

Dear Blind Brook Residents:

On Tuesday, May 16th, from 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM, at the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street Elementary School, voters will be presented with the 2023-2024 Blind Brook-Rye School District budget adopted by the Board of Education in the amount of \$57,763,796. This amount is an increase of 9.88% over the amount of the 2022-23 budget.

For the past 11 years, since the NYS Tax Levy Cap Law has been in place, we have been able to maintain our programs while adhering to the tax cap. Unfortunately, this year, given the effects of high inflation, sharply rising employee health insurance costs and an increase in anticipated students with special needs, our proposed budget will exceed the NYS Tax Levy Cap. This override enables us to maintain our core educational programs. If we remain under the cap of 2.49%, we will be forced to make significant cuts in every area, including programs, class sizes, sports and extracurriculars.

The Blind Brook Board of Education's prime objective is to ensure the continued growth and success of its students through excellence in education. After careful consideration, we have decided that our students and our community would experience significant regression if we were to recommend a tax cap-compliant budget this year.

As residents ourselves and your neighbors, we do not come to this decision lightly. We are well aware that our property taxes are a financial burden on many, and this may increase that hardship. For the past two months, the Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education have publicly discussed the development of a school district budget for next year. While not ideal, we think that the presented budget strikes the best balance of maintaining our strong academic programs while acting in a financially responsible manner.

We encourage you to learn more about the 2023-2024 budget at the [Finance and Facilities page on the District website](#) and by watching our Board meeting budget discussions online at [the BBTV web page](#).

The Board of Education and District leadership thank the Blind Brook community for its dedication, generosity and unwavering support of our schools. With fiscally-minded and innovative planning, the Blind Brook Schools are poised to remain a pillar of excellence in our community!

Jennifer Schlactus, President
Jeffrey Mensch, Vice President
Blind Brook Board of Education

BUDGET VOTE: Tuesday, May 16th, 2023

A Message from Dr. Colin Byrne, Superintendent of Schools

The process of developing a budget this year was not an easy one. The District's goal is always to balance the need to provide an excellent educational experience for our students with the requirement to be financially responsible. While high inflation and spiking healthcare costs made things extra challenging, we were able to put together a budget that will effectively support education in Blind Brook for the coming year.

The budget that is being put forth for the 2023-2024 school year will not only maintain the current programs that the District already has, but will allow for many of the instructional enhancements, some of which the community has been requesting for a while. Improvements in the literacy and World Language programs are scheduled, including the reintroduction of a FLES program. There will also be a focus on providing support for teachers of advanced learners and continued work on integrating the District's strategic plan into the fabric of our students' daily lives.

The proposed budget will also provide needed support staff in both the operations and security areas. Providing additional support personnel will facilitate processes and procedures, improve building maintenance and allow administrators more time to focus on improving learning. The additional security positions will provide more oversight of our security processes and enhance the security protocols that are already in place.

The budget also is responsive to the large increase in special education and mental health needs that our students have been experiencing. Many students have been struggling since the pandemic with behavioral, emotional or instructional issues. It is imperative that we address these needs and provide our students with all of the resources that they need to be successful in our schools.

The Blind Brook School District is on course to do exceptional things in the 2023-2024 school year. The budget that has been proposed will keep us moving forward for next year and put us in a great position for the coming years.



BUDGET LEARNING INITIATIVES

District Initiatives

As it enters its second year of implementation, the district's strategic cohesion plan continues to drive positive change in many areas affecting all three schools. The budget supports ongoing work in key district-wide initiatives:

- Fund ongoing professional learning and program development to meet the needs of advanced learners;
- Continue work on problem-based learning and student-centered approaches to instruction through partnerships with Innovative Designs in Education (IDE) and other groups.
- Support students' social-emotional needs through ongoing implementation of the Yale RULER program and continued training in dialectical behavior therapy (DBT).

Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School

The Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School is committed to providing our students with a supportive learning environment that fosters their academic and social-emotional growth. We want our Bluebirds to fly high as we promote 21st-century learning skills that are student-centered and learner-driven. Our programs enhance core competencies such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, digital literacy, and problem-solving.

