

PROPOSED 2011-2012 BUDGET:

Creating Efficiencies to Preserve Programs

Through the years our community has been supportive of the Board of Education's efforts to add rigor to the academic program in favor of higher student achievement. Students have been provided with a full, well-rounded education rich with academics, and rewarding electives, as well as extracurricular and athletic offerings that have delivered results. While the fiscal climate continues to challenge the Board's ability to do this-highlighted by a cut in New York State Aid of about \$2.1 million and increased mandatory operational costs- we are pleased to announce that all viable core academic programs and extracurricular programs, while restructured, are funded in the proposed 2011-12 school district budget. Efficiencies within many of these programs have been created, and while we have been forced to make reductions, the budget responsibly balances the needs of children with the means of taxpayers and carries one of the lowest tax increases in years.

The proposed budget for 2011-12 carries a 0.66% increase in expenditures with a projected tax levy increase of 3.0% based on the losses in state aid and other revenues. We encourage the community to read this edition of The Tide

carefully and exercise your right to vote on Tuesday, May 17. Hard copies of the entire proposed budget are available in each school building and at the Amityville Public Library.



A strong program demonstrating...

YOUR TAX DOLLAR\$ AT WORK

Amityville students at all levels continue to benefit from the state-of-the-art education resources thanks to the community's support and aggressive pursuit of outside sources of funding, including grants.

This year the focus has been on aligning curriculum across the elementary and secondary grade levels to ensure smooth transitions and student successes as they progress in their education. Recent network upgrades, and the implementation of SMART Boards, state-of-the art computers and the latest in educational software engage the students in every classroom. Learning has never been more interesting, as iPads are now being introduced into ESL classrooms.



The assessment of our programs is ongoing. A reading series implemented at Northeast, Northwest and Park Avenue Memorial schools has been well received by students, parents, and teachers. Adaptive software applications such as Scholastic's Read 180 and System 44 are putting struggling readers on track. This year, we introduced Expert 21 which utilizes video and other media to accelerate students at Edmund W. Miles Middle School beyond basic literacy proficiency to thrive in the 21st Century.

Amityville Union Free School District 150 Park Avenue Amityville, NY 11701

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Programs like Everyday Math and Scholastic's FASTT Math software are making math more handson and fun, through use of the web and games to teach and reinforce key skills that help draw correlations to math and the real world. Everyday Math is another solid program that was piloted this year.

The State and federal governments have lauded our Virtual Academy as a model for Blended Learning and a means to provide students with more electives and more options while saving on costs.

Innovation Across Grade Levels, Subjects

Leading-edge instructional technology innovations implemented for students in the last 2 years that span across grade levels and subject areas, including extracurricular:

- Amityville TV (AMHS student broadcasts)
- E-Pods, iPads, & iMovie for ESL Students
- Music & Art Tech Labs
- SmartBoards (every classroom)
- Web Design Classes
- Read 180 & System 44 (adaptive software)
- FASTT Math (research-based software)
- Study Island, BrainPop, Discovery Ed (online)
- Wireless Infrastructure & Mobile Laptops
- Technology Infrastructure Upgrades

Thanks to Distance Learning, students are taking more virtual trips in science than ever before, interacting with professionals from NASA and other interesting places to which they may not normally have access. The same can be said for other subject areas, including social studies, where guest speakers are often brought in to share their first-hand experiences of current and past events of significance.

We are proud to continue offering a wide variety of Advanced Placement (AP) courses, which provide students with rigorous, college-level classes and the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both. Programs such as AP Literature & Composition, College Writing, College Accounting, Public Speaking, and AP math and science courses prepare students for post secondary education and the workforce, regardless of what their ultimate career choice may be.

Character Education continues to be an important component of our curriculum. Children are taught to act responsibly, compassionately and courteously to their peers and elders. With the ongoing districtwide Character Counts initiative, and the work of the Amityville Memorial High School WAC Club, students are demonstrating acts of kindness and good citizenship from the moment they enter our schools to beyond graduation.

These initiatives, and many more, not only enhance teaching and learning and inspire students to achieve success, they maximize resources and provide the most student-effective and cost-efficient experience for all.

A Message from your Superintendent



Dear Amityville Resident,

Every year, the Board of Education and administration set out to develop a school district budget that provides the best curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular programs possible within our taxpayers' fiscal means.

