



# The Beacon



*Shining a light on the Baldwinsville Central School District*

Issue 127

May 2014

## 2014-2015 BUDGET NEWS

### Residents Will Vote May 20, 6 A.M. to 9 P.M. at Baker Aud.

On Tuesday, May 20, Baldwinsville voters will decide on a \$96,887,219 spending plan for the 2014-2015 school year. The district developed the proposed budget to balance students' needs with the ability of the community to support those needs.

This newsletter details the district's budget proposal. The proposed tax levy increase is 2.87%, or \$1,448,458, which is an increase of approximately \$67.13 for a \$100,000 assessed property value. The tax

levy increase of 2.87% is the district's tax levy cap for 2014-2015.

The budget is presented in three parts – program, capital and administrative. The program component provides students with the educational experiences and opportunities they need for academic success. The capital component includes operational and maintenance costs, and the administrative component provides for supervisory functions. More details on these three parts of the budget are on page 2.

Voters will also be asked to vote on the annual bus purchase, a capital project, the creation of a capital reserve to fund future building projects, and the annual school board elections. You can find more information on these propositions on page 4.

The district will hold a public budget hearing on May 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the cafeteria of Durgee Junior High School. The budget vote will be held in the auditorium of Baker High School on May 20 from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

### Achievement Continues to Soar

District, student and staff achievements are good indicators of how well the district has spent the tax dollars the community has entrusted to it. The following accomplishments are just a sample of how the district is flourishing.

▶ A team of students from Baker High School won first place in the Healthcare Olympiad in March.

▶ Baker High School had 18 top ten finishes in the Mid-State Division C Regional Science Olympiad in February.



Continued on page 8

#### In this issue

|                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Budget Expenditures....p. 2   | Tax Impact.....p. 5           |
| Budget Revenues.....p. 3      | School Board Elections...p. 6 |
| Propositions 2, 3, & 4...p. 4 | Points of Pride.....p. 8      |

### WHO CAN VOTE?

To be eligible to vote, you must be:

- 1.) Eighteen years of age or older;
- 2.) A citizen of the United States; and
- 3.) A resident of the district for 30 days prior to the vote.

### ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Absentee ballots can be obtained by calling the district office at 638-6055, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING

**May 13, 2014 - 7:00 p.m.**  
**Durgee Jr. High Cafe**

# Proposition 1: 2014-15 Budget

## Budget Expenditures

**This proposition is not contingent on the passage of Propositions 2, 3 or 4.**

**S**tate law requires the 2014-2015 budget to be presented in three parts: program, capital and administrative. Please see page 5 for information on the projected tax impact, and page 6 for budget highlights.

|                | 2014-15 proposed budget | 2013-14 final appropriation | Dollar difference | Percent difference |
|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Program</b> | \$75,440,713            | \$73,994,750                | \$1,445,963       | +1.95 %            |

The program component is intended to provide every student with educational experiences and opportunities to foster the full development of his or her potential. This budget category includes all instructional personnel and programs: regular school, special education, library, media, instructional technology, guidance, student health services, school psychologists, attendance and census costs, music, co-curricular activities, athletics, in-district and out-of-district pupil transportation, and staff development.

|                |              |              |           |        |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|--------|
| <b>Capital</b> | \$13,286,430 | \$13,152,293 | \$134,137 | +1.02% |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|--------|

The capital component is intended to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students, staff and the community. This budget category includes all personnel, equipment, supplies and materials for the operation and maintenance of district facilities. Any judgments and claims, refunds of real property taxes, and all payments of principal and interest on short- and long-term obligations are included in this category. In the 2014-15 budget is a small (\$100,000) capital project to replace carpeting at Ray Middle School. We will receive building aid for this project from New York State in 2015-16.

|                       |             |             |           |        |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------|
| <b>Administrative</b> | \$8,160,076 | \$7,845,374 | \$314,702 | +4.01% |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------|

