



2018-2019
Proposed

BUDGET

Budget preserves programs, balances cost

2018-19 budget carries an estimated 1.98% tax rate increase

On May 15, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake School District residents will go to the polls to vote on a proposed \$68 million budget for the 2018-19 school year. The plan preserves all existing programs and small class sizes in grades K-8. It also improves academic opportunities (see pg. 2) for students while remaining below the district's tax levy cap.

The proposal carries a 2.90 percent tax levy increase and an estimated 1.98 percent tax rate increase. Voters will also elect candidates to fill two seats on the Board of Education. (See pg. 8.)

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, May 15, in the gym at BH-BL High School, 88 Lakehill Road.

If approved, overall spending in the proposed budget will increase by \$2.6 million, or 3.96 percent. Within that figure, 2.32 percent is dedicated to general operating costs and 1.64 percent is for debt service payments related to the voter-approved 2013 referendum. The debt service increase is almost entirely offset by state building aid and the district's Debt Service Fund. The increase also adheres to the district's long-range financial plan that was supported when voters approved the referendum in 2013.

"We were faced with several challenges and hurdles when planning the 2018-19 budget," explains Superintendent Patrick McGrath. "Through the cooperation and innovation of our faculty, staff, and administration, we have worked through these difficulties. We feel confident that we have developed a budget plan that reflects our commitment to high-quality academic programming and individualized student support in a fiscally responsible manner."



High school teacher Danielle Manning teaches an Adolescent Psychology course in one of the school's new distance learning rooms. She works with BH-BL students in the physical space while broadcasting the course to about 10 students in the Cairo-Durham School District. The students and Manning communicate and collaborate with each other using the latest distance learning technology, such as a high-definition camera and dual-screen monitors.

Distance Learning Network expands course offerings

Many (many!) years ago when people first began taking distance learning courses, they would correspond with and submit work to their teacher through the post—or, what today we jokingly refer to as snail mail.

Thanks to advancements in video technology, today's students can connect and collaborate in real time with their teachers and other students in the course, even if it's being taught on the other side of the state.

Interacting with others through a digital device is very natural for many students, explains Rory Graham, a junior who takes high school teacher Danielle Manning's Adolescent Psychology class. It is offered as a distance learning course through BH-BL.

"For the most part, we've been using video apps, like Facetime, to connect with friends and family for a while," she says. "So we are really comfortable

communicating with classmates through a screen."

The way distance learning courses get delivered and received may have evolved over the years but the goal remains the same: providing students with opportunities they otherwise would not have.

continued on page 9

BUDGET at-a-glance

- ✓ Proposed Budget: \$68,082,518
- ✓ Estimated Tax Rate Increase: 1.98%
- ✓ Tax Levy Increase: 2.90%
- ✓ Budget-to-Budget Increase: 3.96%
(Operating budget 2.32%;
Debt Service 1.64%)

What's new in the proposed budget?

Did you know?

BH-BL+1

Two years ago, BH-BL HS teamed up with SCCC to form BH-BL+1, an early college program. It offers students the possibility of dual enrollment to earn college credits in a general area of interest, while still earning a high school diploma. The vision for the program is for students to graduate from high school with a SUNY transcript that could qualify them to enter college as a sophomore. Visit www.bhbl.org to learn more about the three potential programs of study.

4

The number of Science Research students last year who received National Honorable Mentions at the Toshiba Explorative Contest in addition to multiple awards at the Greater Capital Region Science & Engineering Fair.

83

The number of clubs & athletic teams supported in the school budget.

BH-BL



EARLY ENRICHMENT SERVICES

The proposed budget includes an increase in Programs for Achieving Children's Excellence (PACE) teaching hours to support the expansion of the enrichment curriculum at the elementary level. PACE lessons complement the district's academic program by enriching students' experiences at an early age while also reinforcing such 21st-century skills as critical thinking, decision making, problem solving, and collaborating with peers. These are skills students will need to be successful later in their educational careers and in the workforce.

EXPANDED DISTANCE LEARNING OFFERINGS

Next year's budget would also broaden the district's distance learning opportunities by continuing to participate in the BOCES Distance Learning Network. Through the network, BH-BL will be able to broadcast nearly a dozen electives, including college algebra, computer science, business law, world language, and family & consumer science courses to other school districts.

Assistant Superintendent Maryellen Symer explains these new opportunities are possible because of the new rooms in the renovated high school library and a classroom in the new STEAM addition that are equipped with distance learning technology.

"The voter-approved referendum helped us bring our facilities and technology into the 21st-century," says Symer. "In doing this, we've been able to continue to offer students a strong academic program with a wide variety of electives so they can explore their interests and broaden their experiences in preparation for life after high school."

The Distance Learning Network is a shared service through BOCES. Therefore, the district receives reimbursement for teachers' salaries and benefits when they are teaching on the network.

DISTRICTWIDE TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

The proposed spending plan supports the district's long-term technology initiative by continuing to provide students in grades 3-12 with Chromebook laptops. Students use these devices to collaborate on class work, share homework and projects with teachers, work on group projects with peers from any location, and connect to classroom technology for a richer academic experience.

SAFETY & SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS

Within the past several years, there have been many changes to the schools' physical safety and security measures, such as secure vestibules, entryway cameras, swipe card entry systems, door alarms, and exterior doors locked throughout the school days. Next year's budget proposal includes enhancements to these measures, including additional digital surveillance cameras throughout the district and extending single-point of entry procedures at the elementary schools to include after-school and early evening hours.