This year has been like none other for which I can recall. New York State has cut the amount of aid to our district by \$2.1 million. Simultaneously, substantial increases in operating costs play a significant role in the budget this year. This includes mandated obligations to the Employee Retirement System that are determined by New York State Comptroller's Office (based on stock market performance) as well as increased health insurance premiums that are determined by providers, which also must be funded by law.

As I reported in the last edition of *The Tide*, we continue to provide a well-rounded education that is sparking student interest and achievement, as evidenced by some of the points of pride on the following page, which is just a snapshot of what's happening in and around our schools. The Board and I are committed to educating our children for the future and improving upon their recent successes. To achieve this and maintain the balance between quality education and responsible budgeting, we had to make some tough decisions to create efficiencies. This entailed cutting back in some areas for the greater good of all our children. This included the reduction of approximately 14 teaching positions, two administrators, assistant coaches and even some teams that we found had very low student participation. While we are not happy about this, the Board and I feel it was necessary in order to continue those programs that have proven to be vital to future student success.

As a result, the proposed budget-to-budget increase is 0.66%, far less than last year's approved spending increase. With the loss of state aid and other revenues, the tax levy increase equates to 3%, also lower than last year's increase.

Non-required programs that have been restructured, reduced or cut were done so after difficult deliberation and after exhausting all options. Careful consideration was given to current and projected student participation levels. We are pleased to say that we have been able to preserve all viable programs for students, including the greater majority of our athletic teams. While current business electives have been eliminated, we are exploring ways in which to provide financial literacy instruction more efficiently. Another regret is the elimination of the Early College Program, as we know it. However, we continue to dialogue with Suffolk Community College to offer the program at a cost that is manageable to interested parents.

The district has also been able to achieve savings through reductions in equipment and supply purchases and through our Voice Over IP Telephone System, which provides better service between our buildings and with outside callers, at a significantly less cost. We are also looking into bringing more students with special needs back into the district, which will save us even more money and allow children to receive the services they need, closer to home.

In closing, I would like to thank the community for their involvement in the process, and the Board of Education and Dr. William Fanning for the many hours of hard work and consideration they gave in formulating the proposed budget. I encourage residents to be a part of the future of the Amityville Public School District by casting their vote on May 17, 2011.

Sincerely,

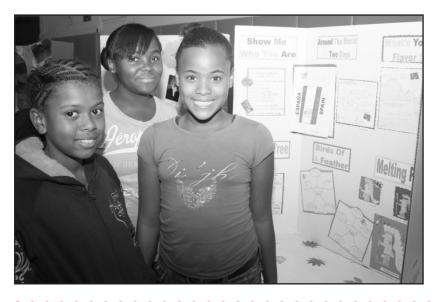
John R. Williams

Dr. John R. Williams, Superintendent of Schools

2011-12 BUDGET IN BRIEF

Balancing the Needs of Our Children with the Means of Our Community

The district continues to work to protect the interests of our taxpayers while keeping children at the forefront of our educational mission. The Board of Education's mission from day one of the budget development process was to achieve a balanced budget that withstands increases in mandated costs. This includes an increased obligation for retirement and health insurance, which we are required to meet by law! With a spending increase of less than 1% at 0.66% the proposed budget balances the needs of students with the means of taxpayers, carrying one of the lowest tax levy increases in recent years at 3%. The goal is to continue to operate as efficiently as possible, not only in the coming school year, but many to follow. We continue to educate for the future by providing important programs that teach students skills that drive them to success in the global economy, shaping them as caring, responsible citizens in the process.





The 2011-2012 Budget . . .

- Preserves all viable academic, music, fine arts, athletic and extracurricular programs
- Preserves AP courses at AMHS
- Continues investment in key technology resources that are instrumental to success across disciplines and grades levels
- Preserves Summer School Program at PAMES with Transportation
- Preserves 21st Century Afterschool Enrichment*
- Reduces the purchase of select equipment, supplies and textbooks
- Reduces the number of teachers, assistant coaches, administrators and custodial staff
- Eliminates only those electives and non-mandated programs, teams, and clubs with very low participation
- Restructures Alternative High School to better utilize Virtual Academy
- Restructures Business Electives to teach financial literacy more efficiently
- Applies \$1.49 million in existing reserve funds to contain the tax impact for our community

The Result: A proposed tax levy increase of 3%, among the lowest in years and significantly lower than last year's approved increase.