Below are highlights of the budget that has been prepared for the upcoming school year:

- Purchase materials and fund ongoing professional learning experiences for teachers as part of the rollout of our new research-based K-5 literacy curriculum, Into Reading.
- Add staffing to support the implementation of a new FLES (Foreign Language in Elementary School) program in grades 3-5.
- Emphasize hands-on experiences in our Science curriculum, which aligns with Next Generation Science Standards.
- Utilize our new spaces, such as our Arts and Innovation Wing, Early Childhood Center, Outdoor Learning Classroom, Cafetorium Performance Area, and Instructional Media Center.
- Continue club and co-curricular programming.
- Build the skills of emotional intelligence and explore conflict management curriculum to reach all students.
- Provide programs that foster connection and strengthen community.
- Provide instruction through a lens of diversity while accepting and appreciating others.

Blind Brook Middle School

The Blind Brook Middle School budget continues to promote the implementation of principles of middle-level education. These include: an organization and structure that supports academic excellence and personal development through grade level teaming; a comprehensive educational program that is challenging, integrated, exploratory, relevant, and aligned to the Next Generation Standards; comprehensive counseling and support services to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of young adolescents; instruction that fosters active, purposeful, and meaningful learning; and co-curricular activities that enrich students' lives and lead to the development of the whole child.

Specifically, the proposed budget will allow us to:

- Maintain all current courses and programs.
- Purchase new World Language textbooks.
- Replace musical instruments which no longer function properly.
- Enhance school-wide programming and co-curricular activities.
- Continue the replacement of furniture to facilitate 21st-century learning.

Blind Brook High School

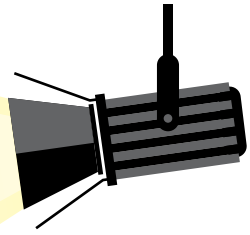
The Blind Brook High School budget supports our continued work to provide a high quality educational program to our high school students. Our program includes supporting our teachers in keeping up to date with teaching methodologies and resources, consistent implementation of PBL and other student engagement strategies, and providing a rigorous and enriching core academic curriculum, as well as opportunities for students to explore areas of interest in STEAM, Humanities and the Arts. As students progress through our high school program, they develop authentic connections with their peers and with the adults in the building. When they graduate we are proud that they are prepared for both college and career pathways.

Specifically, our budget will allow us to:

- Maintain all current courses and programs.
- Support a range of new elective course offerings, thereby providing students with opportunities for advanced learning.
- Support current curricular program needs with supplies, textbooks, and independent reading books.
- Prioritize student health, social and emotional wellness through schoolwide programming.
- Provide ongoing extra and co-curricular offerings and supervision.
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in intensive career education programming through a partnership with SWBOCES.



SPOTLIGHT ON BOARD MEMBER CANDIDATES



Danny Fung

Danny Fung is running for a seat on the Blind Brook Board of Education. He and his wife, Kaity, have lived in Rye Brook for nearly six years with their two children, Lucas and Isabella, and dog, Cody. Professionally, he works in financial services, advising privately held and publicly traded companies and municipalities on managing investment risks, including interest rates, FX, and energy commodities.

Danny is a graduate of Binghamton University with a BSc in Economics. He has served as a guest lecturer at New York University and Columbia University. He was a mentor in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City program and continues to mentor Binghamton University undergraduates seeking a career in financial services.



Katherine Hallissy Ayala

Katherine Hallissy Ayala is seeking election to the Blind Brook Board of Education. As an experienced educator and active community volunteer, Katherine is passionate about education. For nearly 10 years, Katherine has been involved with several local organizations, including the Blind Brook PTA, the PTA's Supporting Every Individual Difference Committee (SEID), and the Rye Brook Cub Scouts. Katherine currently serves on the Board of Education's DEI Committee and Technology Planning Committee.

Before Katherine moved to Rye Brook in 2008, she taught at a K-12 independent school. Katherine holds a BA in Computer Science and in Spanish from Wellesley College and an MA in Computer Education from Columbia University. Katherine and her husband Hugo have two sons in Blind Brook schools, grades 5 and 9.

2023-2024 BUDGET VOTE & BOARD MEMBER ELECTION

Budget Vote & Board Member Election

Tuesday, May 16, 2023 -BMPRSS Old Gym
Polls Open: 7 a.m. · Polls Close: 9 p.m.

Absentee Ballot Application

If you are unable to vote in person on May 16, 2023, you must submit an absentee ballot application which is available on the district website, www.blindbrook.org or by contacting the District Clerk at 914-937-3600 x1001, vgroccia@blindbrook.org to have an application mailed to you.

Absentee Ballot applications must be completed by the person requesting the ballot and received by mail or in-person at the office of the District Clerk by 2 p.m. on May 9, 2023 if the ballot is to be mailed – or by 4 p.m. on Monday, May 15, 2023 if the Ballot is to be delivered personally.