ADDITIONAL COUNSELING SERVICES

The proposed budget also includes additional on-site counseling services for students through a no-cost partnership with Parsons Child & Family Services. "Having on-site counselors will help us better serve students and their families who are in need and would benefit from assistance," says Symer.

Budget Savings

RETIREMENTS & RESTRUCTURED STAFF ASSIGNMENTS

Nearly all of these budget preservations, additions, and improvements are made possible through savings realized by retirements and reallocation of staff due to enrollment changes. There is also a complete reorganization of central administration offices and the restructure of staff assignments

included in the proposal. These changes resulted in a total savings of \$825,000.

HEALTH INSURANCE CHANGES

The district was able to save \$436,000 in health insurance increases by negotiating greater employee contributions to one of the district's plan options and by making changes to the way co-pays are reimbursed. These changes were done without compromising the quality of service offered to staff.

PLANNED SALE OF LAND

Another area of savings, or anticipated revenue, factored into the budget proposal is from the planned sale of district-owned land. A 29-acre plot on Jenkins Road was purchased by the district in the early 1970s when enrollment was on a steady incline (from 1950 to 1970) and the need for another elementary school was imminent. After enrollment peaked then leveled in the early 1970s, it began to decline in the 1980s before leveling off at approximately 3,200. As such, the need for a new elementary school became unnecessary and the land has remained undeveloped for more than 40 years.

"When we take into consideration our enrollment has remained steady for more than 30 years and current enrollment projections show growth that can be absorbed within the district's current footprint, it's actually more fiscally prudent for the board to sell the land the district doesn't need, isn't expected to use in the future, and which could be used for single-family residential development," says Board President Jennifer Longtin.

The sale of the land would also help increase the district's tax base, meaning the tax levy (the total amount of taxes the district collects) would be spread over a larger number of residents. At the time this newsletter went to print, plans were in place to publicly list the land.

Q What happens if the school budget is defeated?

If the proposed budget is defeated, state law gives the Board of Education two options:

- * Resubmit the same or revised proposal for a revote or
- * Move directly to a contingent budget.

If voters defeat the proposal a second time, however, the board must adopt a contingent budget.

Rules more severe now

Under New York's tax cap law, districts that adopt a contingent budget cannot increase the current tax levy by any amount—resulting in a zero percent tax levy increase.

Bringing the BH-BL tax levy increase down to zero would force the board to reduce the proposed budget by \$1,127,574. In doing this, the board may not be able to adhere to its goal of preserving student programs and services or staff. It would likely have to make a number of staff reductions across all schools, which would increase class sizes.

Adopting a contingent budget prohibits a district from spending any money in certain areas, including

community use of school facilities (unless all costs are reimbursed to the district); new equipment purchases; nonessential maintenance; capital expenditures (except in emergencies); salary increases for non-instructional and non-unionized employees; and certain field trips and student supplies.

Also under contingency rules, the administrative component of the budget would be subject to certain restrictions. These requirements existed prior to the tax levy cap and remain in effect.



High school students Dalton Leach, Katarina Helmeset, and Kaitlyn Rounds in Ann Derrick's *Intro to Theatre* course perform playlets in the school's new black box theater, which was part of the voter-approved 2013 referendum. A requirement of the theatre course is that students write their own fairy tales and perform them for the children who attend the district's Kids Korner preschool program. The intimate performance space with proper acoustics and black walls and ceiling provides students with authentic stage exposure on a smaller, more manageable level. The space is equipped with contemporary lighting and high-tech audio and video equipment. The black box theater is also used for English classes, such as *Public Speaking*. Outside of the classroom, the theatre has been used for Drama Club rehearsals and the school's annual "X-Stock" event featuring student bands and solo performances.

Results by the Numbers

98%

BH-BL's graduation rate, which is ranked #2 in the region.

90%

of the class of 2017 attended either a four- or two-year college.

34

The number of high school students who have received National Merit Letters of Commendation in the past few years.

40

The number of college credit courses offered at BH-BL HS, which includes Advanced Placement and University in High School courses.

442

The number of high school students who took University in High School college-credit courses last year. Most students can potentially earn a semester's worth of college credits prior to high school graduation.

Impact of new real estate development in BH-BL

When new construction occurs within district boundaries in the form of residential and commercial development, BH-BL's tax base increases. Continued growth in the tax base allows a district's tax rate increase to be lower than the overall tax levy increase—as has been the case in BH-BL for the past several years.

The tax levy is the total amount that a school district collects each year in taxes from all property owners.

The tax rate is the amount of tax paid for each \$1,000 of assessed value of property.

The chart on the right shows the impact of a growing tax base over the past four school years and next year's projected tax levy increase and estimated average tax rate increase.

TAX IMPACT HISTORY

Year	Tax Levy Increase	Average Tax Rate Increase
2014-2015	1.94%	1.16%
2015-2016	2.68%	1.95%
2016-2017	1.87%	0.15%
2017-2018	1.96%	1.46%
2018-2019	2.90%	*1.98%

Tax base growth factors (if any) come from the Office of Real Property Services (ORPS). * Estimated.

BH-BL



**RESULTS
by the Numbers****100**

The number of high school music students selected to perform in prestigious county and state music festivals this year.