^{*} Afterschool program is supported by grant

EDUCATING OUR YOUTH FOR THE FUTURE

At Amityville Memorial High School:

AMHS was named a Breakthrough School by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, one of only 10 schools in the country to receive the award this year!

The award is based on student achievement, including considerable improvement, leadership by school administration, cohesiveness of staff and a strong home-to-school connection with the community. Additionally, at AMHS...

- 116 students are currently enrolled in Advanced Placement or College Level courses
- 630 college applications have been processed to date
- Students participated in a tour of Historical Black Colleges, in conjunction with COMPASS
- 14 students received scholarship awards through the Early College Program
- Essayist Amanda Ramirez was honored with Hispanic Heritage writing award by Suffolk County Executive
- Student activist Jana Jackson was honored by NYSDOH for AIDS awareness efforts
- Students planted pinwheels for peace and formed a large peace sign on school lawn for International Peace Day
- WAC distributed food and clothing during "Help Homeless Vigil"
- Continued cultural exchange with Plainedge students
- Artist Giselle Rivas's work displayed at NYSSBA statewide conference
- Musicians Meghan Brooks and Cherrelle Crews were selected for NYSSMA All-State conference
- Amity TV launches morning broadcasts, keeping students informed and cultivating creative and technical skills in broadcasting

About the AMHS Class of 2010:

- 5 Advanced Placement Scholars including 1 with Honors
- 94% of graduates are attending college
- 97% of students graduated
- More than \$600,000 awarded in scholarship monies
- 113 students graduated with a Regents Diploma
- 49 students graduated with a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation, one with Advanced Designation with Honors
- 6 Students graduated with a Regents Diploma with CTE Endorsement, one with Advanced Designation, CTE Endorsement

At Edmund Miles Middle School:

• 2 teams of students won 1st and 2nd place in the Science and Technology Entry Program at SUNY Farmingdale (4 EWMMS teams participated)

- Dress for Success initiative launched to teach students proper business attire and etiquette
- NJHS members mentored PAMES students on secondary school life
- Students and parents participated in MS and HS College Fair, hosted by the AMHS Guidance Department
- Students, staff and parents volunteered for a school community beautification project
- Musicians were selected for the Hofstra MS Honors Band
- School launched its first in a series of career luncheons
- Health teacher Bernadette Kraljic received Golden Apple Award for Excellence
- Students and staff collected change and purchased gifts for families in need
- School conducted successful student elections with productive debates on how to further improve school environment
- Math students invited to show their skills at SCCC Conference
- School hosted Pi Day, with students counting digits and making calculations relevant to Pi
- Welcomed professionals from various fields (including staff) for Career Fair

At Our Elementary Schools:

- PAMES hosted a Literacy Carnival
- PAMES hosted Kick Butts event to discourage smoking
- PAMES visited N. Amityville Senior Citizen Center for Senior Olympics
- PAMES conducted Character Counts door decorating, poster contests and essay writing events
- PAMES welcomed speakers and presenters to promote character among students
- PAMES science classes videoconferenced with NASA
- PAMES hosted first Spanish Spelling Bee
- NW and PAMES celebrated Math Day with hands-on, math-based activities
- NW hosted display of African culture and artifacts in celebration of Black History Month
- NW hosted community crafts and game evenings for parents and their children to enjoy together
- NW and NE celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday with fun activities to promote literacy
- NE welcomed guest readers, including community professionals and students' grandparents
- NE welcomed EWMMS students to discuss hygiene and guarding against germs
- PAMES & EWMMS 21st Century BEST program held Open House and Harvest Feast nights for community









