budgets in line and the quality of the education will suffer.
12	Yes	we live here BECAUSE of these schools
13	Yes	We need to look for and implement more creative ways of reducing costs and raising revenue ... recycling will gain us \$, hybrid buses have an ROI that was not figured in ... greening our schools and involving the students is a win-win ... why aren't we?
14	Yes	The budget continues a trend of diverting money from the general education population to provide increased services for the AIS and special education populations in effort to meet the misguided raising of the bar brought on by NCLB. The district should take a leadership stand against these unrealistic expectations of ever increasing passing rates.
15	Yes	We have a great school system here. Although I work in the district, I am a parent first. Before working here, I worked in another district. We moved here for the schools. It is all about people; kids, staff, parents/guardians. We have great people here in this district. We need to continue to support this great system or we will lose what the majority of people value here.
16	Yes	I am a building principal in another district and feel that we are doing the best we can to educate for the future.

17	Yes	Budget should have been higher as that is what the majority of the community wanted no matter whether they work in the school or not, it is about the children!!!!
18	Yes	I realize that these are tough times for everyone involved. My biggest concern is the excessive money spent on retirements and health coverage for all employees of the district. We need to change that!!! We all need to pay our share. My husband works for the state and he has had a wage increase for the next three years. No one in this economy should be receiving pay raises when teaching jobs are being cut and education/extra-curricular programs are being cut!!! We are too top heavy...cut at the administrative level!! Jim Shultz and his wife should not receive full health care benefits with no co-payments!!!! I don't and neither do most people!!! <i>[Editor's note: Actually Superintendent Schultz pays the same health insurance premiums and currently has the same health insurance options as any other active BH-BL employee.]</i>
19	Yes	The alternative is worse. And, were it not for the glimmer of hope that someday the Tri-borough Amendment to the Taylor Law will be recinded and replaced, I would vote no for any and all budgets.
20	Yes	some concerns about administration and concerns about board candidates
21	Yes	I am a teacher in another area school district. The BH-BL budget process continues to be transparent to the residents of the district. Also, it is clear the proposed budget includes the smallest number of cuts possible and ensures that the integrity of the academic program offered by BH-BL remains intact. Thank you for being so transparent.
22	Yes	While I did vote for the budget I am concerned there will not be an end to this. Continuing to raise taxes is not really an option. There will be a point where I will have to sell my house because of the taxes. There are great things about this district but I am not sure I will be willing to continually vote for a tax increase.
23	Yes	Keep the sports programs funded
24	Yes	Schools are important. People who think otherwise, or feel that educational spending is the reason for our state's deficit, or financial woes are ignorant and should be put back through the school system. Teachers rule!
25	Yes	in a community as affluent as ours, a austaire budget increase is a joke. I voted yes, not because I am in favor of this weak proposal, but because I am afraid of the alternative. This district has a proud history, I hope future classes can say the same. Next year I hope the board is not afraid to take a chance and increase the tax rate so we do not continue to lose programs our children need and deserve.
26	Yes	the increase may not be reasonable but it does provide direct value.
27	Yes	As a graduate of the district and current parent of two elementary aged students I have been pleased with the level solid foundational skills my children have received. The quality of education in the early elementary years can not be underestimated. As a parent of a child who has gone through the jump start, extended day kindergarten and receives speech and reading intervention services with out being identified as special education speaks volumes as to the level of quality education each child receives.
28	Yes	I was extremely disappointed that the teachers did not take a voluntary wage freeze for one year. If the contingency situation would not have made the tax increase worse than the current budget I would have voted no. We are all suffering and I feel that my tax increase is solely going to pay for their raises and not to better the learning environment/resource needs for my child. How sad and selfish that they could not do like the administrative groups did in so many surrounding schools. It has left us with a very negative opinion. I also wish that our board and supt. and assist. supt. would reflect on changing their traditional roles to reach out and do some serious work with town officials to encourage industries to move here, or other ways to increase the tax base without eroding the sense of community that has been preserved here. Look at what the supt of Ballston Spa has done for his district in concert with the hard work and efforts of his BOE. This could be and should be done here. I'm looking for change in this direction for my child and for our future here as taxpayers.
29	Yes	Good schools are the first criteria that families look at when moving to a new area, so to maintain controlled local growth, it is necessary to keep the quality of our schools high.

