



# Copiague Public Schools

A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

[www.copiague.k12.ny.us](http://www.copiague.k12.ny.us)

Proposed Budget 2010-2011

## Maintaining Programs, *Reducing Costs*

### PROPOSED 2010-2011 BUDGET CARRIES DECREASE FROM 2009-2010

For the first time in 19 years, the Copiague Board of Education will present a proposed budget, for resident approval, that carries a reduction in the budget when compared to 2009-2010. Despite a projected loss of over \$3 million in State Aid, the proposed 2010-2011 school budget continues to support the District's instructional and co-curricular programs, while taking into account the current economic climate and limiting the financial impact on its residents. **The District is one of only six school districts across Long Island to present a budget decrease.**

"The proposed budget demonstrates our commitment to continue raising the quality of education for all students while remaining cognizant of the tax burden for our residents," stated Board of Education President Laura Gavey.

Added Superintendent of Schools Charles Leunig, "This year we were extremely cost conscious. We looked at every line of the budget and made strategic cuts – cuts that had a minimal to zero impact on our students – in order to ensure we kept the cost impact to our community at an absolute minimum."

Through prudent fiscal planning and careful consideration and input from administrators, staff, and community residents, **the proposed budget of \$100,507,857 represents a decrease over the current budget. This reflects an estimated tax rate increase of 2.7%, due largely to the loss in State Aid.**

To keep the tax impact to a minimum, the District will use reserve funds. "Due to long-term planning and strong financial oversight, the District is able to utilize more than \$4 million of its reserves to offset the tax rate," said Mr. Leunig. Additionally, the District is actively seeking new revenue sources and implementing additional cost-containment strategies.

During the past several years, thanks to community support, student achievement has risen along with the number of graduates receiving Regents Diplomas. The District athletic programs have continued to compete on local and state levels, and the fine arts department has been expanded to offer more opportunities for students K-12.

All residents are encouraged to take an active role in deciding the future of the Copiague School District by voting on Tuesday, May 18. Voting on the proposed school budget will take place at Great Neck Road Elementary School from 10 am to 10 pm.

## *Eagles Soar to New Heights*

- Members of the Class of 2010 have been accepted to such prestigious colleges and universities as Cornell University, St. John's University, Lynchburg College, New York Institute of Technology, Northeastern University, Hofstra University, West Virginia Wesleyan College, Mercy College, Le Moyne College, and University of Miami.
- Fifteen students from Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School have earned Advanced Placement (AP) Scholar Awards in recognition of their exceptional achievement on AP Examinations taken last spring.
- Elvira Razzano and Jhante Collins, seniors at Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School, were selected for the 2009 NYSCAME Suffolk All-County Music Festival.
- Jhante Collins, a senior at Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School, was recognized by the Suffolk County Youth Bureau with the Suffolk County Executive's 2009 Youth Achievement Award.
- Board of Education Trustee Brian J. Sales currently serves as Secretary/Treasurer of the Nassau/Suffolk School Boards Association (NSSBA). Mr. Sales has been on the Copiague Board for the past 13 years and a member of the NSSBA Board since 2005.
- Veronica Zieba, a student at Copiague Middle School, was the Grand Prize Winner in the Kids in Action Youth Conference essay contest.
- Twenty-two student-musicians from Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School and Copiague Middle School participated in the Suffolk County Music Educator's Association (SCMEA) All-County Festival.
- In their rookie debut, the Copiague Middle School Robotics Team advanced to the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) New York State Championship Tournament. The team took 1st Place in Spirit, which was awarded to the team that most enthusiastically demonstrated a commitment to getting others to see how accessible, fun, and rewarding science and technology can be.
- The Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Competition Cheerleading Squad won first place in the Rookie Cheerleading Competition at Mount Sinai High School.
- Ten athletic teams were commended by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) for having best exemplified the spirit of sportsmanship during the fall and winter 2009/2010 sports seasons. Congratulations to the following teams: Varsity Field Hockey, Varsity Girls Soccer, Varsity Volleyball, JV Girls Soccer, JV Girls Tennis, JV Volleyball, MS Girls Soccer, MS Girls Tennis, MS Wrestling, and MS Girls Basketball.