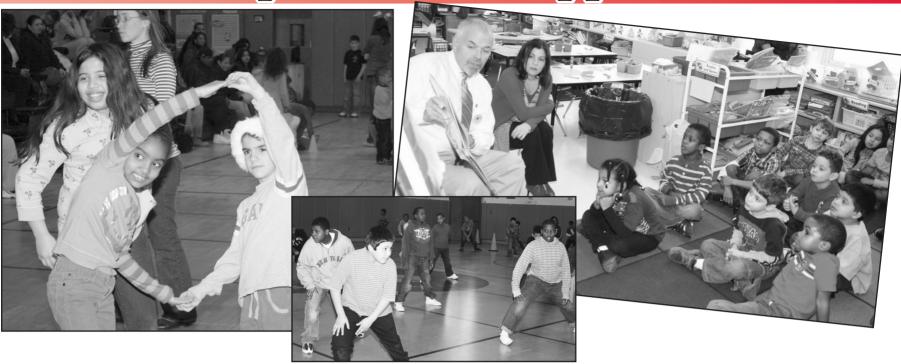
THE 2011-2012 BULL Preserves Program

2011-12 Budget Summary by Categories of Major Expense

Category	2010-11 Budget	2011-12 Proposed	% of Total Proposed	\$ Change	% Change to Category	% Change to Budget
Salaries	\$36,125,100	\$35,192,453	45.34%	(\$932,647)	-2.58%	-1.21%
Benefits	\$11,842,091	\$13,689,396	17.64%	\$1,847,305	15.60%	2.40%
Subtotal	\$47,967,191	\$48,881,849	62.98%	\$914,658	1.91%	1.19%
Equipment Textbooks Supplies BOCES (Gen Ed)	\$752,731 \$327,185 \$1,387,915 \$3,084,216	\$284,937 \$247,515 \$1,153,721 \$3,048,255	0.37% 0.32% 1.49% 3.93%	(\$467,794) (\$79,670) (\$234,194) (\$35,961)	-62.15% -24.35% -16.87% -1.17%	-0.61%
BOCES (Spec Ed)	\$6,901,700	\$7,646,700	9.85%	\$745,000	10.79%	0.97%
Transportation	\$6,305,500	\$6,240,000	8.04%	(\$65,500)	-1.04%	-0.08%
All Other Contracted Services	\$8,210,890	\$7,912,596	10.19%	(\$298,294)	-3.63%	-0.39%
All Other Categories	\$165,000	\$165,000	0.21%	\$0	0.00%	0.00%
TAN Interest	\$330,000	\$350,000	0.45%	\$20,000	6.06%	0.03%
Debt Service	\$1,673,512	\$1,682,200	2.17%	\$8,688	0.52%	0.01%
Total Budget	\$77,105,840	\$77,612,773	100.00%	\$506,933	0.66%	0.66%



ns, Reduces Expenditures, Supports Students



The District has made significant cutbacks in Equipment,
Textbooks and Supply ourchases for 2011-12 in order to maintain student programs

Proposed Budget: Well Under Contingency

Once again, the proposed budget for the Amityville School District is under the contingency budget amount allowable by law. Since the proposed budget is less than the contingency budget, if the proposed budget were defeated, there would be no savings in taxes for residents.

On a contingency budget, the district would be forced to operate under New York State mandated restrictions, such as prohibiting the purchase of most equipment. Additionally, by law, the district would be required to impose fees on community groups for the use of the district's facilities. Since certain costs such as health insurance, fuel oil and the district's mandated obligation to support the retirement systems have risen dramatically, items included in the budget could differ, and the Board could be forced to cut more equipment and supply purchases, as well as more areas that could affect student programs.

Allowable Contingency Budget Increase by Law: 1.92% Proposed 2011-12 Budget Increase for Amityville Schools: 0.66%

id You Know?

axes in the Amityville School District increased SIGNIFICANTLY LESS the cumulative average of the eight aboring school districts in the Town of lon over the last five years.

ACHIEVING A BALANCED BUDGET FOR 2011-12 with Cost Increases and Loss of State Aid

Category	2010-11 Revenue	2011-12 Revenue	\$	%
Tax Levy Increase	Base	3.00%	Change	Change
Misc. Revenue	\$1,551,386	\$1,551,386	\$0	0.00%
State Aid– As Budgeted*	\$20,127,614	\$17,966,702	(\$2,160,912)	-10.74%
Tax Levy-actual and estimated	\$49,906,840	\$51,404,045	\$1,497,205	3.00%
Employee Benefit				
Accrued Liability Reserve	_	\$745,000	\$745,000	N/A
Workers' Comp Reserve	-	\$500,000	\$500,000	N/A
Property Loss & Liability				
Reserve	-	\$245,640	\$245,640	N/A
Opening Balance	\$5,520,000	\$5,200,000	(\$320,000)	-5.80%
Total Revenue	\$77,105,840	\$77,612,773	\$506,933	0.66%

^{*} Note: The \$20,127,614 shown in the second column is the amount that Amityville budgeted for in 2010-11. New York State used a smaller base for 2010-11 and therefore published a smaller loss of State Aid for Amityville. The \$17,966,702 budgeted for 2011-12 reflects all aid restored by the State.