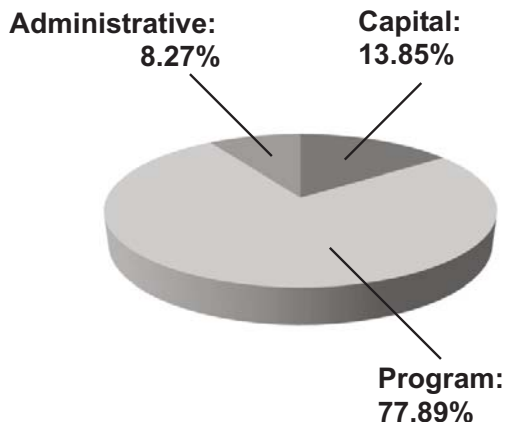
The administrative component is intended to provide the necessary support for district functions. This category includes all expenses for the Board of Education, superintendent, business office, auditor, tax collection, fiscal agent, legal services, personnel office, records management, public information, central printing and mailing, property and casualty insurance, school association dues, BOCES administrative share, and supervision of instruction.

|                     |              |              |             |        |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------|
| <b>Total Budget</b> | \$96,887,219 | \$94,992,417 | \$1,894,802 | +1.99% |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------|

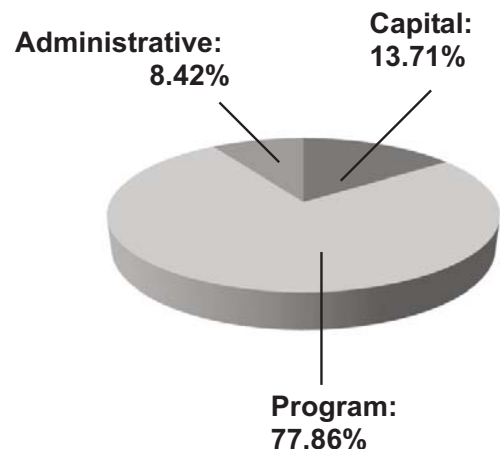
*Copies of the budget can be reviewed in the district business office at 29 East Oneida Street, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.*

## Appropriations Comparisons

### 2013-2014



### 2014-2015



# Budget Revenues

## Non-Property Tax Revenues

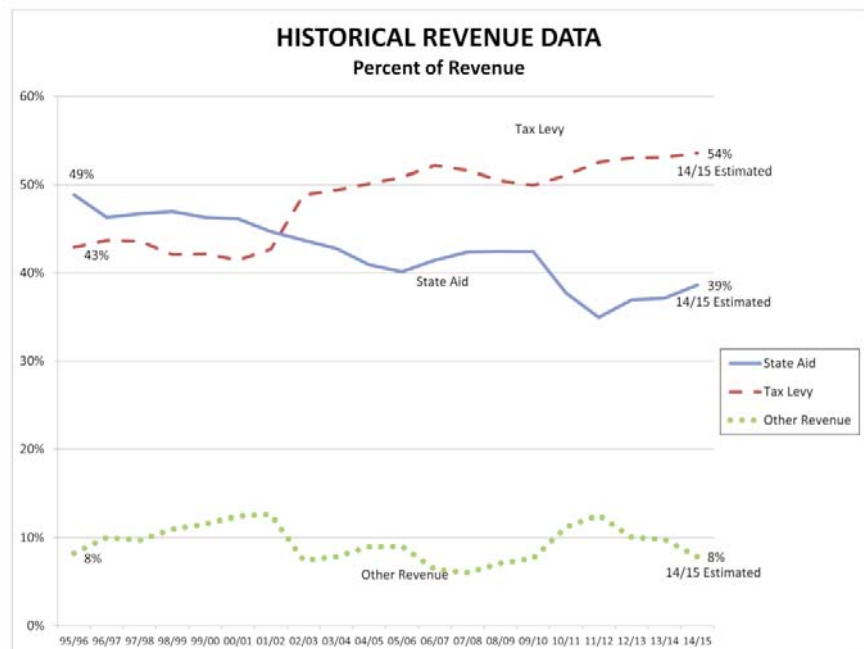
| Account                         | 2013-2014           | Estimated 2014-2015 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| In lieu of tax                  | \$1,589,954         | \$1,522,668         |
| County sales tax                | \$106,250           | \$106,250           |
| Tuition -- other districts      | \$50,000            | \$50,000            |
| Interest income                 | \$85,000            | \$60,000            |
| State aid (including BOCES aid) | \$30,544,629        | \$31,893,215        |
| State aid -- building aid       | \$4,725,102         | \$4,123,401         |
| Full Day Kindergarten Aid       | \$0                 | \$1,400,000         |
| Appropriation from fund balance | \$1,500,000         | \$1,500,000         |
| Appropriation from reserves     | \$5,479,344         | \$3,736,088         |
| All other income                | \$ 490,500          | \$625,500           |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                 | <b>\$44,570,779</b> | <b>\$45,017,123</b> |