658

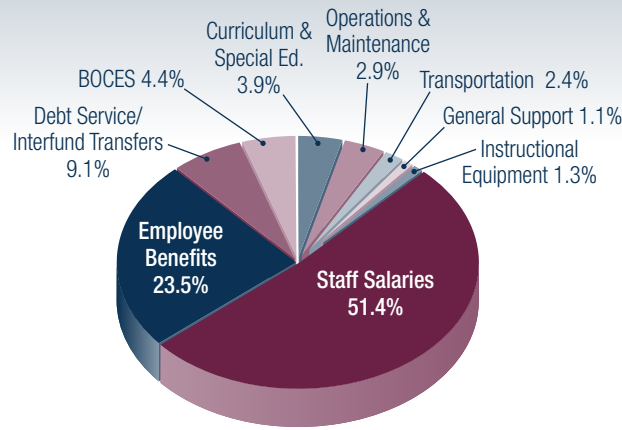
The number of students in grades 4-12 who played a musical instrument and participated in the district's music program this year.

50

The number of high school students whose work appeared in competitive art shows around the region in 2017.

6

The number of consecutive years BH-BL has been named among "Best Communities for Music Education" by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation for its outstanding efforts by teachers, administrators, parents, students and community leaders to make music education accessible to all students.

BH-BL

Expenditures Summary

CATEGORY	2017-18	PROPOSED 2018-19	% CHANGE '17-18 to '18-19
General Support <i>(Includes district supplies & materials, legal services, general insurance)</i>	\$774,541	\$772,738	-0.23%
Curriculum/Spec. Ed. Private Placements	2,411,622	2,608,523*	8.16%
BOCES	2,912,245	2,990,540	2.69%
Instructional Equipment, Furniture & Materials	881,360	871,638	-1.10%
Operations & Maintenance	2,266,386	1,986,625**	-12.34%
Pupil Transportation	1,484,400	1,598,630	7.70%
Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes	15,413,665	16,020,141	3.93%
Debt Service & Interfund Transfers	5,177,050	6,212,101***	19.99%
Staff Salaries	34,170,750	35,021,581	2.49%
Total Expenditure	\$65,492,019	\$68,082,518	3.96%

* This increase is associated with special education placements.

** This decrease reflects changes in maintenance timelines for repairs and equipment replacement.

*** This increase is related to the 2013 referendum and will be almost entirely offset by state building aid and transfer from the district's Debt Service Fund.

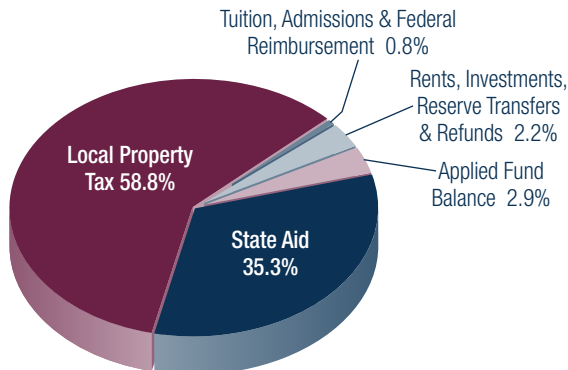
Revenue Summary

	2017-18	PROPOSED 2018-19	% CHANGE '17-18 to '18-19
State Aid	\$23,031,566	\$24,065,085*	4.49%
Local Property Tax	38,882,000	40,009,573	2.90%
Tuition & Admissions	449,000	395,000**	-12.03%
Rents, Investments, Refunds, Transfer from Reserves	739,453	1,502,000***	103.12%
Federal Aid/Medicaid Reimbursement	100,000	100,000	0%
Applied Fund Balance	2,290,000	2,010,860	-12.19%
Total Revenue	\$65,492,019	\$68,082,518	3.96%

* This figure includes approximately \$636,952 of increased building aid to meet additional debt service obligations described above.

** This decrease is associated with special education placements.

*** This increase reflects estimated revenue from the Jenkins Road sale and transfer from the district's Debt Service Fund.



School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2017-18 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2018-19 School Year	Contingent Budget for 2018-19 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$65,492,019	\$68,082,518	\$66,954,945
Increase/Decrease for the 2018-2019 School Year		\$2,590,499	\$1,462,926
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		3.96%	2.23%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.13%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$38,882,000	\$40,009,573	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	0	0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable**	0	0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	0	0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$38,882,000	\$40,009,573	\$38,882,000
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$1,078,473	\$1,116,972	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$37,899,645	\$38,924,476	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$37,803,527	\$38,892,601	
I. Difference: (G - H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval)	\$96,118	\$31,875	
Administrative Component**	\$6,454,235	\$6,345,650	\$6,345,650
Program Component**	\$47,997,328	\$49,812,713	\$48,685,140
Capital Component**	\$11,040,456	\$11,924,155	\$11,924,155

The box on the left is the "School District Budget Notice" as required by state law. School districts must present their costs in three prescribed components, as defined below. A more detailed breakdown of expenses and revenues is given on page 4.

* Assumptions made in projecting a contingent budget for 2018-19, should the proposed budget be defeated: While this may be adjusted, the district assumes the proposed budget would be reduced by removing non-contingent expenses for equipment and new capital project costs. To result in no tax levy increase as the law requires, we would also need to cut a number of staff positions and increase class sizes. (See page 3.)

