

Official Newsletter of the District

Budget Newsletter 2010

Babylon *Highlights*

UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRESERVING PROGRAMS WHILE MINIMIZING COSTS

LOWEST 2-YEAR CONSECUTIVE TAX RATE INCREASE SINCE 1972!

The district's Board of Education has adopted a proposed budget for the 2010-2011 school year that calls for a 2.43% budget-to-budget spending increase (the lowest in 18 years) and a tax rate increase of 1.93% (the lowest two-year consecutive tax rate increase since 1972).

Every year, the Board of Education spends months reviewing all areas of spending to develop a proposed budget to present to the community for approval. This year, as the nation faced a declining economy, creating a budget that not only meets the needs of students, but also is mindful of the impact on the taxpayer, was an extremely challenging task. State-imposed mandates, industrywide retirement system increases, and a reduction in State Aid all put tremendous pressure on the Board and administration as they worked to craft the proposed budget.

Despite the many challenges the district is facing, the Board is pleased to present a 2010-2011 proposed budget that maintains the district's full instructional program, meets all of the district's financial obligations, and contains the impact on the community's taxpayers.

Please review the information included in this publication and remember to vote on May 18th!



THE PROPOSED 2010-2011 BUDGET

- Provides for the purchase of instructional supplies and equipment at current year levels
- Continues the districtwide maintenance initiative
- Increases the appropriation for instructional technology through a multiyear financial plan
- Maintains a safe and secure learning environment
- Enables students to remain competitive in today's global society

EVERY VOTE COUNTS!

**TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2010
6 A.M.-9 P.M.
BABYLON MEMORIAL GRADE SCHOOL**

A Message From Your **SUPERINTENDENT**

Dear Community Members,

You have undoubtedly been aware of the critical economic environment we are currently experiencing and how that has influenced our state and federal governments, in particular with regards to State Aid. As of this publication in late April, New York State has not met its April 1st deadline for setting the State budget. This development is one that posed a serious challenge for our district's Board of Education and administration as we worked to prepare a proposed budget for the 2010-2011 school year.

The Board of Education and I take our responsibility to create an environment that provides a quality, well-rounded education for all students very seriously. We are also mindful of our commitment and responsibility to the community to present a proposed school budget that is cost effective. As in previous years, the Board of Education and administration have spent a considerable amount of time examining current expenditures and analyzing projected enrollment, staffing needs, and expenditure increases mandated by the State. A careful balance between the responsibility we have to our students and the responsibility we have to our community's taxpayers led to the development of our 2010-2011 proposed budget.

With the governor's budget proposal in hand, which reflects a \$683,527 reduction in State Aid for Babylon, the district worked diligently to draft a proposed budget that not only maintains our outstanding educational program and funds the initiatives planned for the 2010-2011 school year, but also contains costs.

As a result of our strong financial planning, a decrease in our projected enrollment, and staff reductions through attrition, I am proud to say that we have been able to reach this goal. The result of our planning is a proposed 2010-2011 budget that carries a **2.43% budget-to-budget increase, the lowest we have seen in 18 years and a projected tax rate increase of 1.93%, which is the lowest two-year consecutive tax rate increase we have seen in 38 years.**

The Board of Education and administration urge all residents to review the proposed budget and exercise your right to vote on Tuesday, May 18th from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Babylon Memorial Grade School. Please feel free to contact my office with any questions or, to learn more about the budget, please join us at our budget hearing on Monday, May 10th at 7:30 p.m. at the High School.

Sincerely,

Ellen Best-Laimit



COST-SAVING *Initiatives*

Throughout the school year the district's administrative team and Board of Education proactively looks for ways to reduce costs and control spending across the board. This includes applying for educational grants and purchasing natural gas at barge prices. Additionally, through an energy performance contract, the district projects it will realize a **\$190,145 savings in energy related costs (electricity, gas, and fuel).**

Tax Exemption for Rescue Workers

The Babylon Board of Education authorized the firefighter tax exemption that gives volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers residing in the community a 10% reduction on school taxes for the 2010-2011 school year. To qualify, volunteer emergency workers must live in the home for which a reduction is requested, and have served the community for at least five years. Only one exemption per property is permitted.

