



The Blind Brook Beacon

THE OFFICIAL BLIND BROOK-RYE UFSD NEWSLETTER

MAY 2021

Dear Blind Brook Residents:

The Blind Brook Board of Education is pleased to present a 2021-2022 school year budget of \$51,169,419, which includes a 0% tax levy increase from the prior year.

In addition to staying well-under the District's allowable 0.79% tax levy increase, the budget allows the District to add the following critical positions in the coming year: an "Experiential Instructional Specialist," who will focus on the utilization of our Fabrication Lab in the Middle and High School and continue to develop our K-12 STEAM curriculum; an instructional staff developer to support our educators' increased use of technology in the classroom; a Career & Finance Management educator, who will help prepare our students with practical "real world" skills; and additional custodial positions. These positions help foster the curricular and operational foundations necessary to give Blind Brook students the best education possible in a safe and healthy environment.

This feat was accomplished through a meticulous review of anticipated revenue and expenditures by the Board, Superintendent Patrick Brimstein, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Facilities Mary O'Neill, the entire District business office, and our Leadership Team of administrators.

Our goal was to deliver a conservative and fiscally-responsible budget while maintaining the integrity of our K-12 curriculum and programming, including small class sizes, and adding staff to maximize the utilization of the new facilities funded by the construction bond.

We encourage you to learn more about the 2021-2022 budget at www.blindbrook.org/Page/830 and by watching our Board meeting budget discussions online at <https://vimeo.com/BlindBrook>.

The Blind Brook schools are stellar because of the generosity of our taxpayers, who continue to provide the funds necessary to support our educators, staff and curricular programming, as well as the facilities, technology and athletics & extracurriculars, which serve our students with a robust and broad educational experience.

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

Ashley Welde, Blind Brook Board of Education President

BUDGET VOTE TUESDAY MAY 18TH, 2021

A Message From: Dr. Patrick Brimstein, Superintendent

The Blind Brook community provides resources to our schools that enrich the imaginations of children, nurture the achievements of adolescents, and realize the ambitions of young adults. Our schools prepare graduates to be leaders, philosophers, innovators, musicians, citizens, poets, scientists, entrepreneurs, and life-long learners. The opportunities afforded to Blind Brook students encourage them to excel and distinguishes our educational program. The quality of Blind Brook Schools confirms the appeal of living within this special school district as a desirable place to raise a family.

The capital investment in our schools includes the new Fab Lab on the King Street campus and the striking addition on Ridge Street. These enhancements express the commitment of the community and vision of our educational program. While project construction has presented significant challenges and delays, the work is now progressing with focus and resolve. The building is taking its new form and promises to be exceptional.

These impressive facilities will serve as a point of pride for the community. The building additions stand to inspire us all to surpass expectations each day in fulfilling the longstanding promise of a high-quality educational experience for all our students. The new buildings send a clear signal to our students, faculty, and staff that the Blind Brook community prioritizes educational opportunities and values its schools.