30	Yes	I'm disappointed by the cuts. I think small class sizes are important, libraries need new books, and the needs of gifted and talented children are not being met and I am willing to pay for those things even though my children have graduated.
31	Yes	Anything to help our children's education is worth it.
32	Yes	I am a teacher in a neighboring district and understand these propositions.
33	Yes	It is vital that senior citizens support the younger generation by giving them the best education possible. Those before us did it for our children
34	Yes	If its get voted down, the Board will think they asked for to much
35	Yes	Disappointed that there is nothing on this list about voting yes for a budget because of excellent teachers who are and always will remain the main reason this district is so successful. That is why I vote yes. That is why we moved to this district to raise our family.
36	Yes	to make sure our property value stays up and allow the kids the benefit of good schools and extra ciricular activities
37	Yes	I went to the budget meetings and think you school board members did a good job balancing all the issues especially given how many state laws restrict what you can and can't do.
38	Yes	i want the younger classes to be successful
39	Yes	My parent is a teacher in the school district and I went here and believe in supporting it.
40	Yes	I graduated from bh bl and want others to have the chances I had.
41	Yes	I am unhappy with the number of staff cuts, but I know the District has very little control over that
42	Yes	I voted yes however I don't know that I would in the future if the teachers do not make more compromises. Many people in our area have not had a raise in years and our teachers continue to get raises despite the challenges every where else. The union needs to work together to help save programs and jobs by decreasing their raises. Being a former teacher, I know how a union functions. There tends to strong reps that put fear into other teachers that are willing to make change. It is time that the majority stands up to the minority in the union.
43	Yes	The budget does not ask enough of the community. My home value depends on the quality of the school. I voted yes in fear that a no vote woill lead to further cuts.
44	Yes	I do not want to see anymore cuts to programs and staff of this high-performing district.
45	Yes	The district has done a good job of making reductions while keeping a focus on student programs.
46	Yes	Although I thought we should have gone with a higher budget, the thought of anything even lower was appalling.
1	No	Parents of school children pay too small a percentage of school costs.
2	No	Economy - Federal government deficit may have catastrophic effects on funding available from NYS government.
3	No	Teacher costs are out of control and not in line with the general working population of the community.
4	No	Please think before you agree to the teachers at the end of June!!!

5	No	Teachers & Administrators salaries continue to increase - 8-10% per year and quality is decreasing. We have teachers making over \$100,000 & kids not being offered electives. What is wrong with this picture? We know all % increases go directly to teachers.
6	No	A coach who benched all of the seniors to groom a future team instead of having seniors mentor younger players should be benched permanently. Not fit to work with young people.
7	No	Tough economic times - SAD - but too much \$\$\$ - Love BH - graduated here - unemployed 2 years - no sympathy for teachers
8	No	Taxes are way too high - rather than a cap we need a roll back.
9	No	The increases are forcing me to leave my home to a non-profit who will get a tax free category (in my will).
10	No	When BH teachers make sacrifices in their pay, and I don't mean by letting junior teachers be laid off, I'll vote yes, till then I vote NO.
11	No	We cannot continue increasing spending every year. This is not a sustainable system.
12	No	District employees & administration should learn to live within a budget like private sector.
13	No	It was disappointing to see the school staff not do their part to lower expenses by at the very least taking a pay freeze.
14	No	Private businesses & households have to cut back on spending, why not you!
15	No	Not enough administration cuts.
16	No	I think BHBL generally is well run & frugal - except I cannot support the situation when layoffs occur and 5+% raises are handed out to others. I hope you negotiate a better contract next time around.
17	No	I have not gotten a raise in 3 years why should you?
18	No	Teacher benefits and compensation is too generous especially given that the market is saturated with teachers that should drive costs in favor of the tax payer. Net teacher reductions eliminates mostly partial positions that does not really reduce staff and cost of benefits. Need to take a hard line on contracts and staff cuts.
19	No	union contracts have tied the hands of the district and administration is unwilling to acknowledge it or work to address it. My family has gone without pay raises for several years now due to non-unionized jobs giving our employers flexibility in their budgeting. This flexibility has allowed my husbands company not only to survive, but to thrive and rise to the top of their field during the hardest times of this recession. It's very discouraging when I work in an M/C - non union NYS fiscal job and have been doing much more with much less for 10 years now. The salaries and raise charts available for public info should leave school districts and teachers themselves ashamed at the cuts of key low pay grade staff and services in order made to allow continued and highly unusual (these days) pay raises for district teachers. I am responsible for making across the board CUTS in all spending categories, and BHBL doesn't seem to get it.
20	No	Teacher benefits need to be cut proportionate to private industry. They are overcompensated.
21	No	everything needs to be cut to reflect the current economy, does it really take 280 staff to support 250 teachers?
22	No	No teacher concessions. Our staff is not top notch across the board. we have many educators that are not to the potential that the school thinks they are. The quality of our students is largely in part of the middle class make-up, the two parent families, and the "genetics" of the community members. BHBL has many educated individuals in the community....smart parents, good parents...good, smart kids....cover up for the "poor" quality educators we have in many areas.