Copiague School District  
Copiague N.Y. 11726

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Resident  
Copiague School District

## Budget Development Mission Statement:

The Copiague School District believes that we exist to serve the needs of our community of learners. Each student is unique and comes to us as a learner. The District's mission is to provide instruction, programs, strategies and challenges in a caring, positive and safe learning environment.

The budget development process will support the goals of the Board of Education, which reflect the vision, philosophy, and beliefs of our district and community.

Through sound fiscal management and strategic planning the Budget Goals, listed to the right, will be realized.

# BUDGET 2010-2011 GOALS:

- Provide an Expenditure and Revenue Plan that is child centered and focused on increased achievement.
- Support a Staff Development Plan consistent with the Copiague School District Professional Development Plan to ensure that classroom strategies and practices are aligned with New York State Standards and Assessments.
- Support a staffing plan that ensures all children meet or exceed the New York State Learning Standards. Continue to implement the District's Technology Plan.
- Provide facilities for students, employees, and the community that are safe, well-maintained and conducive to the activities of the District.
- Continue the review of existing Instructional Programs, Administrative Support Services, and all co-curricular and interscholastic activities to evaluate equity and efficiency in determining their continuation or modification.
- Actively seek out new revenue sources and implement cost containment strategies to minimize the tax burden and broaden student programming.
- Total budgetary and tax rate increase will be in line with Board of Education and community expectations.
- Present a budget for voter approval that:
  - o Provides full disclosure
  - o Is easy to understand
  - o Is accurate
  - o Is sensitive to the needs of our District residents

**2.70%**  
Tax Rate Increase  
or  
**44¢ Per Day**

## 2010-2011 PROPOSED BUDGET

	Budget 2009-2010	Proposed 2010-2011	Increase (Decrease)
Salaries	\$47,977,502	\$46,686,327	(\$1,291,175)
BOCES	18,653,591	18,488,267	(\$165,324)
Fringe Benefits	14,919,366	16,283,593	\$1,364,227
Transportation	8,836,409	8,658,391	(\$178,018)
Contractual	3,154,554	3,175,578	\$21,024
Utilities	1,267,300	1,268,100	\$800
Tuition	1,222,500	1,498,000	\$275,500
Debt/Interest	2,038,375	2,019,375	(\$19,000)
Supplies	988,639	1,017,675	\$29,036
Text Books	765,315	553,892	(\$211,423)
Repairs	565,900	510,000	(\$55,900)
Equipment	70,000	128,659	\$58,659
Transfer to Other Funds	185,000	220,000	\$35,000

**TOTALS** **\$100,644,451** **\$100,507,857** **(\$136,594)**

## WHAT IS A THREE-PART BUDGET?

The District is mandated by New York State to present their budget to the public in three parts: Administrative, Capital, and Program. Below are brief explanations of what is included under each different part.

**Program** – The program component of the budget represents all personnel, equipment, supplies, and contractual items related to the instruction of students. Items include regular and occupational instruction, continuing and co-curricular education, instruction for pupils with disabilities, libraries, guidance, nurses, psychologists, social workers, interscholastic sports and student transportation items. Employee benefits of program staff are also included.

**Capital** – The capital component includes the operation and maintenance of buildings and grounds, principal and interest payments of bonds, and salaries and benefits for buildings and grounds employees.

**Administrative** – The administrative component of the budget represents the items necessary to support the educational process. Included under the administrative component (but not limited to) are expenses for the Board of Education, District Clerk, district meetings, District Office support operations, instructional leadership, and insurance and employee benefits for the administrative personnel.