A World of Talent: **Excellence** in the Arts

- AMHS Marching Band participated in the *Newsday* Marching Band Festival, as well as many community parades
- AMHS Jazz Band performed at the community Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration, SCMEA Day of Jazz, the community Arts and the Antiques Fair and Apple Fest
- 7 EWMMS seventh-grade band students participated in the Hofstra Middle School Honors Band Festival
- Several of the district's music students participated and performed in various regional festivals this year, including SCMEA Day of Tuba, SCMEA Day of Horn, Longwood Trombone Day, and the Long Island Flute Festival
- Several Park Avenue students attended the first SCMEA PEAK (Parents, Educators, and Kids) music festival for fourth-grade students
- 4 orchestra students from grades 4 12 were selected to participate in the highly selective Long Island String Festival
- 16 music students from grades 5 12 were selected to participate in various All-County music ensembles this year
- 1 AMHS junior was selected to participate in the highly prestigious NYSSMA All-State Symphonic Band
- Music Department commemorated March as "Music in Our Schools" month through its annual "Evening of Song" and "Evening of Jazz"
- 140 music students, districtwide, have chosen to set additional music goals for themselves as they participate in the annual NYSSMA Solo and Ensemble Festival Assessment this spring
- 3 secondary performing ensembles will attend the NYSSMA Major Organization Assessment Festival this spring
- AMHS Drama Club presented the musical *Annie* to the community

- Several art students have attended various weekend programs for senior art students at Adelphi University
- 10 AMHS art students participated in the Annual Fall Arts Conference sponsored by Adelphi University
- 10 students' artwork, districtwide, was featured at the Colors of Long Island Art Exhibit at the LI Museum in Stony Brook
- The work of an AMHS art student was featured at the annual NYS School Board Association Conference/ NYS Art Teacher Association annual exhibit in NYC
- 2 AMHS seniors had their artwork featured in the High School Women's Art Exhibit at the College of New Rochelle
- An exclusive exhibit of artwork by Amityville students in grades 9 – 12 was displayed in the Patron's Lounge of the Tilles Center at CW Post College
- The artwork of many NW and AMHS students was featured in the Town of Babylon Black History Month commemoration program
- 2 AMHS art students were recognized as finalists in the "Long Island's Best" HS art exhibit sponsored by the Heckscher Museum of Art
- The PAMES Art Department hosted Art Appreciation Week
- 4 PAMES students were recognized as finalists in the Aeropostale T-shirt design contest.
- 3 NW students were recognized as grade winners in the mixed media art contest, "Which Amendment of The Bill of Rights is most important to you?" sponsored by the Suffolk County Library Association and the Suffolk Chapter of the NY Civil Liberties Union.
- 1 NW student received Honorable Mention in the Suffolk County Dental Society collage art contest, "Healthy Smiles"







Sportsmanship and Athleticism Personified





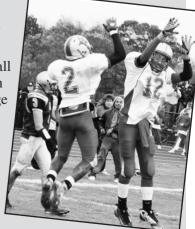
- Girls Varsity Soccer achieved the distinction of NYS Scholar-Athlete Team with a 90 or better team academic average and also won the Suffolk County Small Schools Sportsmanship and League 6 Sportsmanship awards
- JV Girls Tennis won the League 6 Sportsmanship award
- JV Boys Basketball won the League 6
 Sportsmanship award and was undefeated for the entire season
- Varsity Boys Basketball was the Suffolk County Small Schools runner up and won the League 6 Sportsmanship award
- Varsity Wrestling won the League 6 Sportsmanship award
- Middle School Football won the League Sportsmanship award

- Middle School Boys Soccer won the League Sportsmanship award
- Varsity Football qualified for the Postseason
- Boys Winter athletes earned top State-level Honors, highlighted by Class B NYS Athlete of the Year Sancho Barrett

who raked 1st in 55 Meters and 4th in 200 and 400 Meters



Spring Athletics are ongoing



Questions and Answers

Q. What is the budget-to-budget increase?

A. The budget-to-budget increase is the amount of money this year's budget has increased over last year's budget. This year's increase is \$506,933 or 0.66%, which carries a 3% increase in the tax levy.

Q: What happens if voters defeat the budget?

A. The Board of Education has three options: put the same budget up for a second vote, put a revised budget up for a second vote, or immediately adopt a contingency budget. If the budget is defeated a second time, by law, the district must operate on a contingency budget for the 2011-2012 school year.

Q: What is a contingency budget and how does it compare to the proposed budget for 2011-12?