## Real Estate Property Tax

|   |                     |                     |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Budget</b>                           | \$94,992,417        | \$96,887,219        |
| <b>Less: Estimated revenues</b>         | \$44,570,779        | \$45,017,123        |
| <b>Amount to be raised by tax levy:</b> | <b>\$50,421,638</b> | <b>\$51,870,096</b> |

## Historical Revenue Data

The chart at right illustrates the percentages of district revenue from New York State aid, the local tax levy, and other revenue over the past 19 years and the estimated revenue for 2014-2015. As you will note, the local portion of education costs, represented by the dashed line, has increased over the last 19 years as state aid has decreased.



# Propositions 2, 3 & 4

## **Proposition Two: Annual Bus Purchase**



### **Annual bus purchase and replacement program**

The bus fleet consists of 79 large (54-70 passenger) buses, 27 medium (15-48 passenger and wheelchair capable) buses, and eight 8-passenger buses. Large buses are used for about 12 years, the medium buses for about 10 years, and the 8-passenger buses for about 7 years. In order to maintain a consistent replacement schedule, approximately 11 to 14 buses should be replaced per year. However, given the economic pressure facing the district, we are proposing the purchase of fewer buses.

### **The district would like to purchase:**

- ▶ One Suburban
- ▶ Five 65-passenger buses
- ▶ One 30-passenger bus
- ▶ Two 30-passenger wheelchair buses

**Total maximum cost of  
Proposition 2 = \$999,939**

**Less state aid = \$779,952**

**Local cost = \$219,987**

**This proposition is not contingent upon the passage of the budget or the passage of Propositions 3 or 4.**

## **Proposition Three: Capital Project**

**Estimated cost = \$347,630**

**Cost to taxpayers = \$0**

**Scope of Project:** The district would like to replace the failed air conditioning chiller at Ray Middle School.

The community will be voting on the project as well as if the district may use money from its capital reserve to pay for the project. Per state law, the district may only use its capital reserve for building projects, and voters must approve the use of the capital reserve.

### **Total maximum cost of**

**Proposition 3 = \$347,630 From Capital Reserve**

**Less state aid = \$292,009**

If voters approve Proposition 3, there will be no cost to taxpayers because the project will be paid for with capital reserve funds. State aid will be paid back to the district over 15 years.

**This proposition is not contingent upon the passage of the budget or the passage of Propositions 2 or 4.**

## **Proposition Four: Establishing A New Capital Reserve**

If Proposition 3 passes (funding of the chiller replacement at Ray Middle School) the capital reserve established in 2007 will be depleted.

By paying the local share of capital projects, a capital reserve reduces the costs to taxpayers. Per state law, the district needs voter approval to spend funds from the reserve.