For additional information, please contact Vivian Groccia, District Clerk, 914-937-3600 x1001, vgroccia@blindbrook.org.



The Board of Education
Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District
390 North Ridge Street
Rye Brook, NY 10573

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VOTING: RIDGE STREET OR ABSENTEE BALLOT
DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023
ABSENTEE BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5 p.m.

2023-2024 PROPOSED BUDGET
BLIND BROOK-RYE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT



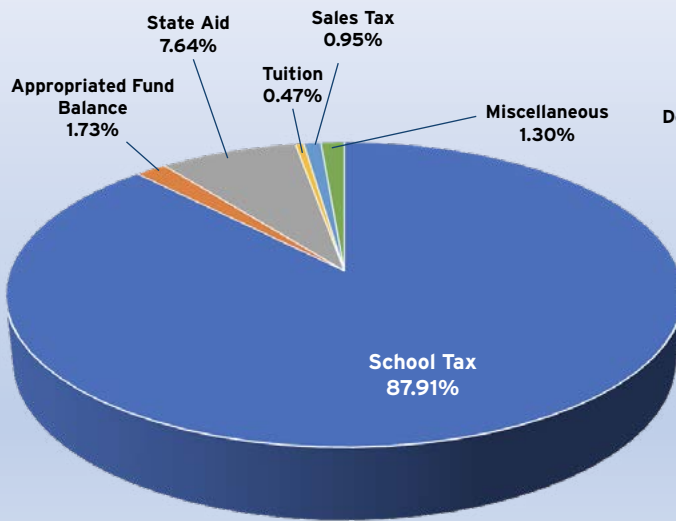
BUDGET VOTE: Tuesday, May 16th, 2023

2023-2024 PROPOSED BUDGET
BLIND BROOK-RYE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

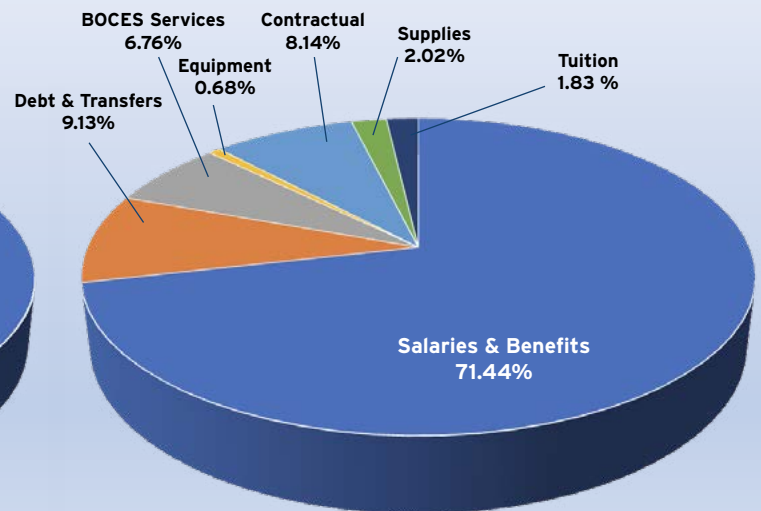
For more information: www.blindbrook.org

Revenue Source	2023-24 Proposed Budget	2022-23 Budget	Dollar Change	% of Budget
School Tax	\$50,778,794	\$45,809,574	\$4,969,220	87.91%
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$1,000,000	\$1,797,841	(\$797,841)	1.73%
State Aid	\$4,416,001	\$3,925,142	\$490,859	7.64%
Tuition	\$270,210	\$262,340	\$7,870	0.47%
Sales Tax	\$550,000	\$450,000	\$100,000	0.95%
Miscellaneous Revenues	\$748,791	\$50,697	\$698,094	1.30%
Total Revenues	\$57,763,796	\$52,295,594	\$5,468,202	100%

REVENUES



EXPENSES



Expenditures: How is the Money Spent?