23	No	Teachers union has too much influence on cost and quality of education. Schools out west and in the mid-west get a far better education at a much lower cost. Our Board is a captive of the Teachers Union.
24	No	Increases for teachers salaries and pensions are too high. Since the board agreed to these increases, unfortunately the money will have to come from elsewhere.
25	No	large budgets do not equate to a good education. Too many unnecessary courses are offered at this school
26	No	School boards still are unable to run the budget as families are required to run their households
27	No	there are superfluous positions (i.e. a payroll expense of 40k to schedule fields and athletic facilities). This could be done with a spreadsheet and put the \$\$ towards actual teaching positions. That is the primary reason for the no vote. Superintendant bonuses should be disclosed. I find that be insulting in economic times that find districts cutting to the "bone", when in actuality, there is still a lot of fat .
28	No	The teachers' union has not stated that they will make any concessions in their contract renegotiations, I have seen no evidence that the Board is taking a strong position with the union in negotiations, and the negotiations are not complete yet.
29	No	the yearly increase of taxes, decrease in classes..but the yearly pay increases for the staff can not conyinue.
30	No	The budget should not be set and voted on before teacher contracts are complete. We used about 1/2 of our surplus, laid off countless teachers, and relied on stimulus money which disappears next year all at the start of a 3-year contract negotiation with ZERO concessions from the teachers union. If the budget passes, what likelihood is there they will agree to any reductions? They do not live in the real world with pay freezes and cuts, increased health care and reduced, if any, pensions. How much longer must those who make less subsidize those who make more?
31	No	Teachers are overpaid and have too many lucrative benefits compared to the private economy
32	No	Please see below.
33	No	the teachers union needs to negotiate a contract that does not include automatic increases
34	No	We simply cannot afford to pay the school taxes on a retiree income. I love BH-BL schools. But the taxes represent over 20% of our income. Much to my sorrow, we are selling our home after 23 happy years here. We are moving to a place where the property taxes are lower, and we can afford to live within our means. We tried staying here. After my husband retired (not by choice, but for health reasons), I worked 2 jobs to try to make up the difference. I'm sad to leave this town and my friends. Good bye.
35	No	need to see teacher(teacher union) make benefit concessions. also, 150,000 miles on a deisel bus is not anywhere excessive, in fact it is broken in @60,000. They easily can do 250,000 mi.
36	No	we can not afford raises for anyone right now and the private sector isn't getting so why should the public sector think they are any different?
37	No	School Board is granting salaries that are too high in this economy. I work in the private industry and have taken pay cuts, I expected a zero increase budget this year. We have had to curtail family expenditures, I expect the the school district to do the same. It is not business as usual time
38	No	time for the teachers union to give concessions and provide more contributions to their retirement and health care costs
39	No	when the avg household income in our school district is \$65,000 and the teachers are making more than that, and getting a salary increase, something is wrong with the system. It is time to fix it. It is also time for the teachers to be aware of that. they need to pay more for healthcare, their pensions, and take a pay freeze. The private sector has not had a raise since 2008.