**This proposition is not contingent upon the passage of the budget or the passage of Propositions 2 or 3.**

**Public Budget Hearing  
May 13 - 7 P.M.  
Durgee Jr. High Cafeteria**

# Tax Impact

## Estimated Tax Rate

In Lysander and VanBuren, the tax rate is projected to increase by 2.87 % as assessments are not expected to rise. The estimated tax rate will be as shown below. Please note that the district will not receive assessments and equalization rates for the towns of Van Buren, Lysander and Clay until August. At that time, the actual tax levy and tax rates will be calculated.

|   | Change in tax bill on a<br>\$100,000 house, without STAR<br>(no change in assessed value) | Change in tax bill on a<br>\$100,000 house, with STAR<br>(no change in assessed value) | Estimated<br>tax rate increase |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Lysander and VanBuren<br>(assuming equalization rate remains at 100%) | \$67.13   | \$67.13  | 2.87 %                         |
| Clay<br>(assuming equalization rate remains the same)                 | \$67.13   | \$67.13  | 2.87 %                         |

## About Equalization Rates

An equalization rate represents the average level of assessment in each community. For example, an equalization rate of 50% means that, on average, the property is being assessed at 50% of its market value. The equalization rates are determined by the New York State Board of Equalization and Assessment. One of the most important uses of the equalization rate is to divide the tax levy fairly among municipalities in the same school district. In the Baldwinsville Central School District, the municipalities are the towns of Lysander, Van Buren and Clay.

## About STAR

The state's School Tax Relief Program, or STAR, provides a basic exemption that allows property owners with income under \$500,000 to receive a \$30,000 full-value exemption on their home's assessed value. Senior citizens with incomes of less than \$37,400 gross are eligible for larger exemptions on a sliding scale; senior citizens with incomes of less than \$81,900 (not including IRA distributions) are eligible for the state's "enhanced" exemption of \$63,300 on their home's assessed value.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE BUDGET IS DEFEATED?

If the budget is defeated, the Board of Education has three options:

- 1.) Put the same budget back before voters;
- 2.) Reduce the budget and ask voters to approve that budget; or
- 3.) Go directly to a contingent budget with no re-vote.

If the budget is defeated twice, the board must adopt a contingent budget. The contingent budget may not increase the current tax levy by any

amount, which would be a zero percent tax cap.

**How will a contingent budget affect the school district?**

Under a contingent budget, there will be no instructional or non-instructional equipment purchases and no community use of facilities unless groups or organizations pay all associated costs. Further cuts from programs and administration would be required to conform to spending caps.

## Property Tax Cap Explained

**Q:** New York's property tax levy cap is 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower. Why is the district proposing a budget for 2014-2015 with a tax levy increase of 2.87 percent?

**A:** New York's property tax cap law allows school districts to increase their property tax levy from one year to the next by 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is less, based on a multi-step formula. School districts are allowed to take exemptions for certain costs, such as pension contributions. These exemptions can increase a school district's tax levy limit to more than 2 percent or the rate of inflation, which is the case for the Baldwinsville Central School District for 2014-

2015. The district's tax levy limit for 2014-2015 is 2.87 percent. The proposed budget has a 2.87 percent increase in the tax levy. Since the district's proposed tax levy increase is at its limit, the district needs a simple majority (more than 50 percent) to pass the 2014-2015 budget.

**Q:** Does a 2.87 percent increase in the tax levy mean my taxes are going to increase by 2.87 percent?

**A:** No. Property tax bills are determined by using a property's assessed value, the school tax levy and the equalization rate in each town. The school district only controls one-third of the tax rate equation.

# School Board Elections

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## Board of Education Candidates

The order of the candidates is *the order in which they will appear on the ballot*. Four seats on the Board of Education are up for election. They are for three-year terms. The four candidates who receive the four highest vote totals will be elected to the three-year terms. Below are the photos and biographies that each candidate submitted for this newsletter.