¹ The estimated basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law. The numbers listed here come from the NYS Office of Real Property Services website: <http://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/star/sd41.htm>

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings¹

Ballston	Charlton	Clifton Park	Glenville
\$794	\$795	\$830	\$630

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2018-2019 by the qualified voters of the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central School District, Saratoga & Schenectady Counties, New York, will be held at the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School in said district on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m., prevailing time in the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School gymnasium, 88 Lakehill Rd., Burnt Hills at which time the polls will be open to vote by voting machine.

**BUDGET COMPONENTS DEFINITIONS

1. Administrative costs include the salaries and benefits of administrators and supervisors, the salaries and benefits of clerical staff, school board costs, curriculum development, staff development, tax collection, legal and auditing costs, central printing, central data processing, general insurance, BOCES administrative costs, research, planning, and evaluation.
2. Program costs include the salaries and benefits of all teachers and staff delivering pupil services (health, guidance, library, and athletics), textbooks, instructional materials, equipment, extracurricular activities, BOCES program costs, and all costs of the transportation program except bus purchases.
3. Capital costs include the salaries and benefits of custodial staff, debt service, bus purchases, utilities, fire insurance, tax certiorari, and other court-ordered expenses.



High School students in Mrs. Manning's Fashion and Textile class put their newly learned sewing skills to good use. Among other projects, they are transforming pillowcases into children's dresses for the Little Dresses for Africa program. This program helps clothe the underprivileged in Africa. But, adds Manning, the students learn more than sewing skills with this project. They also learn about compassion, kindness and the importance of giving back and helping others.

BH-BL



Did you know?**BH-BL**

has more than 125 K-12 students participating in one of the district's 18 FIRST Robotics teams this year.

BH-BL

strongly supports integrating technology instruction in the classroom, which is why students in grades 3-12 receive Chromebook laptop computers to use in their classes throughout the school day. Coupled with other teaching technology equipment, students and teachers are able to connect on a whole new level in the classroom.

BH-BL

Board of Education has proposed school budgets that have been below the district's maximum allowable tax levy limit since the inception of the state-imposed tax cap law in the 2012-13 school year.

BH-BL

Are new buses being purchased for next year?

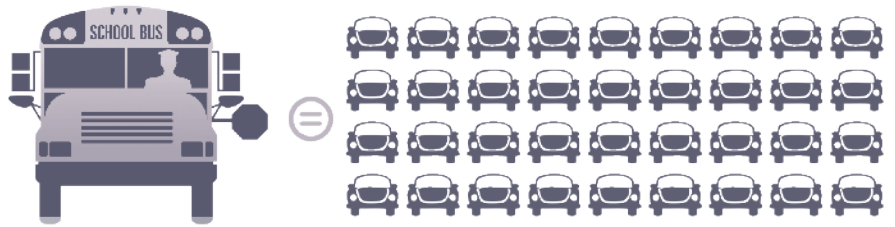
Yes, but rather than borrow funds and incur debt the proposed 2018-19 budget includes \$850,000 for the purchase of five 66-passenger buses, three 29-passenger buses, and three vans to replace some of the district's oldest buses and transport vehicles.

The district is expected to be reimbursed approximately 66 percent of the cost of the buses through state transportation aid in subsequent years, resulting in a net local cost of approximately \$289,000. Additionally, by purchasing buses outright, the district saves an estimated \$15,000 in interest and legal fees associated with borrowing funds.

Bus replacement plan

The buses scheduled to be replaced in the 2018-19 school year are

ONE SCHOOL BUS CARRIES THE EQUIVALENT OF 36 CARS

AMERICAN SCHOOL BUS COUNCIL


among the oldest in the district's fleet and have already accumulated high mileage, exceeded their warranties, and undergone many maintenance repairs. Beyond certain limits, buses typically become too costly to maintain given the state's stringent safety codes. Furthermore, new school buses are aligned with the latest safety and emissions standards and have better fuel economy rates.

BH-BL's 68-bus fleet travels more than 700,000 miles a year, transporting more than 3,100 students to and from its five schools. The buses are also used for sporting events, out-of-district runs, shared transportation runs, field trips, summer school, and other events.

In order to keep buses in safe working order, the district's long-standing policy has been to replace several of the oldest buses each year.



Are there any exemptions available to help taxpayers?

Yes. Homeowners can receive property tax exemptions under the School Tax Relief (STAR) program. Under state law, STAR exemptions can now grow by only 2 percent per year.

The Basic STAR exemption is available on a homeowner's primary residence for anyone who owns and lives in his/her own home and earns less than \$500,000 a year.

The Enhanced STAR exemption is available on the primary residence of taxpayers age 65 and older with yearly incomes of \$86,000 or less.

Other tax relief options

BH-BL residents over the age of 65 with incomes of \$37,400 or less also can be exempted from paying school taxes on 5 to 50 percent of their

home's assessed value depending on their exact income. The district also grants a disability exemption, ranging from 5 to 50 percent, for qualifying residents of any age with disabilities and incomes of less than \$37,400.

Last year, the board adopted the Alternative Veterans' Tax Exemption at level 1, which allows qualifying veterans to be exempted from paying school taxes on a portion of their home's assessed value depending on their military service.

Applications for these district exemptions and for state STAR exemptions must be filed with your town assessor's office. Visit your town's website or call your town assessor if you have questions about these exemptions.

