



# 2026-27 Budget Development Plan & Calendar

## BUDGET OBJECTIVES

In developing the budget, the Board of Education aims for:

- 1. Student-Centered Programming:** Advance innovative programs and professional development that equip students with the skills and knowledge essential to thrive in a complex global environment and become engaged citizens.
- 2. Fiscal Responsibility:** Achieve short- and long-term fiscal balance between community desires for excellent education and reasonable taxes. This requires critical evaluation of current and proposed spending, alongside consideration of additional funding streams beyond taxes.
- 3. Advocacy:** Closely track state-level decisions on aid, policy and regulation to effectively advocate for the interests of students.

## CONTEXT FOR DEVELOPING THE 2026-27 BUDGET

As we approach the budget development process for the 2026-27 budget year, we want to build upon the processes used in the past as well as account for the different revenue environment we find ourselves in moving forward. One particular area of uncertainty is the amount of State Aid we will be receiving in the 2026-27 school year. On July 4, 2025 the federal government passed Public Law 119-21 (aka One, Big, Beautiful Bill). While it does not appear that this bill has any direct material impact on education funding, it's been advised that it does significantly reduce the amount of funding for the state's medicaid program. The two largest areas of NYS spending are healthcare and school aid for elementary and secondary education. It's possible the state might consider changes to education funding in order to address the reduction in federal funding for medicaid. Our goal for the 2026-27 budget process is to work through this uncertainty to develop a student-centered, forward thinking educational plan that carefully evaluates the educational and financial impact of that plan over the short and long term.

1. We have received initial guidance that the increase for the district's commercial insurance-plans (Blueshield and CDPHP) will again be greater than 10% for 2026-27. This is going to present a significant challenge to the budgeting process as every 1% increase in the budget for health insurance is approximately \$112,000. Note that a 3% increase in the district's tax levy yields approximately \$1,428,000. It is possible that even if the district increases the tax levy by 3% for 2026-27, this will not be enough to cover this single item. The magnitude of this increase is going to greatly limit our options for the 2026-27 school year.
2. The district has settled contracts with all employees for the 2026-27 school year with the exception of the Teachers' Association and Management Confidential employees. The impact of those negotiations, particularly with the Teachers' Association, may have a significant impact on the development of the 2026-27 budget.
3. We continue to see a large growth in the number and cost of out-of-district placements for our students with IEPs. At this time, these costs have increased by more than \$500,000 over what was originally planned for the 2025-26 budget year. It appears that the majority of these placements will carr -over into the 2026-27 budget year, and, as such, will be a significant area of increase that the district will need to address.
4. Since the 2016-17 school year, weighted average tax rate increases have averaged 1.26% due to controlled expenditure growth and increased assessed value from new construction in the district. It should be noted that the weighted average increase in the district's tax rates over this time period is significantly less than the rate of inflation over the same time period
5. BH-BL is fortunate its residents by and large support high-quality programs when balanced by reasonable taxes. The May 2025 budget proposition, which was within the district's tax levy cap, was approved by nearly 72% of district voters.

## CALENDAR OF BUDGET & ELECTION ACTIVITIES

- Mid-Jan.** Announcement of Governor's budget proposals
- Feb. 4 • W** Budget update during regular BOE Mtg, 6 p.m., Boardroom
- Feb. 13 • F** Compiled budget requests & reference materials shared with BOE
- Feb. 26 • W** Finance Committee Mtg, 5 p.m., (Regular BOE Mtg to follow at 6 p.m.) Submit tax levy limit information to state comptroller (March 1)
- Mar. 11 • W** Finance Committee Mtg, 5 p.m., HS Boardroom (Regular BOE Mtg to follow at 6 p.m.) Approve referenda & notice of annual mtg
- Mar. 25 • W** Finance Committee Mtg, 5 p.m., HS Boardroom (Regular BOE Mtg to follow at 6 p.m.)
- April 3-10:** Spring Recess NO SCHOOL
- April 15 • W** 2026-27 Budget Forum, 6 pm, HS Boardroom
- April 16 • Th** Finance Committee Mtg (if needed)
- April 20 • M** BOE candidates' filing deadline, 5 p.m.
- April 22 • W** Adopt Proposed 2026-27 Budget as part of regular BOE Mtg; Property Tax Report Card submitted to SED
- April 24 • F** Draft budget newsletter to BOE (tentative)
- April 29 • W** Budget update during regular BOE Mtg, budget materials available in all schools & on district website
- May 6 • W** Budget Hearing as part of regular BOE Mtg, 6 p.m., Boardroom
- May 7-18** Outreach to inform school groups & community about 2026-27 budget
- May 7 • Th** Budget notice & newsletter mailed to residents
- May 13 • W** Meet-the-Candidates Night, 7 p.m., location TBD

**May 19 • Tu** School Budget Vote, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., BH-BL High School Gymnasium