40	No	Don't agree with salary raises in this time of austerity. We really need to tighten the belt here.
41	No	I haven't gotten a cost of living increase in years. I did not get my medical paid for when I retired. I'm tired of taxes going up and up constantly. Learn how to budget and don't give out raises like they are a dime a dozen. Our teachers and administration are paid a lot more than I ever made and I learned to live on a budget. We older folks will end up losing our homes due to the exhorbitant taxes we pay.
42	No	i feel it taxes should be higher in order to provide a better ededucation to the kids of bhbl in order to provide to a smarter futre of kids and students

Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Board of Education Exit Poll - May 17, 2011

How did you vote on the school budget today?		Question 8: Other budget information source (please specify)
1	Yes	son-in-law administration in another school district
2	Yes	My daughter who is a student here
3	Yes	Nysut info
4	Yes	Although, I live in the distict I do ont receive the distct newsletter via US mail. Actually I receive the Ballston CSD newsletter!!!
5	Yes	I work with some of the board of ed members and have spoken to them at length
6	Yes	Ballston Patriot
7	Yes	Ballston Patriot
8	Yes	active email link
9	Yes	BPA meeting
10	Yes	nysuit
11	Yes	Participation In Government class
1	No	The out of control cost of the school is due to the heavy salary and benefits of teachers and staff
2	No	The college age young people who had their dreams dashed by a manipulator
3	No	seethruny.com - How can you have a multipage newsletter and say so little about wage increases?
4	No	Online salary information

Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Board of Education Exit Poll - May 17, 2011

How did you vote on the school budget today?		You are welcome to add any additional comments here.
1	Yes	Voting on the proposed school budget should be decided after the teachers contract is made public - School Budget vote May 17, 2011 - Current teachers contract expires June 30, 2011. Also the contract should be open to discussion and not discussed/negotiated in private with the School Board members. there has to be balance between quality of education and fiscal responsibility. Property taxes should support or be equal to teachers' salaries. That is not true today.
2	Yes	I do work for the school district but do not understand why question 3 is asked. I live in the community and pay taxes just like my neighbors--does it really matter if I work for the school district?
3	Yes	we need to spend whatever it takes to educate our children. Bless you all.
4	Yes	Schools need teachers, students need teachers, students need to keep competitive with the additional learning requirements to get into colleges and to get great jobs
5	Yes	Your sign that asked voter to use Lakehill Rd entrance was ineffective as it was only visible after one had turned into the driveway
6	Yes	The reason we live here is the schools
7	Yes	GO BH-BL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
8	Yes	If the district would like to purchase buses, please give us better information about costs ... and why not green our fleet ... IT WILL SAVE THE DISTRICT MONEY!
9	Yes	We need to contine to communicate with each other in order to provide our kids with a strong educational experience that will prepare them for life. This experience can go one of two ways: 1) A positive one which will be paid back to us 10 fold in the future or 2) a less positive one that we will produce much less in the future. Pay a little now to see huge benefits later on.
10	Yes	I shouldve put my above comments here. Sorry!!
11	Yes	In the future, I would like the board to listen to the people and not assume what they are thinking. I would continue with the forums and do them earlier and start discussion earlier in the future, so publics opion can be heard and board has time to apply those changes.
12	Yes	I offer these comments as a president of a 85 member local teachers union, a parent of a recent BH-BL graduate and taxpayer. Quality schools result in higher property/reestate values, and more desirable living areas, in comparision to Albany were I grew up, my parents house, a historical center hall colonial, twice the size of my small cape is worth 30% less because of the local school districts. The education my daughter here at BH-BL K-12 received excellently prepared her for college. HOWEVER, we are still spending too much on the transportation fleet and sports! Future cutbacks should not be in the primary academic areas - i.e teachers, course offerings, fieldtrips, etc. but reduction in bus routes (all under 1 mile should walk or have parents drive them.), reduce out of district bussing when and where possible (or legal if a state mandate - residence making this choice should transport their children themselves) and think about the vast amount of money that goes into sports such as football, despite the long proud tradition and achievement by those few who play football, many more are discriminated, by the reduction in college preparation course or other extracurricular activities. Quality of a local school district is ultimately measured in the scholarships earned, the colleges sellected/and accepted into, and future citizenship, not trophies in a glass case. Thank you for reading this lengthy commentary.
13	Yes	Continue to support elementary library programs. They are the key to preparing 21st century learners and a big part of meeting the inquiry elements of the CCCS