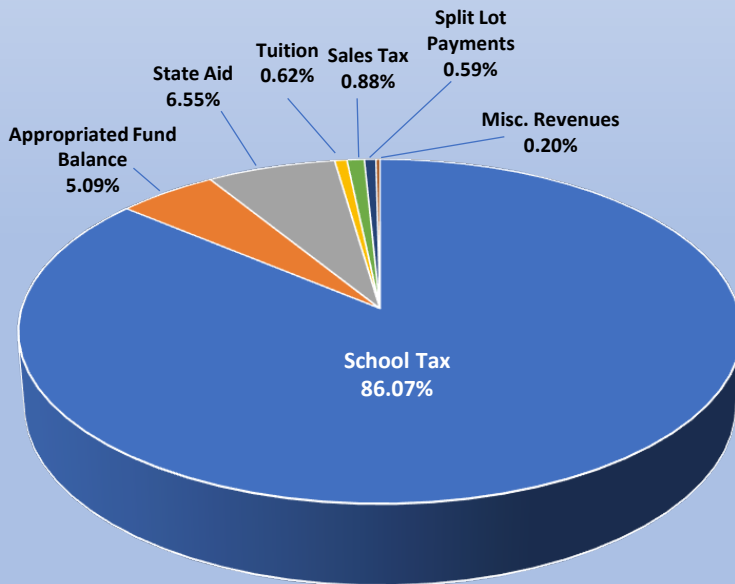


REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

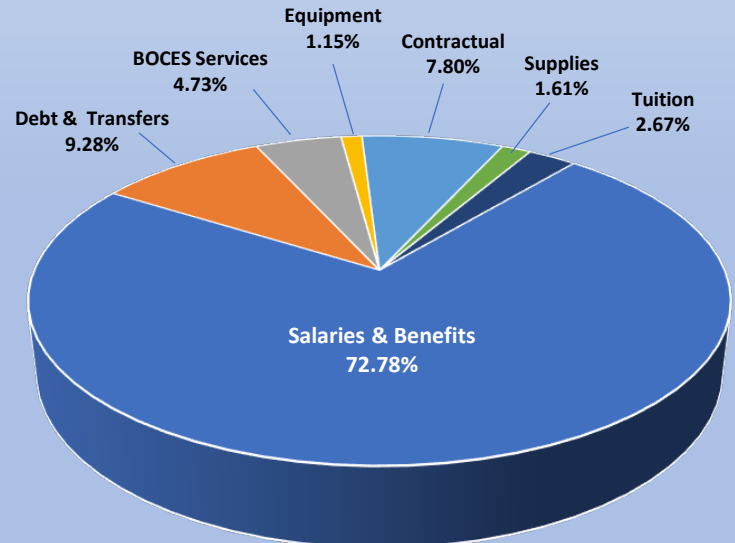
Revenues: Where Does the Money Come From?

Revenue Source	2021 - 22 Proposed Budget	2020 - 21 Budget	Dollar Change	% of Budget
School Tax	44,042,253	44,042,253	0	86.07%
Appropriated Fund Balance	2,604,649	1,650,000	954,649	5.09%
State Aid	3,350,763	2,999,764	350,999	6.55%
Tuition	317,354	450,000	(132,646)	0.62%
Use of Facilities	-	192,500	(192,500)	0.00%
Sales Tax	450,000	450,000	-	0.88%
Split Lot Payments	300,000	300,000	-	0.59%
Miscellaneous Revenues	104,400	371,500	(267,100)	0.20%
Total Revenues	51,169,419	50,456,017	713,402	100.00%

REVENUES



EXPENSES



Expenditures: How is the Money Spent?

Expense Category	2021 - 22 Proposed Budget	2020 - 21 Budget	Dollar Change	Percent Total
Salaries & Benefits	37,238,938	36,128,260	1,110,678	72.78%
Debt & Transfers	4,748,410	5,699,442	(951,032)	9.28%
BOCES Services	2,418,266	2,292,381	125,885	4.73%
Equipment	586,511	329,191	257,320	1.15%
Contractual	3,990,987	3,608,264	382,723	7.80%
Supplies	822,114	816,167	5,947	1.61%
Tuition	1,364,193	1,582,312	(218,119)	2.67%
Total Expenses	51,169,419	50,456,017	713,402	100.00%



LEARNING INITIATIVES. . .



The District continues to embrace personalized, experiential learning. Teachers are creating learning activities in which students develop solutions to real world problems. Whether it is making a Shark Tank-style presentation to a panel of judges, recreating the terracotta warriors of Emperor Qin Shi Huang or creating a museum to honor Native American history, students are taking part in activities where they are active participants in their learning.

The STEAM initiative has evolved into DICE, the Design, Innovation, Creation and Expression initiative. This shift has led to more hands-on learning happening in classes at all levels. Courses from Kindergarten to the High School are being revamped and realigned to allow students to engage their creativity as well as their memory. The additions of the FabLab at the Middle School/High School building and the Maker Space at the B.M.P. Ridge Street School will facilitate this type of learning.

We continue to support social/emotional learning and are looking to start a review of equity and bias in our schools. Our goal is to integrate these initiatives without disrupting the intellectual curricula that our students need to engage with. For additional questions, please reach out to Colin Byrne, Assistant Superintendent Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, cbyrne@blindbrook.org

ATHLETICS. . .



The Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District Interscholastic Athletic Program is available for all students in grades 7-12. We use the Educational Framework for Interscholastic Athletic Programs (NYSAAA & NYSAHPERD), highlighting Competence, Character, Civility, and Citizenship within our programs.

Through this framework, we believe that the Interscholastic Athletic Program contributes significantly to preparing our students for becoming productive, contributing citizens of our community and society. Along with the mental and physical benefits of athletic team participation, Blind Brook High School has a rich tradition of competitive success in the Interscholastic Athletic Program.

Four NY State Titles and numerous Sectional Championships are some of the highlights of our program. Every year, student-athletes graduate Blind Brook HS to become college-level athletes. Our long-term goal is to have Blind Brook students carry the values of integrity, pride, loyalty, and overall character with them throughout their lives. For additional questions please reach out to DJ Goldman, Director of PE, Health & Athletics, dgoldman@blindbrook.org

TECHNOLOGY. . .



In the 2021-2022 school year the Department of Technology will make improvements to its network footprint, refresh audio equipment and advance its communication initiatives while maintaining all current services. In the adopted budget for the upcoming school year, pending voter approval, these exciting projects will support all aspects of the school community.

Expanding the network on the Middle School/High School campus to the bus garage and track, will allow for the campus to become more connected by increasing wired and wireless network connections. This allows for increased security measures to be implemented as well as additional working spaces. As seen through the District's streaming page on Vimeo, live streaming of athletic events and other events will continue to increase with this enhancement.

Additionally, the work will provide the foundation for a future press box at the Middle School, High School track. The proposed budget also includes a refresh of the sound system within the George Trautwein Auditorium located in the Middle School/High School. Aside from modernizing equipment, careful attention will be devoted to improving the acoustics of the space.