### PROPOSED BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget: \$100,507,857

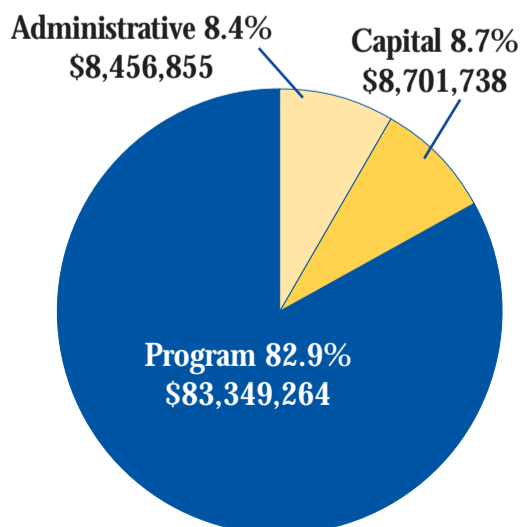
**Budget Decrease: -0.14%**

**44¢ Per Day Increase**

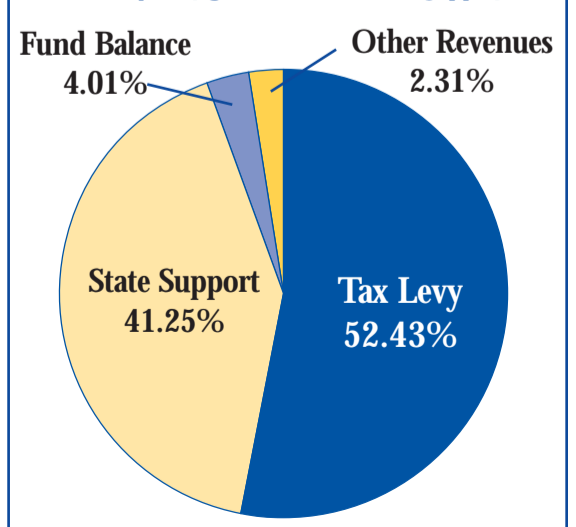
on an

Average Home Assessed at \$3,600

### EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN



### REVENUE BREAKDOWN



# DRIVING FORCES BEHIND THE PROPOSED BUDGET

## WHAT WILL 44 CENTS A DAY PROVIDE?

- Maintains all academic programs
- Maintains all athletic programs
- Supports current extracurricular programs based upon student interests
- Continues the commitment to our superior educational technology program
- Honors commitment to be prudent, accountable, and sensitive to the financial needs of the taxpayers
- Preserves District's financial stability



# COMPUTATION OF ESTIMATED TAX LEVY

2010-2011 Proposed Budget	\$100,507,857
Less Estimated Revenue	<u>-\$43,783,013</u>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$56,724,844</b>
Less Appropriated Fund Balance	<u>-\$4,029,000</u>
<b>Estimated Tax Levy 2010-2011</b>	<b>\$52,695,844</b>

## UNFUNDED MANDATES

Board of Education members and administrators often speak of 'unfunded mandates' that affect the escalating cost of education. These are Federal or State requirements that the District must comply with and implement without adequate funding from the government.

The following list shows a portion of the diverse unfunded mandates, which account for between 17-18% of any school budget:

- **INSTRUCTIONAL**
  - Test Scoring (Grading & Substitutes)
  - Teacher Mentoring
  - Home Instruction
  - Graphing Calculators
  - ESL/Bilingual Instruction
  - Academic Intervention Services
- **FACILITIES**
  - AHERA Inspections
  - Five-Year Plan
  - Wicks Law
  - Pesticide Applications
  - Gym Partitions
  - Backflow Water Protection
  - Building Condition Survey
- **FINANCIAL**
  - External Auditors
  - Internal Auditors
  - Claims Auditors
  - Fixed Asset Accounting
  - Segregation of Duties
  - Charter Schools
  - IRS Regulations
  - Litigation Defense
- **OTHER**
  - Non-Public School Transportation (15 mile radius)
  - Defibrillators
  - Fingerprinting
  - Character Education / Social Services
  - Printing State Documents