14	Yes	Don't get cheap on education. It's the one part of my taxes where I am willing to be a "big spender."
15	Yes	I am very pleased with the way in which the school district kept the public informed of the budget process. Mr. Schultz's table outlining the three tiers of potential cuts was very transparent and easy to understand. My son is in kindergarten at Pashley, and I am very pleased with the education he is receiving. The faculty and staff are personable and professional. They often go above and beyond the call of duty.
16	Yes	You'd be crazy if you didn't think our children were worth a \$72-92 increase.
17	Yes	I think the community would have considered keeping more staff and services for a minimal increase in taxes. The school system is the communities largest asset.
18	Yes	I have little/no confidence in the current administration to look forward and to support their staff.
19	Yes	I think that [board candidate's] mission statement was inflammatory and unhelpful. In the unfortunate event that he is elected, he will attempt to bring with him an attitude of confrontation and belligerence that has no place in this district. Should he be elected, I hope he will learn quickly that the best way to do business is to be pleasant.
20	Yes	Education needs to be funded fully. Teachers need to be paid well for their work. If there have to be cuts, cut the administration. Tell the rich whiners that don't want to pay taxes to be quiet - the schools educate their future employees.
21	Yes	insufficient data to evaluate bus business case
22	Yes	I am concerned about the teacher contract that is now being negotiated. We will not know the outcome before this budget vote. I feel that it should be on the table as far as what is going on with these negotiations. It should play apart in the district's tax proposal. I feel that their contract should be accessible to the tax payer. My husband has not had a pay raise in 4 years and he is a union employee. Thank you.
23	Yes	Thank the volunteers for their time, please!
24	Yes	Great job once again
25	Yes	I understand the hands of the folks locally are tied by the mandates of the state and I don't think penalizing people here is the solution.
26	Yes	I think there is too much topheaviness in our admin....pay for teachers and the amazing programs our schools have...NOT assistants to assistants to superintendents. Thank you!
27	Yes	Please keep up the good work. It is a difficult job being in charge during a recessionary period. Thank you for your act of service. Patriotism is not venting on the radio but the quiet deliberate daily step up to responsibility. This the administration and the board has done.
28	Yes	My grandchildren have the same teachers as I had... let's get rid of the seniors and bring in some new, young and modern teachers. Otherwise, keep up the good work!
29	Yes	Stop letting go of teaching positions!
30	Yes	Good Luck
31	Yes	Great staff, great administration, great Board of Ed!
32	Yes	keep up the good work
33	Yes	Ask for more to keep the fund balance intact.
34	Yes	I attended the budget forums and it was nice to see that the community still supports the teachers

35	Yes	Thank you to Jim Schultz and all the administrators and supervisors for making concessions. Your sacrifice is known and appreciated. I have told my neighbors about this too.
36	Yes	I am concerned that we had to tap into half of our "rainy day fund" and how we will handle shortfalls in the upcoming years. I hope that the next few years will not require excessive tax levy increases.
37	Yes	There seem to be other things that can be trimmed, but they are overlooked. It was helpful when we could submit anonymous ideas for the district to look at. Thank you for your time.
38	Yes	The Board has worked so hard this past few months to make sure they did the best possible job proposing this budget, and keeping the town informed.
39	Yes	all buses should have seat belts.
40	Yes	Two points: 1. I would have voted for a much larger tax increase if it meant more resources going to support children's learning and teachers. 2. The only board member I voted for was Patre. I voted for the other two incumbents because I had to.
1	No	As a 94 year & 93 year old living on social security being squeezed severely by rising costs of living in all areas - healthcare, food, gas, fuel oil, etc. any raise in taxes impacts us severely. People over 85 should not have to pay any taxes whatsoever!! I realize we have to educate our young people but at what cost to older people of district who have paid taxes for over 60 years here. I wish I had the answer! Thanks for the read!
2	No	In 42 years of homeownership I NEVER voted against a school budget, UNTIL BH-BL insisted on retaining a man who sacrificed his young charges for his own dream of a winning team.
3	No	The primary focus of the school should be education. The Board should cut sports funding but they cut teaching positions. I have voted no on all budgets for the last 5 years and will continue to do so, until the Board reduces the cost to the taxpayer.
4	No	Save lots of money by doing away with all department heads. Make just one to handle all courses in department. Do away with all Assistant Superintendents except one. Use that one as a floater for 5 schools. Get rid of poor performing teachers. Do not use school buses for extra activities. Let the parents provide transportation. Saves gas, wear and tear on buses and no driver payment who gets paid hours while watching games.
5	No	Husband & myself have lived 30+ years in Glenville, We are both now on Social Security. Everything keeps going up. Our income does not.
6	No	We need to cut back - the buses here are new enough and it's not the time to buy ahead to keep buses new - those days are gone. If \$10G raises are in the budget, we don't need to update the fleet.
7	No	I'm appalled that the budget proposes to spend \$1M from the rainy day fund to pay for ordinary labor expenses!!!!!!!
8	No	I don't feel that the budget information that I received was detailed enough. I was particularly not happy with the information on the finances for the current fiscal year. There was not any detail of where and what the district was spending our tax dollars on.
9	No	I have been driving the same car for years and budgeting for my family in order to be in a good financial position...I can only expect my school system to do the same in these difficult times. Be smart with my money like I am!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
10	No	I believe the major issue/problem is with the union salaries/benefits. As private sector pay has decreased or remained level the union contracts have included increases. I do not believe I should be paying for the union members retirement.
11	No	The spending must stop.