The third main initiative within the budget is a new District webpage aimed at providing a more visual and user-friendly experience while implementing an internal support hierarchy to ensure accurate information.

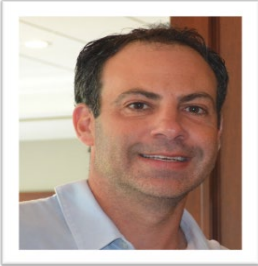
Pending voter approval, the Department is excited to build upon the great successes of the past year which included implementing a new phone system and redesign of the data network, which established increased and more reliable connectivity. For additional questions please reach out to Director of Technology, Charles Von Hollen (cvonhollen@blindbrook.org or X1005)



SPOTLIGHT ON BOARD MEMBER CANDIDATES



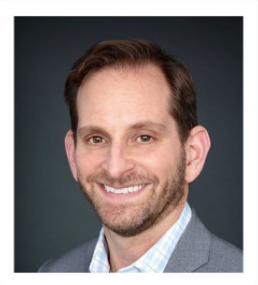
Jeff Mensch



Jeff Mensch is running for a seat on the Blind Brook Board of Education. Jeff and his wife, Hannah, have lived in Rye Brook for the past seven years with their three daughters who are currently in 8th, 5th and 2nd grade, respectively. Jeff is an investment banker with a focus on structuring transactions that have a high degree of complexity. He has worked for various financial institutions for the past 15 years and prior to that, he was a tax attorney at a large law firm.

He graduated from Duke University as an economics major and math minor and received his JD from Harvard Law School. Jeff has been an involved member of the Rye Brook community, including managing two Destination Imagination teams (one that went to Global Finals), coaching multiple recreation and travel sports teams, and volunteering in the classroom.

Scott Jaffee



Scott Jaffee was originally elected to the Blind Brook Board of Education in May of 2018 and looks forward to running for a second three-year term this May. During the 2020-2021 school year, he also served as the School Board Vice President. Scott, his wife Pam, and his children Kate and Will have lived in Rye Brook for over 15 years, and both Kate and Will have attended Blind Brook schools from kindergarten through high school.

When Scott isn't working at his day job as an attorney for Warner Media and HBO Max, he can often be found in the BBHS gym or on the King Street fields, watching the Trojans compete, or coaching one of the Village's many recreational sports teams. Like every other Rye Brook/Westchester/NY/US resident, Scott is excited and relieved for a return to normal during the 2021-2022 school year!

2021 Budget Vote & Board Member Election

Budget Vote & Board Member Election

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 – BMRSS Old Gym

Polls Open: 7:00 am

Polls Close: 9:00 pm

Absentee Ballot Application

If you are unable to vote in person on May 18, 2021, you must submit an absentee ballot application available on the district website: www.blindbrook.org or contact 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 2:00 PM on May 11, 2021 if the ballot is to be mailed - or by 4:00 PM on Monday, May 17, 2021 if the Ballot is to be delivered personally.

You may request an absentee ballot if you are concerned about contracting COVID-19. Check box 1. "temporary illness or physical disability."

Additional Information

Please contact Vivian Groccia, District Clerk, 914-937-3600 x1001, vgroccia@blindbrook.org.

BUDGET NOTICE

	Budget Adopted For the 2020-2021 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2021- 22 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2021-22 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	50,456,017	51,169,419	51,169,419
Increase/Decrease for the 2021-22 School Year		713,402	713,402
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		1.41%	1.41%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		0.0123	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	44,042,253	44,042,253	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	-	-	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	-	-	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	-	-	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	44,042,253	44,042,253	44,042,253
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	4,276,462	3,693,657	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	39,824,756	40,696,292	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	39,765,791	40,348,596	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	58,965	347,696	
Administrative Component	4,723,283	5,274,315	5,274,315
Program Component	37,782,049	38,138,198	38,138,198
Capital Component	7,903,701	7,756,906	7,756,906

* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2021-22 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.
The 2021-2022 budget presented is at the contingent level. In the event the budget is defeated, no additional reductions are necessary.

BASIC STAR EXEMPTION

1360

1. The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

** List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)

Description	Amount
N/A	0

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2021-22 by the qualified voters of the Blind Brook Rye Union Free School District, Westchester County, New York, will be held at Blind Brook Ridge Street school in said district on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 between the hours of 7:00am and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the Blind Brook Ridge Street school, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine. Last year the District was required by executive order to provide absentee voting only due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, executive order 202.81 requires "the potential for contraction of the virus that causes COVID-19 as an illness" be included as a qualifying reason to apply for and receive an absentee ballot for the 2021 annual election. As such, the District will be providing in-person voting on May 18, 2021 however, voters are permitted to vote by absentee ballot, instead of in-person, with COVID-19 as a qualifying reason.

**PROPOSED BUDGET
2021-2022
BLIND BROOK PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

VOTING: At Ridge Street or Absentee Ballot
DATE: Tuesday, May 18, 2021
BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 PM

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

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