BABYLON'S POINTS OF PRIDE

INDICATORS OF YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK



ACADEMICALLY SPEAKING

Babylon HS Class of 2009: 144 Graduates

- **96% Regents Diploma Rate**
- **92% are attending college**
- **12 AP Scholars**
- **268 AP Exams administered**
- 2010 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist & Finalist
- 2010 Rensselaer Medal Winner
- 2010 National Merit Estee and Joseph Lauder Scholarship Recipient
- Outstanding HS Graduation Rate (99%)
- Named 2009 "Top School" in NYS in the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth Talent Search
- Integrated curriculum aligned with New York State Learning Standards
- High percentage of students meet and exceed proficiency levels on New York State assessments
- Differentiated learning strategies
- College-level courses offered in collaboration with St. John's University, Syracuse University, LIU C.W. Post, and Suffolk Community College
- Distance learning program for American Sign Language
- Students participate in unique virtual classroom experience for AP Calculus BC
- 11 AP courses offered, including new AP Studio Art 2D
- Technology-integrated curriculum, utilizing state-of-the-art technology tools
- Research-based and evidence-supported instructional programs

- Comprehensive Literacy Collaborative Program
- Successful Co-Teaching Model for Learning
- Effective student/teacher ratio
- Staff development opportunities provided to teachers by renowned experts in all fields
- Staff members participate and present during professional conferences
- Award-winning staff members

CO-CURRICULAR HIGHLIGHTS

- Comprehensive Fine and Performing Arts Program
- High percentage of students participate in NYSSMA with outstanding results
- Student-musicians selected for All-County and All-State Music Festivals
- NYS Scholar-Athlete Teams
- Numerous sports team members named All-League, All-Conference, and All-County student-athletes
- Student-athletes selected to sign National Letters of Intent with top colleges/universities
- Dedicated and civic-minded student-based National Honor Societies
- High-performing DECA organization
- 5 Students participated in LI Challenge in NYC
- Community-minded student councils
- Outstanding theater productions
- Supportive parent organizations
- PTA Reflections Contest winners



PROPOSED 2010-2011 School Budget

2009-2010 Budget

2010-2011 Proposed Budget

Difference

GENERAL SUPPORT

Board of Education: The elected, seven-member Board serves the community without pay. Its responsibilities include proposing/promoting a budget, levying taxes, meeting requirements set by State law, and setting educational policy. Expenditures incurred include costs for conducting Board business, plus salary and expenses for the District Clerk's Office, and the annual district meeting.

Board of Education	\$10,200	\$10,200	\$0
District Clerk	17,871	18,250	379
District Meeting	7,545	7,545	0
Total	\$35,616	\$35,995	\$379

Central Administration: Services of Central Administration include the Superintendent's Office, Business Administration, Personnel, Treasurer, Auditing, Legal Services, and District Publications.

Staff/Operation of Chief School Admin.	\$278,338	\$277,536	\$(802)
Business Administration	460,607	474,544	13,937
Auditing	103,484	105,765	2,281
Treasurer's Office	14,052	14,150	98
Legal Services	160,000	160,000	0
Personnel	53,494	51,268	(2,226)
Public Information	67,258	70,000	2,742
Total	\$1,137,233	\$1,153,263	\$16,030

Central Services: Operations and maintenance expenses for maintaining the district's three buildings and grounds. Expenditures include costs for personnel services, equipment, contractual expenses, supplies, and materials. Central Services also includes districtwide printing costs and BOCES data processing.

Plant Operation	\$2,599,268	\$2,386,867	\$(212,401)
Plant Maintenance	753,059	799,760	46,701
Central Printing	32,799	33,207	408
BOCES Data Processing	105,100	107,600	2,500
Total	\$3,490,226	\$3,327,434	\$(162,792)

Special Items: This category includes cost for the district's insurance, which provides for general liability, property insurance, student accident insurance, and vehicle insurance. Also included are BOCES administrative charges, school association dues, and unclassified items.

