

The Reader

Dear Ballston Spa Community – The 2020-21 budget development process has been a challenging one from the start. In the early stages in November and December, we were anticipating decreases in revenue from our Global Foundries payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreement and were adjusting accordingly. Since that time, we have planned for additional losses of revenue in the form of tuition payments from other districts for our special education programs. These two revenue losses alone totaled over \$1 million. With the COVID-19 closure, the budget development process including the vote and the Board of Education election processes have become very different and have, not surprisingly, brought additional losses in revenue. Our loss of interest on earnings, for example, is nearly \$200,000 and we have been told by both the Governor and the Comptroller that we should expect a drastic reduction in our state aid over the course of the coming year. While we do not know exactly which component of our aid will be reduced, we do know that the reduction will occur over the course of three separate “measurement periods” in the year ahead and may be up to 20% of our aid total. Given that state aid makes up approximately 31% of our revenues, the District will need to be prepared to react to a constantly changing environment and try to minimize the impact this will have on students and their families. The proposed budget includes that flexibility which includes further reductions in expenditures including staffing. With this context in mind, in the proposed budget the District will:

1. Maintain as much student instructional and student support programming as possible. This includes:
 - a. Continued development and support of a cohesive curriculum across K-8 schools (reading, math, and science)
 - b. Continued support of AP, IB, PTech, and CTE options for high school students
 - c. The introduction of a K-5 social-emotional learning curriculum to be provided by our school counselors
 - d. Continued support of our sports and arts programs.
2. Limit increases in expenditures – currently an increase of 1.3% over last year’s budget.
3. Balance the maintenance of a strong program for students with reductions in staff, use of our reserve funds, and what we are asking the taxpayers to support through the tax levy. This year’s proposed tax levy increase is 3.53%.
 - a. While at first the 3.53% increase may seem high in these economic times, the projected actual tax increase averages 1.35% across our four towns. The reason for this is that our District has again experienced tremendous growth in new taxable properties, both residential and commercial. This growth, in turn, offsets the proposed tax levy for current taxpayers.
 - b. The District’s tax cap (maximum allowable tax levy increase) is 6.7% which, if fully implemented, would generate an additional \$1,661,000 above what is raised through our proposed 3.53% tax levy increase. Needless to say, we simply could not responsibly recommend this increase, particularly in our current context. (See back page.)

These are extraordinary times that we are living in. We are working diligently to adjust to them and to maintain programs that will advantage our students as they enter a world of increasing unknowns. Accordingly, their knowledge, skills, wellness, and citizen-readiness have arguably never been more important. We remain grateful to the community for your partnership in this work.

For additional information on the budget, on the June 9 mail-in only budget vote and Board of Education election, please see detailed information on our website [HERE](#).

Budget Vote Dates:

May 27 Public Hearing on 2020-2021 Budget

June 2 Voter Registration Day

June 9 Budget Vote and Board of Education Election



Gordon Creek Elementary School students engaged in new reading program



Ballston Spa High School Book Club member reads at Saratoga County Animal Shelter

The Ballston Spa Central School District

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www.bscsd.org

Propositions on the Ballot

In addition to the school budget (which is Proposition I on the ballot) voters will consider the following separate propositions:

Proposition II: School Vehicle Replacement

The district will spend up to \$968,000 to purchase and replace school buses and vehicles.

Proposition III: Ballston Spa Public Library

The district will be authorized to collect and contribute \$58,795 towards the expense of operating the public library.

Board of Education Elections

There are two full term (three year) Board seats up for election this year, commencing in July 2020. Interested voters will select from the following candidates at the polls: Matthew Dreher, Rebekah Deuel-Jones, Susan Filburn, Lillian McCarthy, Susan Moore, David Newell, and Katie Whittemore.

Board of Education candidate information is being posted on the district website. A "Meet the Candidates" video is being produced by our Ballston Spa High School video production team so voters can learn more about this year's candidates. Voters are encouraged to review information provided by this year's candidates before voting and returning their ballot by June 9, 2020.

2020-2021 Expenditures and Revenues

	2019-2020 Budget	2020-2021 Budget	Change	
			Dollars (\$)	Percent (%)
Expenditures				
Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$71,427,005	\$72,766,745	\$1,339,740	1.9%
Supplies, Materials, Equipment	\$3,124,779	\$2,934,746	-\$190,033	-6.1%
Contracted Services	\$5,103,281	\$5,027,892	-\$75,389	-1.5%
BOCES	\$5,402,944	\$5,483,596	\$80,652	1.5%
Utilities	\$1,294,200	\$1,253,100	-\$41,100	-3.2%
Debt Service & Transfers	\$5,677,938	\$5,792,556	\$114,618	2.0%
Total	\$92,030,147	\$93,258,635	\$1,228,488	1.3%
Revenues				
State Aid	\$28,691,297	\$29,031,594	\$340,297	1.2%
PILOTS	\$7,138,000	\$6,230,000	-\$908,000	-12.7%
Other Sources*	\$3,186,000	\$2,773,400	-\$412,600	-13.0%
Fund Balance/Reserves	\$1,000,000	\$1,375,000	\$375,000	37.5%
Real Property Tax	\$52,014,850	\$53,848,641	\$1,833,791	3.5%
Total	\$92,030,147	\$93,258,635	\$1,228,488	1.3%

* Other Sources of Revenue include federal aid, charges to other districts, interest earnings, and other miscellaneous sources.