2018 Estimated STAR Values

	MAXIMUM TAX SAVINGS
Basic STAR	
Ballston	\$794
Charlton	\$795
Clifton Park	\$830
Glenville	\$630
Enhanced STAR	MAXIMUM TAX SAVINGS
Ballston	\$1,591
Charlton	\$1,592
Clifton Park	\$1,664
Glenville	\$1,216



How will the proposed budget impact taxes?

The 2018-19 proposed budget of \$68,082,518 is 3.96 percent higher than the current year's budget. Given the state aid BH-BL will receive and other revenue sources, the overall property tax levy will increase 2.90 percent in order to balance the proposed budget.

Equalization rates

Calculating tax rate increases is complicated by the fact that the BH-BL district is made up of parts of four towns—Glenville, Charlton, Ballston Lake, and Clifton Park.

Each year, tax rate increases vary from town to town due to equalization rates that the New York State Office of Real Property Services (ORPS) announces in August.

As the name implies, equalization rates are intended to spread the tax burden across the four towns as fairly as possible. The rates attempt to "equalize" or compensate for differing assessment practices, for the fact that one town's assessments may be more recent than the other towns', and for

the fact that property values don't change equally in all towns within the school district.

For instance, if ORPS determines that property values have risen more in one town than another in the past year, the tax increase in that town may be somewhat higher than the estimated 1.98 percent average for 2018-19, while the rate in another town may be lower than the average.

Equalization rates are typically not shared with school districts until August. Equalization rate differences tend to even out over several years, but they make it impossible to predict actual tax rate increases in each town.

The school district plays no role in determining what portion of the tax burden is placed on any one town or any one property owner.

The state ORPS office sets equalization rates that determine the portion of the total tax levy paid by each town, and the assessor in each town calculates individual assessments that determine how much is paid by each property owner.

2018 MEDIAN FULL-MARKET VALUE PER TOWN & ESTIMATED 2018 TAX INCREASES

Ballston	\$220,708	\$91
Charlton	\$223,714	\$92
Clifton Park	\$178,880	\$74
Glenville	\$186,848	\$77

Understanding this infographic: If your home is in Glenville and last September's tax bill shows its total full-market value was \$186,848, your school tax bill could increase by \$77 in September. This is the best estimate the school district can make given existing data. Calculations will change when ORPS announces new equalization rates in August. Additionally, the estimated figures are *before* factoring in any exemptions. **Reminder:** Some town assessments are more up to date than others. Median full-market value figures are calculated directly from the tax rolls and are based not on the entire town, but only on the portion of each town within the BH-BL district.

Understanding Tax Levy and Tax Rate

How is the tax levy different from the tax rate?

The **tax levy** is the total amount that a school district raises each year in taxes from all property owners.

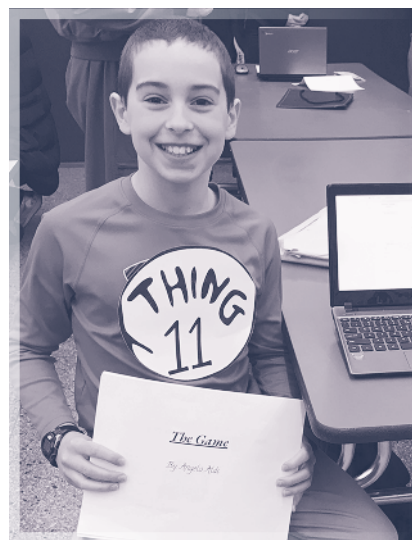
The **tax rate** is the amount of tax paid for each \$1,000 of assessed value of property.

Is the tax levy increase within the tax cap?

Yes. In fact, the proposed tax levy increase of 2.90 percent is below the district's 2018-19 maximum allowable tax levy limit of 2.98 percent. Staying below the tax levy limit allows residents to qualify for the state's property tax rebate.

How does the tax levy cap work?

Under New York State tax cap rules, school districts must use a complex formula to calculate their own unique "tax levy limit." Districts then add exclusions set forth in the law to this limit to determine their maximum allowable tax levy for a simple majority vote.



As part of a 10-week PACE/enrichment English Language Arts (ELA) lesson, teachers Carrie Sunkes and Michaela Durrant taught fifth-grade students, like Angelo Aldi pictured above, how to write like Dr. Seuss. The students were tasked with writing and illustrating their own Dr. Seuss-like books using figurative language, rhyming words, onomatopoeias, positioning words, alliteration, imagery and even made-up words. Throughout the project the students collaborated with their peers, discovered the different stages of book writing, and learned how to develop stanzas that properly incorporated the moral of their story. In the end, the students presented their books to their peers, school leaders, and family members.

BH-BL



Board of Education CANDIDATES

At the polls on May 15, residents may also elect **two** members to the Board of Education.

To learn more about the candidates, the district will conduct a

Meet-the-Candidates Night on Wednesday, May 9 at 7 p.m. in the HS Board Room.

All residents

are invited to pose questions and listen to the candidates discuss their views. If you can't attend, the event will be streamed online.