Unallocated Insurance	\$211,400	\$222,000	\$10,600
School Association Dues	22,000	22,000	0
Special Items/MTA Payroll Tax	0	68,290	68,290
BOCES-Administrative Charge	124,202	126,200	1,998
Total	\$357,602	\$438,490	\$80,888

SCHOOL BUDGET BREAKDOWN

	2009-2010 Budget	2010-2011 Proposed Budget	Difference
INSTRUCTION			
<i>Curriculum Development and Supervision: Expenditures in this category include costs for districtwide development, coordination, supervision, and administration of instructional programs. Supervision includes salaries for the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, building principals, directors, administrative assistants, and clerical staff. Also included are costs for in-service training.</i>			
Curriculum Development & Supervision	\$1,413,166	\$1,381,379	\$(31,787)
<i>Instruction – Regular School: Expenditures in this category include salaries for K-12 classroom teachers, substitutes, and classroom aides and monitors. Also included are expenses for instructional equipment, textbooks, contractual expenses, and tuition to BOCES for vocational students.</i>			
Instruction – Regular School	\$15,004,016	\$14,786,505	\$(217,511)
<i>Services for Handicapped Children: This portion of the budget includes instructional programs and services for students with handicapping conditions. These services are mandated by federal and state education laws. Costs cover administrative, teacher, and support staff salaries, supplies, equipment, and tuition charges for BOCES and other special schools outside the district.</i>			
Services for Handicapped Children	\$5,388,797	\$5,914,234	\$525,437
<i>Teaching – Special Schools (Summer School): This category covers the costs associated with the Elementary Summer School Program. Included are teaching and support staff salaries and supplies.</i>			
Summer School	\$62,580	\$25,238	\$(37,342)
<i>Instructional Media: This segment of the budget provides salaries for librarians, aides, and monies for audiovisual equipment, film, video rental, and purchase of computer hardware, software, and repairs.</i>			
Instructional Media	\$1,011,749	\$1,133,105	\$121,356
<i>Support Services: Programs included in this code are attendance, guidance, health services, and psychological and social worker services. Parental notification of student absences continues to promote high attendance. Additional expenditures include salaries for school nurses, supplies, equipment, and contract services.</i>			
Support Services	\$1,708,395	\$1,667,519	\$(40,876)
<i>Co-curricular & Interscholastic Activities: Expenditures in this code cover expenses for school plays, bands, chorus, orchestra, yearbooks, newspapers, and the district's interscholastic athletic programs. Also included are expenses for coaches' salaries, athletic department purchases and repairs, officials' fees, and costs of maintaining all athletic teams.</i>			
Co-curricular & Interscholastic Activities	\$860,954	\$854,139	\$(6,815)
Instruction Total	\$25,449,657	\$25,762,119	\$312,462

PROPOSED 2010-2011 SCHOOL BUDGET BREAKDOWN

	2009-2010 Budget	2010-2011 Proposed Budget	Difference
PUPIL TRANSPORTATION			
<i>Pupil Transportation: Costs for transporting to and from public, private, and parochial schools, field trips, and athletic events are within this code. Clerical staff salaries and supplies are also included.</i>			
Pupil Transportation	\$2,243,662	\$2,075,711	\$(167,951)
Transportation Total	\$2,243,662	\$2,075,711	\$(167,951)
UNDISTRIBUTED EXPENSES			
<i>Undistributed Expenses: This category includes employee benefit expenditures and debt service. Employee benefits are mandated and regulated by negotiated contracts. Debt service expenditures are also mandated and represent the cost incurred to retire scheduled long-term debt payments. It also includes the cost of borrowing money to meet cash flow requirements.</i>			
Employee Benefits	\$8,265,389	\$8,605,911	\$340,522
Debt Service	2,804,493	3,449,839	645,346
Interfund Transfers	45,000	45,000	0
Undistributed Expense Total	\$11,114,882	\$12,100,750	\$985,868
TOTAL BUDGET	\$43,828,878	\$44,893,762	\$1,064,884

ESTIMATED REVENUE FOR THE PROPOSED 2010-2011 BUDGET

	2009-2010 Budget	2010-2011 Proposed Budget	Difference
State Aid	\$8,204,318	\$7,520,791	\$(683,527)
Energy Performance Contract Aid	0	151,836	151,836
Babylon Public Library Debt Reimb.	0	385,214	385,214
MTA Tax Reimbursement	0	67,260	67,260
Misc. Income	360,906	363,050	2,144
Appropriated Fund Balance	1,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
Property Tax Levy	33,763,654	34,405,611	641,957
Total Revenue	\$43,828,878	\$44,893,762	\$1,064,884