A. A contingency budget is the total amount of specific expenditures that may be included as defined by law. Generally, the total increase is limited to 120% of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), or 4.0%, whichever is less. The latest CPI as of the writing of this newsletter was slightly under 2%; therefore, at 0.66%, the proposed budget increase for 2011-12 for our district is well below the contingency cap.

Q. What is the difference between this year's budget increase and a contingency budget?

A. To put it simply - RESTRICTIONS. On a contingency budget, the district would be forced to operate under New York State mandated restrictions, such as prohibiting the purchase of most equipment. Just as significant, the impact would reach out into the community. By law the district would be required to impose fees on community groups for the use of the district's facilities. Since certain costs such as health insurance, fuel oil and the district's mandated obligation to support the retirement systems have risen dramatically, items included in the budget could differ, and even more equipment and supply cuts could be required, as well as additional program cuts. Since the proposed budget is less than the contingency budget, if the proposed budget were defeated, there would be no savings in taxes for residents.

Q. If the district is increasing spending less than 1%, why is the tax levy increasing 3%?

A. Unless the sum of all revenues, exclusive of the tax levy, increase by the same dollar amount as the budget, the percent increase to the tax levy will always be larger than the percent increase to the budget. For 2011-12, the district is anticipating a

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reduction of approximately \$2.1 million in New York State Aid. This reduction in State Aid accounts for the difference in the percent increases.

Q: Besides cutting back on personnel and equipment and supplies how else is the district attempting to contain taxes?

A. It is important to note that the district is applying \$1,490,000 in reserves to contain the tax levy increase (with the Governor's endorsement). If the Board had elected not to do this, despite efforts to cut costs, the proposed tax levy increase would have been higher.

Q. Does this mean my school tax bill will increase by 3%?

A. For many taxpayers, the answer is "yes." However, a more precise answer is "probably," because the actual rates that result from any tax levy are determined by taxable assessed values and the apportionment of taxes determined by the Equalization Rate set by the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services. The school district has no control over assessed values and equalization rates. As such, any attempt to predict the actual tax rate for a given property will always be a "best guess." If equalization rates and assessed values remain the same as they were last year, a 3% increase in the tax levy would result in a comparable 3% increase in the tax rate. HOWEVER - based on prior years, this is highly unlikely.

Q. Does the taxpayer investment in supporting the budget really make a difference?

A. Yes! As a result of approved budgets in the past, the district has been able to implement higher learning standards and greater rigor into the instructional program. Student achievement has steadily risen in all academic areas in the past several years. Approved budgets provide the district with the resources and staff to keep students moving in the right direction, while preserving valuable electives and co-curricular programs from being reduced or eliminated completely. The Board of Education has made what it believes to be responsible reductions for the proposed budget in light of the current economic times. The proposed budget is designed to continue the progress our children have made in recent years. A contingency budget will only impede any progress for 2011-12 and beyond.

Q. Where can I find more detailed information?

A. Visit the district website at www.amityville.k12.ny.us. The complete budget is also available in every school building and in the public library.



EVERY VOTE Makes a Difference

When is the Vote?

Tuesday, May 17, 2011 • 7 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Where Do I Vote?

Amityville Memorial High School or Northeast Elementary School based on where you live

Voter Eligibility

- Must be a U.S. citizen
- 18 years of age or older
- A resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote
- Registered to vote in the general elections or have been registered to vote in school elections

Absentee Ballots

Qualified voters are eligible to vote by absentee ballot when:

- Absent from the district when polls are open due to business, occupation, or studies
- Physical disability or illness
- Absent due to vacation includes retirees
- Confined to a hospital or jail

Absentee ballot applications must be received by the District Clerk or designee at least seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election if the ballot is to be issued to the voter in person. For more information, please contact the District Clerk's office at (631) 565-6031 or at 150 Park Avenue.









Usted puede ver informacion del presupuesto escolar en la pagina de website de la escuela: www.amityville.k12.ny.us

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Budget Vote and Board Trustee Election Tuesday, May 17, 2011

7:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.

Amityville Memorial High School and Northeast Elementary School



BOARD OF EDUCATION

Michele Sikhrangkur, President Juliet Jordon-Thompson, First Vice President Lisa Johnson, Second Vice President Nathan King, Trustee Diane Koza Egglinger, Trustee Charles Walters, Trustee Kathleen Ward, Trustee

Dr. John R. Williams, Superintendent of Schools

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