*** The statements to the right of each candidates' bio were written by the candidates. The opinions contained within are theirs and may not reflect the opinions or views of BH-BL School District leaders or the Board of Education.**

BH-BL



David Versocki

is seeking his first term on the board. Before becoming the Director of Technology at Capital Region BOCES, he was a school administrator and a high school math and computer teacher. Versocki is a 1986 graduate of BH-BL High School. He holds a BA from Hartwick College, a master's from Union College, and earned his Administrative Certification from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. In the past, he was a co-chair of BH-BL's 2013 Capital Project Committee, a member of the Galway Lake Sailing Club, and a coach for the Burnt Hills girls travel basketball, youth softball, and youth lacrosse teams. Versocki is a lifelong resident, and he and his wife, Amy, have a daughter who attends the high school. See his position statement* at right.



"Our role as parents and community members is to provide our children with experiences that provide an opportunity to develop the skills to become lifelong learners. Lifelong learning is not solely about academic endeavors. I believe the other opportunities we offer in areas such as community service, clubs, arts and athletics are all a part of this development. These opportunities provide students a connection to the district and community through something they are passionate about.

As a lifelong resident of the BH-BL community, I've had the privilege of experiencing the excellence the school district provides as both a student and parent. My participation as a co-chair of the 2013 Capital Project Committee provided an opportunity to work closely with a committed group of educators, students and community members which produced many improvements to district facilities. These improvements are providing students some of those experiences mentioned earlier.

I have been a career educator, having the good fortune of serving as a high school mathematics and computer science teacher, a basketball coach of varying levels and a school district administrator (Director of Technology). My current position as Director of Technology at Capital Region BOCES has provided an opportunity to witness how shared services provide students opportunities they might not receive if their district does not have the resources to go it alone. One of the areas that I have been able to champion region-wide is distance learning. Students from the smallest to the largest rural, suburban and urban districts can benefit from these environments.

I believe that this collection of experiences provides a wholistic view of the educational process. I am looking forward to sharing these experiences with the district as a member of the Board of Education."

Lisa M. Morse

is a 16-year resident who is seeking her first term on the board. She is a special education aide at Gordon Creek Elementary School in Ballston Spa and previously worked at the Glenville YMCA. She has an associate's degree and a paralegal degree from Herkimer Community College. She was a member of BH-BL's 2013 Capital Project Committee and a past member of the Scotia Rotary. Morse is currently a baptism ministry coordinator at the Church of Immaculate Conception, treasurer of the Field Hockey Booster Club (past president) and a certified USA Swim Official. She lives in Glenville with her husband and has a son attending the high school, a daughter attending Pashley, and three children who are BH-BL graduates. See Morse's position statement* at right.



"As a BH-BL resident for 16 years, I have watched my five children transition from the elementary school through high school graduation. Two of them graduated from college, St. John Fisher College and Clarkson University. Another is a freshman at Wagner College. My two youngest children are a sophomore and a 5th grader at Pashley Elementary School. My children have participated in athletics, theater, band, orchestra, and STEM. During this time, I met and became friends with so many of you. We have stood in the rain, waited for buses, and cried at graduations. During my time at the YMCA, I had the opportunity to converse with seniors and members of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. I've had the opportunity to talk...and talk with so many about the successes and concerns of the district.

As an integral part of the community, I've always felt inspired to not only listen to my friends and neighbors, but to take action as well. This is why volunteerism has been an important part of my time at BH-BL. I've been on field trips, helped with 5th grade moving up days, attended rec nights, helped with middle and high school plays, was a field hockey Booster Club President for seven years, and helped officiate swim meets. Most notably, I was a member of the 2013 Capital Project Committee. This committee met from February until June 2013, each week at every school. The committee was tasked with prioritizing all presentations and requests with consideration to the tax impact, then submitting to the school board. I am a member of the current committee for the 2018 Bond Referendum. During the time spent on each of these committees I gained an awareness into how decisions are made, and I've gained valuable insight as to how these decisions impact our students and our community.

My adult life has been spent advocating for children, students in need of assistance, students who are differently abled, and students who aspire for an opportunity to further their education. In doing so I've hoped to create an atmosphere of congeniality for students, their parents, staff and administrators, and all members of the community. With personal and professional experience within our community and school atmosphere, I believe I will bring a unique perspective to the BH-BL Board of Education."

Distance Learning Network expands opportunities for students

continued from front page

At BH-BL, taking a course remotely has become more attainable through participation in the BOCES Distance Learning Network (DLN). The network has helped expand the district's digital footprint by supporting an extensive catalog of courses to broaden elective offerings regardless of a student's physical location.

Additionally, the voter-approved 2013 referendum resulted in the addition of distance learning rooms in the high school library and upgrades to several classrooms to include the infrastructure necessary for distance learning technology, such as high-definition cameras, dual-screen monitors, and audio equipment.

The new space and modern technology has given BH-BL teachers the ability to deliver their curriculum to students within the physical classroom while also broadcasting to students at other schools. This also allows BH-BL to offer elective courses even when

enrollment in those courses may be low.

In addition to helping the district sustain a healthy offering of electives, distance learning classes and digital connections with classmates can also sharpen essential cooperative problem-solving skills and encourage students to be proactive in their own learning.

Because distance learning courses typically include a couple of sections of students, cooperative learning becomes a useful method of teaching that can have social, cognitive, and academic benefits. Distance learning courses also help students develop fundamental interpersonal skills and foster connections beyond the walls of the classroom and BH-BL High School.

"The distance learning course I'm taking actually helped make forging friendships with my Cairo-Durham classmates seamless," Graham says. "We are all in a Snapchat group and keep in touch outside of school."