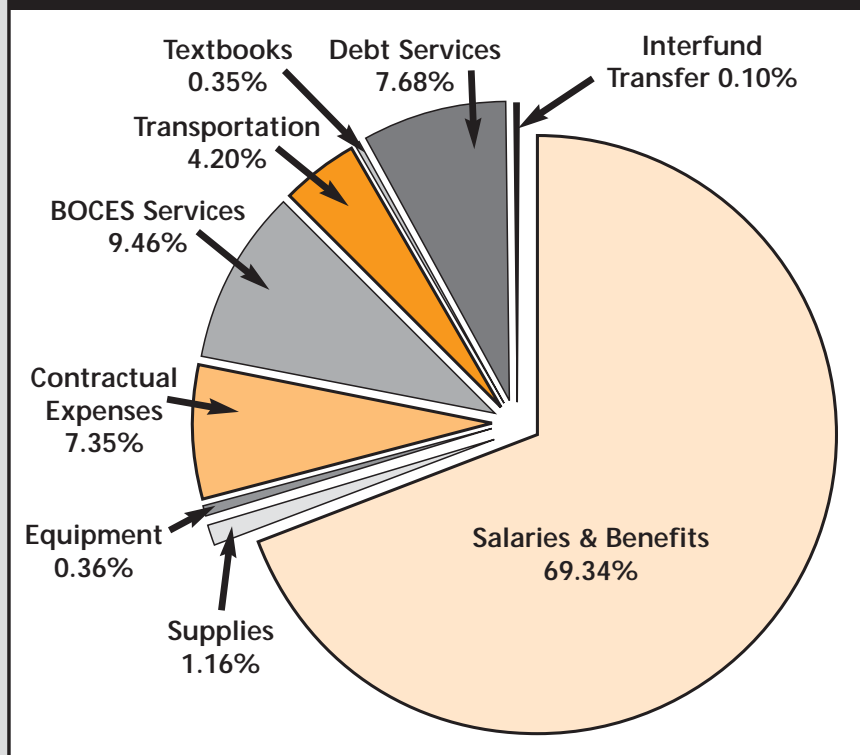
ESTIMATED COST TO THE BABYLON HOMEOWNER*

	2009-2010	2010-2011	Additional Cost Per Year	Additional Cost Per Month
Tax Rate Per \$100	\$182.95	\$186.47		
Home Assessed at \$4,000	\$7,318	\$7,459	\$141	\$11.75
Home Assessed at \$5,000	\$9,147	\$9,324	\$177	\$14.75
Home Assessed at \$6,000	\$10,977	\$11,188	\$211	\$17.58

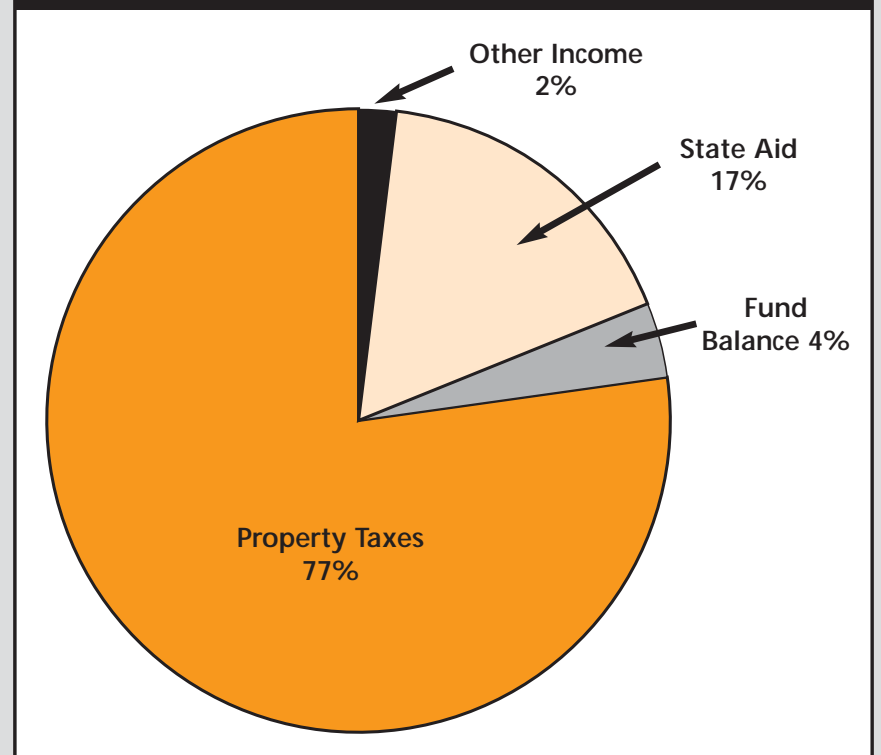
* The average assessed value of a home in Babylon is \$4,299.