12	No	<p>Thus, far I am tremendously disappointed that the teachers and those in administration have not accepted salary freezes. I understand that negotiations are ongoing, but the constant feedback from the administration that we cannot discuss "the negotiations" and we have "asked for concessions/wage freezes" is insufficient and not acceptable. I also have concerns regarding the those who are negotiating with the teachers union on the school district's behalf. The whole process in itself is terribly, terribly not TRANSPARENT. The quality of education in BH-BL is eroding, just ask the high school students. This is not about not valuing the teachers, this is about what is the right thing to do in the GREAT RECESSION when people in the private sector have been losing jobs or a minimum not having salary increasing. I voted "no" today because I am disappointed with the process, in particular the lack of transparency wrt to teacher union negotiations and for the cut in providing a quality education to the students particularly increasing class sizes. I voted yes for the bus proposition because I assume it is a transportation safety issue. The board failed to get a badly needed "technology upgrade" proposition past 2 or 3 years ago. I feel without concessions by the teachers to a salary freeze the school district will have a very, very difficult time passing the badly needed upgrade to building and basic internet access in all buildings. I am not evening speaking of IPADS, etc technology - just sufficiently fast internet access. The BH-BL community is wonderful and rallies together to meet challenges and we had a great opportunity as a community to address the budget issue together - the community have funded teacher salary increases for the past two years, while school cuts occurred affecting the quality of education in BHBL, now its the teachers turn to step up ...not to lose jobs, but to accept wage freezes. What a lesson we could teach our children about team work and solving problems and expectations. We need stronger leadership and passion. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.</p>
13	No	<p>Only thing to do is move away to a more resonable area. People in this chool district are totally out of touch with the unresonable schoo tax. I guess Burnt Hills is only for fat cats making so much money that high school tax does not matter. Good education does not require high numbers of teachers and support staff. You can now get a better online education than having these high paid teachers. Moving away from Burnt Hills as soon as possible.</p>
14	No	<p>Past hiring practices and unprofessional interview committees still continue to spurn me in my vote.</p>
15	No	<p>Mr. Schultz and the board are not supportive of their teachers, the heart and soul of the schools. Mr. Schultz has deceived the public regarding his \$18,000 "concessions". Sick days do not equal cash. Mr. Schutz and the board owe the taxpayers an apology and should be ashamed of themselves.</p>
16	No	<p>This is not a year to be buying new buses----again, we cannot afford business as usual. I also think that the school day is too short</p>
17	No	<p>Taxes are killing me - I've lived in District over 40 years and now retired and on fixed income - being forced to sell my house to pay the taxes.</p>
18	No	<p>We spend way too much money on our schools. I am opposed to borrowing for depreciable assets such as busses even though I know it is a common practice. I am not happy with the quality of the schools, my children can ace tests including regents exams but they can not figure out what is important or not from what they read or hear because teachers don't teach about note-taking, they give the students notes to ensure that they pass standard tests. My senior son is only this year learning some of those basic skills now that he has passed all his regents and is taking electives!</p>
19	No	<p>i hope they don't keep submitting the budget until they get their way. I say cut all the frills. School should be for education. Peiod.</p>