There are more than a dozen BH-BL courses in math, computer science, business, world language, and family & consumer sciences that are open to students in other districts that participate in the network.

There are budgetary benefits to hosting distance learning courses, too. The network is a shared service through BOCES, therefore, BH-BL receives reimbursement for teachers' salaries and benefits when they are teaching on the network.

"We are always looking for new and creative ways to improve upon what we currently offer our students," says Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction Maryellen Symer. "One area that has always been exceptional at BH-BL is our comprehensive program. Our continued participation in the distance learning network further enriches this program and provides students with an even more robust selection of courses."



What do kids like more than making slime? At BH-BL's annual Science Demo Day we learned they also enjoy experimenting with glow-in-the-dark bubbles and lava beakers, popping smoke bubbles (dry ice), testing their catapult-making skills, and discovering robotics. Science became super cool earlier this year when fourth graders from Stevens, Charlton Heights, and Pashley Elementary Schools visited the high school's science labs where they worked with high school students and became engrossed in the more than two dozen science and technology demonstrations. The fourth graders also put their own science skills to work by making observations, performing experiments, and recording their findings in their science notebooks.



Do you have other budget questions?

If after reading this newsletter you have other questions about the budget, please contact Superintendent Patrick McGrath by email or phone at pmcgrath@bhbl.org or 518-399-9141, ext. 85002. There is also budget information at www.bhbl.org.



Exit Survey

Following the vote, residents will be asked to complete a voluntary and anonymous exit survey. This will help the board gather community feedback and help guide future budget and program decisions. Both online and paper surveys will be available.

BH-BL



SAVE THE DATES

MS & HS Arts Festivals

Join us in celebrating BH-BL student artists at the annual Arts Festivals where a year's worth of work will be showcased. Much of the artwork on display has been recognized and earned awards at competitions throughout the region and state.

☑ Tuesday, May 8:

O'Rourke Middle School Arts Festival, 5 p.m. in the cafetorium

☑ Tuesday, May 15:

BH-BL High School Arts Festival, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the gym

Just can't hide that Spartans PRIDE



Congratulations to the 2017 boys varsity cross country team for winning the New York State Class B Championship and finishing the season with a Suburban Council dual meet record of 14-1. The team also won its first-ever Federation Championship and students Tyler Berg, Evan Brennan, Aidan Gillooley, and David Metacarpa were named Suburban Council Cross Country All-Stars. This is the 7th state championship win for BH-BL boys cross country.



We are proud to announce that at the 2017 NYSSMA Major Organization Festivals, Concert Band achieved a Level VI Gold with Distinction Award, Concert Choir achieved a Level VI Gold Award, and the Orchestra achieved a Level IV Gold Award.

This is just a small sample of the many successes BH-BL students accomplish in the classroom, on stage, and on the field throughout the year. To learn more about student and staff achievements throughout the school year, please visit our website and social media channels (Facebook and Twitter) where news, announcements, and photos are shared almost daily! Visit us at www.bhbl.org or follow BH-BL on social media at @BHBLschools.



Congratulations to the O'Rourke Middle School Future City team (Siri Adams, Howard Bearce, Owen Bechtel, Nicole Boyea, Lucas Carey, Nick Clark, Sophia Commisso, Duncan Dauphinee, Owen Emerich, Gavin Heritage, Anya Kotkoskie, Nolan MacFarland, Declan Nerney, Patrick Robbins, Carlie Rzeszotarski, Jenna Vaughan and Ana Zepf) for placing first in the regional competition with model city, Spartageria. The team advanced to the national competition in Washington, D.C. where they competed against 44 teams from the USA, China, and Canada and took home sixth place. "Of the 40,000 students who began this competition at the beginning of the school year, our 17 students ranked among the top 70 students in the country," says Katie Duell, a middle school science teacher and team leader. "This is such an amazing accomplishment." (The Future City team was lead by OMS teachers Katie Duell and Nick Morocco, and parents Jen Wiederhold and Erik LeClair.)

"BH-BL High School was recently marked one of the highest graduation rates in the area—98%—with five students out of the class of 2017 not graduating in June; two of them graduated in August, lifting the school's graduation rate to 99%."

—Daily Gazette, February 2, 2018



Congratulations to BH-BL High School students Jonathan Sinopoli, Noah Wiederhold, and Ava Shimkus who were recognized for their indepth science research projects at the Greater Capital Region Science and Engineering Fair. Jon took home three prizes including the US Metric, Navy, and Air Force awards for his work on concussive forces of firearms. Noah received the US Navy award for his work on biometrics and iris localization, and Ava took home the top prize in water studies for her project on microplastics in Mohawk River Tributaries.

BH-BL



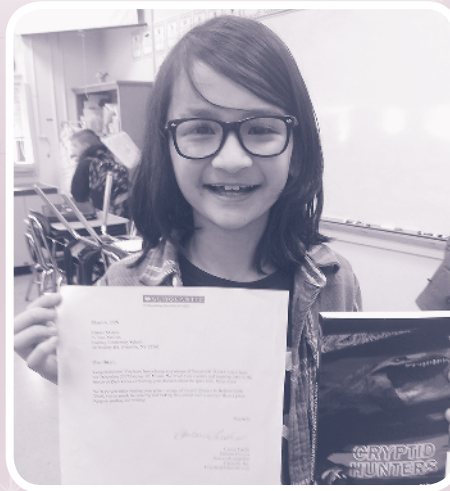


Congratulations to BH-BL High School students Edward Hull, Samantha Whitman, Bradley Albright, Miya Hugaboom and William Halm for being recognized as Commended Students in the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program. They were recognized for their exceptional academic promise demonstrated by their outstanding performance on the PSAT. More than 1.5 million students took the PSATs but these students were among the 34,000 high performers to be named Commended Students nationwide.