## SIGNIFICANT FACTORS

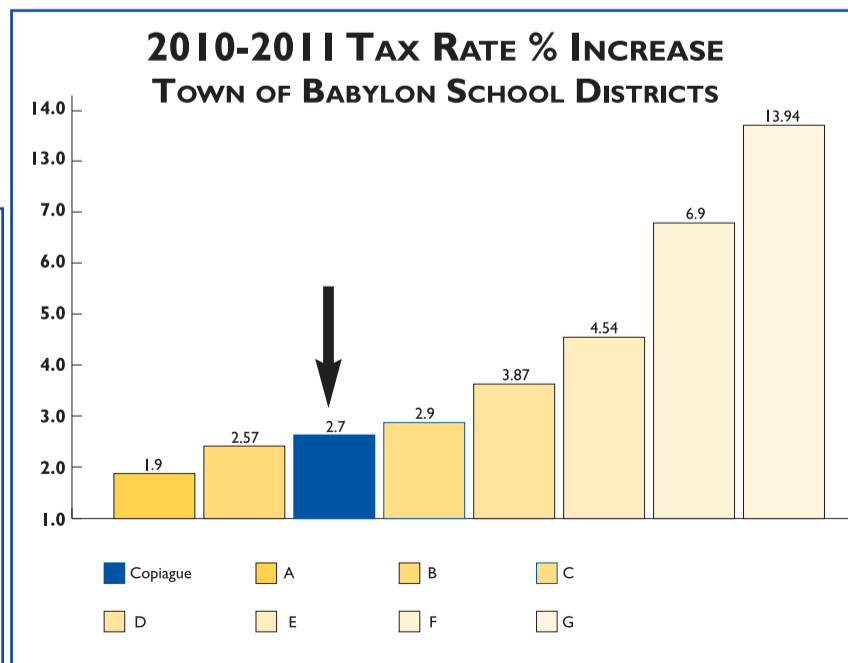
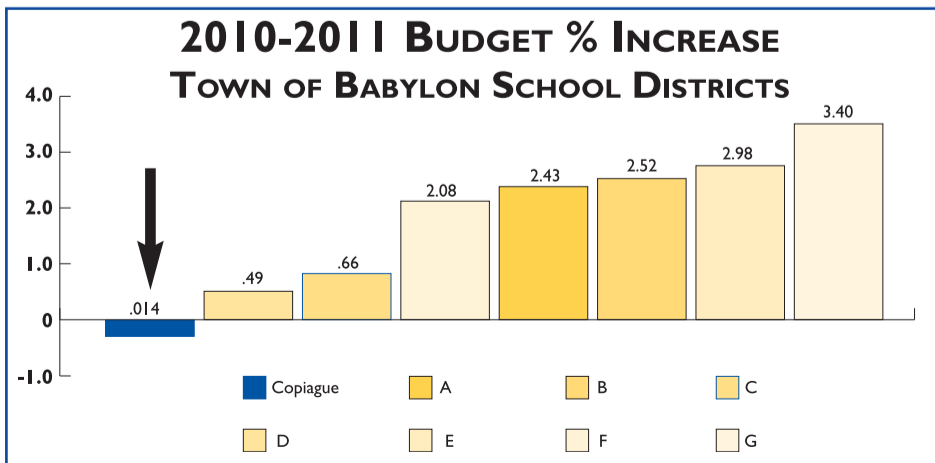
While constructing the 2010-2011 proposed budget, the District had to overcome the following challenges in order to bring the lowest possible budget-to-budget increase to residents.

- Slow Economic Recovery
- Increased Retirement Costs
- Reduced Interest Revenue
- State Aid Reductions
- Foundation Aid Increases Postponed
- Continued Unfunded Mandates
- Contractual Obligations
- Aging Facilities
- Increasing Cost of Special Education Programs

## COST-CONTAINMENT EFFORTS

To address the unprecedented economic challenges being faced across the country and locally, the District has taken additional steps to reduce spending where applicable. Below is a list of areas in which the District has reduced expenditures in order to further contain costs:

- Offered a Retirement Incentive which resulted in 19 Retirements
- Reduced Administrative, Custodial, Clerical, and Teaching staff positions after careful review of all programs
- Formed a Transportation Committee to find efficiencies and curtail costs
- Hired an experienced grant writer which has led to over \$7,700,000 in pending grant applications
- Consolidated building usage for all weekend activities
- Eliminated travel to out-of-state professional conferences
- Continued monitoring & curtailment of overtime wherever possible
- Reviewed every line item in the budget, which led to reductions in supplies, repairs, conferences, utilities, BOCES costs and insurance
- Continue to leverage EXCEL Aid to pay for additional building improvements and maintenance



VOTING WILL TAKE PLACE ON

**MAY 18**



**10:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M.**

**GREAT NECK ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
1400 GREAT NECK ROAD**



## Questions & Answers

**Q. How was the District able to develop a proposed budget that is lower than the current budget?**

A. Education and economy were the two driving forces behind this year's proposed budget. Every line item was analyzed. Reductions, with minimal impact to students, were made wherever possible. The result is a proposed budget that is fiscally responsible, but also continues to support student achievement.