**Christopher Patrick** - Christopher Patrick has been a resident of Lysander since 2002. He is a veteran of the United States Navy in which he served as a reactor operator aboard the USS Atlanta SSN-712 and a reactor operations instructor in Saratoga Springs, NY. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from The New School in Human Resource Management. Christopher has worked in the manufacturing industry for many years both as hourly and management. He is currently a contractor to NYS Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services, Office of Emergency Management. He has been working the Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts in New York City. Christopher and his wife, Lynn, have two children. His daughter, Taylor, graduated from Baker High School in 2011 and his daughter, Carly, is attending Durgee Junior High School. He has been active in the school throughout their educational experience. He volunteers his time and support to various organizations within the Baldwinsville area and would like to continue to serve the community on the school board.



**Cheryl Cowen** - With over twenty years as a Baldwinsville resident, Cheryl Cowen is the proud mother of four Baker High School graduates. Her husband, Dave Cowen, is a life-long resident who also holds a BHS diploma. As a real estate agent at Century 21 Leah's Signature, Cheryl has impeccable communication skills and is highly self-motivated. Cheryl has also worked directly with town/village board members when she spent 11 years at EOS, a municipal accounting software firm.



**Natalie Zaccaria** - Natalie Zaccaria has been a Baldwinsville resident since 2007. She obtained her B.A. in Geography from Syracuse University in 1993, and her M.A. in Linguistics in 1999. At SU she enjoyed courses in reading, multicultural, and urban education. Natalie earned permanent teaching certification in Social Studies and English as a Second Language through LeMoyne College in 2003, during which time she student-taught at Seymour Magnet School and ESM High School. She taught English as a Second Language for 12 years, starting at Syracuse University, and subsequently as a private tutor and at 3iMobile (a small company catering to international business professionals), before taking a permanent position with Newton-Conover City Schools in North Carolina. In 2006, she returned to NY to accept a position with the North Syracuse Central School District. Natalie currently works as the Retail Coordinator for Beltone, an international hearing-aid company, for the Syracuse market. She and her husband, Rick, a 19-year Baldwinsville resident, have three children - two daughters who attended Baldwinsville schools, and a son who is in pre-school. In her spare time, she enjoys walking in her neighborhood or at Beaver Lake.



**Jeff Marier** - Jeff Marier has lived in Lysander since 2006 with his wife, Sue, and his daughter and son. He has been a school board member since 2011 and is currently serving on the Technology and Policy committees. He received his M.S. in Electrical Engineering from Syracuse University and a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Toledo. He is currently an engineering manager at Lockheed Martin in Liverpool. He is an advocate for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) outreach, visiting schools throughout Central New York to actively engage students in hands-on activities and promote STEM-related career fields. Jeff is a US Air Force Persian Gulf veteran, an Eagle Scout and a member of Leadership Greater Syracuse Class of 2009.



**Kimberly McIlroy** - A Syracuse native, Kimberly (Kim) and her husband, Tim, moved to the Village of Baldwinsville in 2007, in large part based on the Baldwinsville Central School District's reputation for providing high-quality education. A stay at home mom of three boys, ages four, two and four months, Kim has a vested interest in ensuring that schools in Baldwinsville continue to thrive and provide high-quality education. After graduating from Nazareth College with a B.A. in International Studies and Spanish, Kim worked in management positions for ten years at non-profit community development organizations. Most recently, Kim was the assistant director at Home HeadQuarters in Syracuse. In this capacity, Kim was responsible for strategic/long-range planning and implementation, annual business planning, organizational budget development, fundraising and grant writing, performance reporting and staff management. Kim also served as the liaison to organizational Board members, funders (including local, state and federal funders), and other non-profit organizations.