Congratulations to BH-BL High School student Mark Piotrowski for being accepted into the NYSSMA Conference All-State Orchestra on bassoon, and to Jessica Landry for being selected as a Conference All-State Alternate on flute.



Congratulations to fourth-grade student Hikaru Matsue for being selected as one of the national winners for the monthly Scholastic Storyworks writing competition.



Congratulations to student artists Amelia Averill, Lauren Bachand, Nicole Boyea, Chloe Davidson, Elena DiSarro, Emeline Fried, Timothy Gallinat, Juliet Hull, Lydia Kammerer, Joseph Largo, Abigail Malagisi, Danny Moak, Julia Morales, Elsa Newman, Emma Pausley, Shianna Ramsaran, Jaxson Soria, and Adam Yerina for having their artwork selected for display at the 30th annual Capital Region BOCES Art Show. Visit bhbl.org to view their work.

Did you know that 62 students were recently inducted into the World Languages Honor Society (photo below) and 70 students were inducted into the school's National Honor Society chapter in April. The society recognizes students for their academic excellence and their stellar service, leadership, and character traits.



Results by the Numbers

85

The percent increase of the number of high school students requesting to enroll in STEAM-related courses for the 2018-19 school year.

16

The number of state championships BH-BL athletes have won over the past 10 years.

786

The number of students who participated on at least one interscholastic athletic team this school year.

25+

The number of years BH-BL has supported the long-standing and successful PEACE Exchange Program. Last year, students went to France, Spain & Germany.



Congratulations to BH-BL High School and Career and Technical Education (CTE) students Alyssa Andrew (left) and Mayanna Hayhurst (right) who will compete in the New York State SkillsUSA competition. Andrew is competing in the first aid/CPR field and Hayhurst is competing in the nursing assistant field. The annual SkillsUSA competitions at the local, regional, state, and national levels enable students to showcase their career and technical, professional, and interpersonal skills and learn more about team work and citizenship.

BH-BL



Board of Education
Jennifer Longtin
President

John Blowers
Vice President
Jennifer Bradt
Don Marshall
James Maughan
Peter Sawyer
Patrick Ziegler

Superintendent
Patrick McGrath Jr.

*Produced in
cooperation with the
Capital Region BOCES
Communications Service
Tara Mitchell, Editor*

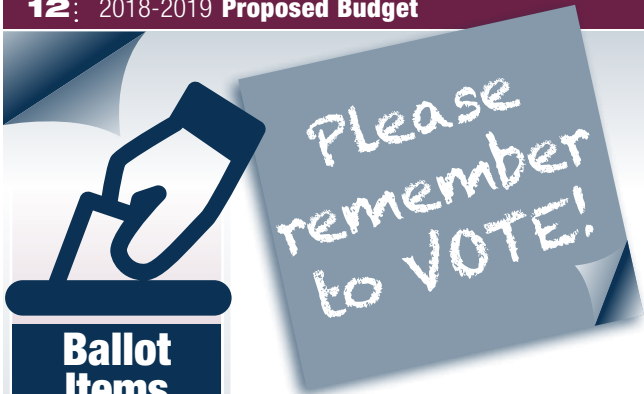
Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake

CENTRAL SCHOOLS

PO Box 1389
Ballston Lake, New York 12019
(518) 399-9141, ext. 85002
www.bhbl.org

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Albany, NY
Permit No. 79

12 2018-2019 Proposed Budget



Ballot Items

✓ The 2018-19
Proposed
Budget

✓ Board of
Education
Candidates

Tuesday, May 15
7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
High School Gym,
88 Lakehill Road,
Burnt Hills



Congratulations to BH-BL High School students (pictured from left) Billie McClosky, Aidan McKenna, Darby Larkin, Seth Gully, Courtney Kruzikas, (not pictured) Hailey Aldrich, Justin Giorgio, Jacob Straub, and Matthew Zoller for being recognized at the YMCA's 31st Annual Awards ceremony as Outstanding Students. BH-BL High School Social Worker Tara LaMalfa was also recognized as an Outstanding Educator.

👍 Voter Qualifications

All voters must be United States citizens, age 18 or older on election day, residents of the BH-BL school district for 30 days immediately prior to election day, and registered.

👍 Registering to Vote

You are already registered to vote on May 15 if you are registered with your county Board of Elections to vote in a general election.

👍 Absentee Ballots

Registered voters may vote by absentee ballot if they are unable to appear at the polling place on May 15.

To receive an absentee ballot, first fill out an application from Clerk of the Board Christopher Abdo at the district office. The application can also be downloaded from the BH-BL website at www.bhbl.org/budget/voterinformation.cfm

The completed application must be

returned to Christopher Abdo at least seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or at least one day before the election if the ballot is to be picked up personally by the voter at the district office from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Absentee ballots will be counted only if they are returned to the clerk of the board no later than 5 p.m. on election day, May 15. For more information, contact Christopher Abdo at 518-399-9141, ext. 85025.

BH-BL