**Q. How is the Tax Levy determined?**

A. The District takes the total school budget and subtracts estimated revenues including state aid, tuitions and fees, interest earnings and any applied fund balance from the previous year. The remaining figure is the amount that needs to be raised through property taxes.

**Q. If the budget is decreasing, why is the tax rate increasing slightly?**

A. Despite the extraordinary efforts that have been made to reduce the budget, which have resulted in a budget decrease, New York State continues to cut our state aid. As of the 2010-2011 school year, the state will owe our school district over 14.5 million dollars in State Aid. Therefore, after making every possible reduction in the budget and utilizing reserves, the only alternative left to balance the budget to compensate for this loss of State Aid is this slight increase in property taxes.

**Q. What happens if the budget is defeated on May 18th?**

A. If the proposed budget is defeated on May 18, the Board could recommend the same budget a second time, recommend a reduced budget, or decide to adopt a contingency budget. If the budget fails a second time, the Board, by law, must adopt a contingency budget which would require charging a fee for the use of buildings and fields by community and outside groups, eliminate summer school enrichment programs, and eliminate purchasing of equipment.

**Q. What would be the difference in cost between a passed budget and a contingent budget?**

A. At the proposed 2.7% tax rate increase, the cost would be 44¢ per day on the average home. If the budget were to fail, resulting in a contingent budget, the tax rate would increase by 1.68% or 27¢ per day, a difference of 17¢ per day from a budget that passes.

**Q. Where can I get more information?**

A. Complete copies of the proposed 2010-2011 Copiague School District budget are available in the District office, each school building, and the Copiague Memorial Public Library. Budget information is also available on the District website [www.copiague.k12.ny.us](http://www.copiague.k12.ny.us).

## Eagles Soar to New Heights

Continued from Page 1...

- Jessica A. Taveras and Jonli Falk, seniors at Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School, were awarded the New York State Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Suffolk Zone Award.
- Four Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Varsity Fall Athletic Teams qualified for the New York State Scholar-Athlete Team Award. This prestigious state award is presented to a team that cumulatively achieves a 90% grade point average or better during the competing season. Congratulations to Girls Field Hockey, Girls Soccer, Girls Volleyball, and Girls Tennis.
- High student involvement in community service.
- Continuing improvement districtwide on New York State Assessment tests.
- High level of parental involvement at all grade levels in every school.
- High School DECA students excel on State and National levels.
- Copiague supports all before and afterschool and weekend enrichment activities through competitive grant funding.
- Comprehensive academic, co-curricular, and interscholastic athletic programs are available to students.

## VOTER REQUIREMENTS

- You are a U.S. Citizen.
- You are 18 years of age or older.
- You have been a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.
- You are registered to vote in the general elections or are registered to vote in the school elections.

### ABSENTEE BALLOTS

The District Clerk must receive applications at least seven (7) days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter. All completed ballots must be in the hands of the District Clerk by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the election. For further information, call 842-4015.

## THE IMPACT OF A CONTINGENCY BUDGET

The effects of a contingency budget would be devastating to a school district such as Copiague. In 2005-2006 the District was forced to operate on contingency and, as a result, student achievement was negatively impacted, programs were affected, staffing was reduced and class sizes were increased. It was several years before the negative effect of this one-year contingency budget was reversed and conditions began to improve. It will be doubly difficult to recover from a contingency budget in these challenging economic times. Operating on a contingency budget would impact services, place students at a disadvantage when compared to their peers across the Island, and could have a negative impact on the value of homes in the community.

However, if the District were forced to adopt a contingency budget we would be required by law to operate under the restrictions of a contingency budget, which include:

- Charging a fee for the use of buildings and fields by community and outside groups
- Potential program reductions
- Elimination of summer school enrichment programs
- No purchasing of student supplies
- No purchasing of equipment



**Copiague Public Schools**  
A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

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