Continued on page 7

# School Board Elections

Continued from page 6



**Matthew Yager** - Matthew Yager has been engaged professionally in the higher education community for the past 20 years. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Industrial Training and Development from SUNY Oswego and a Master of Arts Degree in Student Affairs Administration from Michigan State University. He has worked with undergraduate students in an advising and counseling capacity at Michigan State University, The University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and Syracuse University. He is currently working at SU in the David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics. As an academic counselor he assists students with overall curriculum and career planning as well as helping them resolve other educational, social and emotional concerns. He also volunteers his time as an assistant youth hockey coach.

From 2005 to 2009 Matt took a leave from his career to spend time with his children as a stay-at-home dad and worked part-time as a developer and webmaster for Lenovo's worldwide HR division. Matt and his wife, Dena, have been Baldwinsville residents since 2006 with their two children, who are both students in Baldwinsville schools.

## Budget Highlights

The 2014-2015 budget seeks to support the district's long-range plan, which strives to provide quality academic programs and maintain facilities while remaining fiscally responsible to taxpayers. The following highlights illustrate how the budget will support the long-range plan.



### Program

- ▶ Offer a large number of college-credit courses at the high school. The district has significantly increased the number of students receiving credit for college level courses:

2010-2011 = 269 students  
2011-2012 = 492 students  
2012-2013 = 1,068 students  
2013-2014 = **1,191 students**

- ▶ Maintain existing student program opportunities (instructional and extra-curricular)

- ▶ Maintain effective class sizes

- ▶ Support efforts to increase the number of students receiving Advanced Designation diplomas.

- ▶ Continue the district's data-analysis process

- ▶ Ensure continued improvement in teaching through the district's mentoring program and other professional development initiatives.

### Equipment & Maintenance

The budget supports the district's cleaning and preventative maintenance program and the community use of buildings. It also supports necessary repairs, including building infrastructure, mechanical and electrical repairs, HVAC upgrades, athletic field maintenance, and energy conservation upgrades. Examples of new equipment include lawn maintenance and snow removal equipment, and building maintenance and floor care equipment.

### Technology

In the area of technology, the budget continues to support ongoing needs in the district to include general network hardware and software upgrades, the programmed replacement of older equipment and installation of various peripheral instructional equipment to include video projectors, SMART Boards, Symposiums, other presentation devices, and mobile computing devices, such as iPads.

## District Recognized for Efficiency

The Baldwinsville Central School District is number one in Onondaga County for its administrative efficiency, according to *Business First's* 2013 administrative efficiency ratings of 429 Upstate school districts. This is the second consecutive year that the journal has rated Baldwinsville the number one school district in the county for administrative efficiency. The Buffalo-based business publication rated Upstate school districts using a three-part formula based on low spending rates per pupil, high ratios of students per administrative staffer, and small percentages of their budgets committed to debt service.

## POINTS OF PRIDE: Achievement 2013-2014 *Continued from page 1*



▶ District named a 2014 Best Communities for Music Education designee by the NAMM Foundation

- ▶ AP Scholar Awards:
  - \* Scholars with Distinction - 15
  - \*Scholars with Honor - 13
  - \*Scholar Awards - 43

▶ Two Baker High School students received awards in the SkillsUSA Regional Competition.

▶ Bianca Gascon, a 5th grader at McNamara Elementary School, was the runner up in The Post Standard/WCNY Spelling Bee in February.

▶ Baker technology teacher Jamie Cuyler was named the CNY Technology & Engineering Educators' Association Teacher of the Year.

▶ Four teachers have been named NYS Master Teachers: Lynda Barry, Jill Gravante, Matthew Hudson and Christopher Ludden.

▶ Students in grades 5-12 selected for All-County music festivals: 116

▶ Girls varsity volleyball - 2013 NYS Class AA Champion

▶ Varsity wrestling - 2013-14 Section III, Division I Champion



### Budget Exit Survey

District residents will have the opportunity to participate in an anonymous budget exit survey after voting on May 20. The survey will provide the district with useful feedback from residents about the budget and the school district. Before you leave the polls please look for the short survey to share your opinions with the district.

**The Beacon is an official publication of the Baldwinsville Central School District.**

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