**Average Assessed Home
in District:**

\$253,710

Average Tax Impact:

\$52 Per Year

Vote June 9, 2020

The annual statewide School Budget Vote and Board of Education Elections will be held by mail in June 2020. District residents need to return their ballot by mail or drop at the District Office before 5:00pm on June 9, 2020.

School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2019-20 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2020-21 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2020-21 School Year
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$92,030,147	\$93,258,635	\$91,424,844
Increase/Decrease for 2020-21 School Year		\$1,228,488	(\$605,303)
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		1.33%	-0.7%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.81%	
A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$52,014,850	\$53,848,641	
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)	\$52,014,850	\$53,848,641	\$52,014,850
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$1,463,323	\$1,603,946	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$51,377,488	\$53,906,066	
H. Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, Excluding Permissible Exclusions and Levy for Library Debt, Plus Prior Year Tax Cap Reserve (E - B - F + D)	\$50,551,527	\$52,244,695	
I. Difference: (G - H): Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval	\$825,961	\$1,661,371	
Administrative Component	\$9,293,771	\$9,207,492	\$9,090,904
Program Component	\$69,707,144	\$70,917,474	\$70,021,311
Capital Component	\$13,029,232	\$13,133,669	\$12,312,629
Contingency Budget Assumptions: A contingent budget would result in the reduction and/or elimination of certain expenses such as equipment, supplies, and personnel as determined by the Board of Education. In all, a contingent budget would require \$1,833,791 in reductions.			
List of separate propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount:	Description		Amount
	School District Buses & Vehicles		\$968,000
	Ballston Spa Public Library		\$58,795

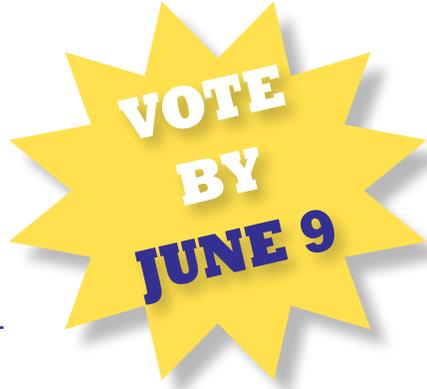
	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2020-21 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings	\$607

In accordance with Executive Order, the annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2020-2021 by the qualified voters of the Ballston Spa Central School District, Saratoga County, New York, will be held exclusively by absentee ballot. All absentee ballots must be received by the School District no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9, 2020. A ballot may be mailed to the School District using the postage prepaid envelope provided with the ballot or dropped off in the same envelope at 70 Malta Avenue, Ballston Spa. **All return envelopes with ballots must be completed and signed by the voter as required and received by the School District no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 9, 2020, to be counted.**

Ballston Spa Central School District

70 Malta Avenue
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

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Written by Stuart J. Williams, *Coordinator of Community Relations*
Layout/Design by Patricia Ball, *Assistant to the Superintendent*

Boxholder
Ballston Spa Central
School District

The Reader

Spring 2020

Upcoming Events June 2020

June 4 – Senior Awards, BSHS, broadcasted virtually

June 9 – Budget Vote and BOE Elections, Ballots due by 5:00 pm

* Senior Prom, postponed until August 1, 2020, *pending approvals*

* High School Graduation, postponed until August 4, 2020, *pending approvals*

Up-to-date information is located on the district website's events calendar. Please check often for the latest information, or call the appropriate school office.

District Budget and Vote Information

The annual statewide School Budget Vote and Board of Education Elections will be held by mail with ballots due back to the district by 5:00 pm on June 9, 2020.

The Board of Education recently approved the proposed 2020-21 district budget. Voters are encouraged to review the information in this newsletter to learn more about the budget and propositions on the ballot before voting by June 9. Please visit the website for additional details and/or contact us for more information. In addition, residents may call the district's budget hotline with specific questions for the Assistant Superintendent for Business at 518-884-7195 ext. 1320.

If a resident of the school district meets the definition of a "qualified voter" but has not registered to vote, (s)he must register to be eligible to receive a ballot. A qualified voter may register with the county by contacting the **Saratoga County Board of Elections**, or at the district's registration day on June 2, 2020.

Questions and comments may be sent via the comments section on the district website at www.bscsd.org or call the District Office at 518-884-7195.

What Happened to the 2% Tax Cap Limit?

This has been a consistent question since the tax cap legislation went into effect in 2012. To start, the tax cap legislation limits tax levy increases to the lesser of the rate of inflation **or** 2%. BUT THEN, to establish their actual tax cap, each school district must go through eight additional calculations which may result in a limit above 2%, as is our case, or below 2%. These calculations include a tax base growth factor, PILOT payments, and capital expenditures (building projects and purchases of buses, for example). For BSCSD, once these calculations were completed, our actual tax cap for the 2020-21 school year – the amount that we may recommend for a tax levy – is 6.7%. However, the proposed tax levy for 2020-21 is 3.5%.