UNDERSTANDING THE BUDGET...

EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN



REVENUE BREAKDOWN



Questions & Answers

Q. What happens if the budget fails on May 18th?

A. If the budget is defeated on May 18th, State law allows the district to present either the same budget or a revised budget, which could be either higher or lower than the first and include program cuts, for one more vote. If a second proposed budget is defeated, the district must, by law, adopt a Contingency Budget.

Q. What is a Contingency (Austerity) Budget?

A. A Contingency Budget is the maximum amount authorized by law that a district can impose on the community if the school budget is defeated. New York State imposes a cap on a Contingency Budget, which would result in a 0% expenditure increase plus an allowance for such excludable expenses as enrollment increases. **A 0% Contingency Budget does not equate to a 0% tax levy increase.**

Q. How would a Contingency Budget affect our district?

A. A Contingency Budget would have a negative impact on the quality of education the district has experienced over the past several years. **This would definitely**

result in cuts to programs and/or services.

Additionally, the Board may choose to eliminate other items to allow for restructuring under the contingency regulations.

Q. Are there any limitations to what can be funded when operating under a Contingency Budget?

A. Yes. Under the regulations of a Contingency Budget the district would not be permitted to:

- purchase new equipment
- purchase student supplies
- allow community or outside groups to use district facilities without charging a fee

Q. Where can I get more information?

A. Complete copies of the proposed 2010-2011 Babylon budget are available in the district office. Reference copies are available for inspection at all district schools. Budget information is also available on our district website at www.babylonschools.org. Residents with questions on the budget can also contact Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ellen Best-Laimit at 893-7925, or Deputy Superintendent Dr. Peter Daly at 893-7914.

THE BABYLON SCHOOL DISTRICT
50 RAILROAD AVENUE
BABYLON, NY 11702

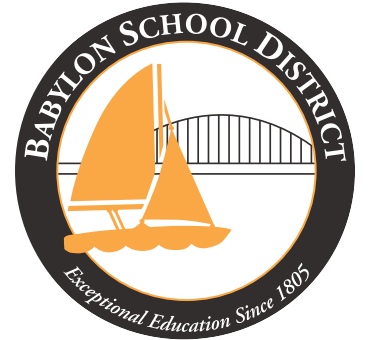
Board of Education:

Judy Anderson, *President*
Henry Brunjes, *Vice President*
Roger A. Katz
AnneMarie Martino
Lisa McKeown
Thomas Melito
Catherine Vukovich

Dr. Ellen Best-Laimit
Superintendent of Schools

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REMEMBER TO VOTE

Be a part of Babylon's future!

PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
Monday, May 10, 2010 • 7:30 p.m.
Babylon Junior-Senior High School

BUDGET VOTE TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2010
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Babylon Memorial Grade School

Unable to Vote in Person? **Apply for an Absentee Ballot**

Residents who are registered to vote but are unable to cast their ballots on the school budget during the district's designated polling times of 6:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. are encouraged to obtain an absentee ballot application from the District Clerk. Please contact the Clerk's Office at 893-7923 or visit the district's website, www.babylonschools.org, for an application form.

BOARD ELECTION

There are two vacancies to be filled on the Board of Education. Voting is at-large, which means the two candidates with the highest number of votes will be elected. The terms for these positions are three years, starting July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2013. Incumbent Thomas Melito is seeking reelection, and Dominic Bencivenga and Nora Jean Gaare are seeking election.

VOTER INFORMATION

OPEN VOTER REGISTRATION

Residents not yet registered to vote for the school budget and Board of Education elections may do so between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. weekdays when school is in session, at the District Office, 50 Railroad Avenue, up to and including Tuesday, May 13, 2010.

To verify your registration status, please call the District Clerk at 893-7923.

VOTING QUALIFICATIONS

To vote on the proposed 2010-2011 school budget and Board of Education election, you must be:

- A U.S. citizen
- 18 years of age or older
- A district resident for at least 30 days prior to the vote
- Registered to vote with either the school district or Suffolk County Board of Elections and have voted within the past four years.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Applications for absentee ballots can be obtained at the District Clerk's Office or on the district's website. If you need the application mailed, please call the District Clerk's Office at 893-7923.

Absentee ballots **MUST** be returned by 5 p.m. on May 18th.