Expenses	2023-24 Proposed Budget	2022-23 Budget	Dollar Change	% of Budget
Salaries & Benefits	\$41,268,179	\$38,019,485	\$3,248,694	71.44%
Debt & Transfers	\$5,274,392	\$5,208,593	\$65,799	9.13%
BOCES Services	\$3,903,886	\$2,968,549	\$935,337	6.76%
Equipment	\$394,504	\$333,786	\$60,718	0.68%
Contractual	\$4,701,223	\$4,058,497	\$642,726	8.14%
Supplies	\$1,165,310	\$805,351	\$359,959	2.02%
Tuition	\$1,056,302	\$1,173,333	(\$117,031)	1.83%
Total Expenses	\$57,763,796	\$52,567,594	\$5,196,202	100.00%

Budget Notice	Budget Adopted for the 2022-2023 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2023-2024 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2023-2024 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 52,576,594	\$57,763,796	\$52,794,575
Increase/Decrease for the 2023-2024 School Year		\$5,196,202	\$226,981
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		9.88 %	.43%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		8.0%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount			
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$45,809,574	\$50,778,794	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$ 0	\$ 0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$ 0	\$ 0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$ 0	\$ 0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$45,809,574	\$50,778,794	\$45,809,574
F. Total Permissible Exclusions			
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$4,312,591	\$4,162,305	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$41,496,983	\$42,789,508	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$41,496,983	\$46,616,489	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval)	\$0	-\$3,826,981	
Administrative Component			
Administrative Component	\$5,802,741	\$6,099,909	\$5,742,020
Program Component			
Program Component	\$37,919,873	\$42,585,918	\$38,594,448
Capital Component			
Capital Component	\$8,844,980	\$9,077,969	\$8,458,107
* The District would be required to cut \$4,969,220 from the proposed budget. The Board of Education would be forced to eliminate a combination of teaches, teacher aide, support and maintenance staff positions. All extracurricular activities and interscholastic sports would be eliminated, as well as all educational field trips. All instructional supplies would be significantly reduced. In addition, community use of buildings and grounds, all equipment and furniture, conference and travel expenses, as well as memberships in professional organizations would be eliminated.			

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2023-2024 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$1,360

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2023-24 by the qualified voters of the Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District, Westchester County, New York, will be held at the in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 between the hours of 7:00am and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine

1. The basic School Tax Relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

ON THE BALLOT

PROPOSITION NUMBER ONE - 2023-2024 BUDGET

Shall the proposed budget or estimate of expenditures for the ensuing fiscal year (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024) presented by the Board of Education in the amount of \$57,763,796 be approved and the taxes in the necessary amount therefore be levied?

PROPOSITION NUMBER TWO - BUS PROPOSITION

Shall the Board of Education of the Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District ("District") be authorized to lease-purchase or purchase by installment contract two (2) 72-passenger school buses at a cost not to exceed \$287,850, plus interest, for a five (5) year term, commencing July 1, 2023 and terminating on June 30, 2028, and to levy the necessary tax therefore?

PROPOSITION NUMBER THREE - CAPITAL RESERVE FUND - BUS FLEET RESERVE FUND 2022

Shall the Board of Education of the Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District ("District") be authorized to establish a new Capital Reserve Fund in accordance with the provisions of Education Law section 3651, to be designated "Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District Bus Fleet Reserve Fund - 2022" (the "Fund") effective May 17, 2023, for the purpose of providing moneys, for the direct purchase of school buses thereby adding to the District's bus fleet, including, but not limited to, financing in whole or in part, the supplementation and/or replacement of the District's bus fleet including original equipment, machinery, apparatus, appurtenances, as well as project management fees, ancillary or related work required in connection therewith; the probable term of

said Fund will not exceed ten (10) years from the date of its establishment; the ultimate principal amount therein to total eight (8) million dollars plus interest earnings thereon; such amount to be provided from surplus monies remaining in the general fund and/or from existing reserves in the current and future fiscal years, and the interest accrued on such funds over the term of the capital reserve fund, sufficient to fund said ultimate principal amount?

PROPOSITION NUMBER FOUR - CAPITAL RESERVE FUND - CAPITAL RESERVE FUND 2022

Shall the Board of Education of the Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District ("District") be authorized to establish a new Capital Reserve Fund in accordance with the provisions of Education Law section 3651, to be designated "Capital Reserve Fund - 2022" (the "Fund") effective May 17, 2023, for the purpose of providing moneys, for future capital improvements for building, and site improvement projects at various school buildings, including, but not limited to, expenditures for property and for buildings and alterations including original furnishings, equipment, machinery, apparatus, appurtenances, as well as architect and project management fees, ancillary or related work required in connection therewith; the probable term of said Fund will not exceed ten (10) years from the date of its establishment; the ultimate principal amount therein to total fifteen (15) million dollars plus interest earnings thereon; such amount to be provided from surplus monies remaining in the general fund and/or from existing reserves in the current and future fiscal years, and the interest accrued on such funds over the term of the capital reserve fund, sufficient to fund said ultimate principal amount?