

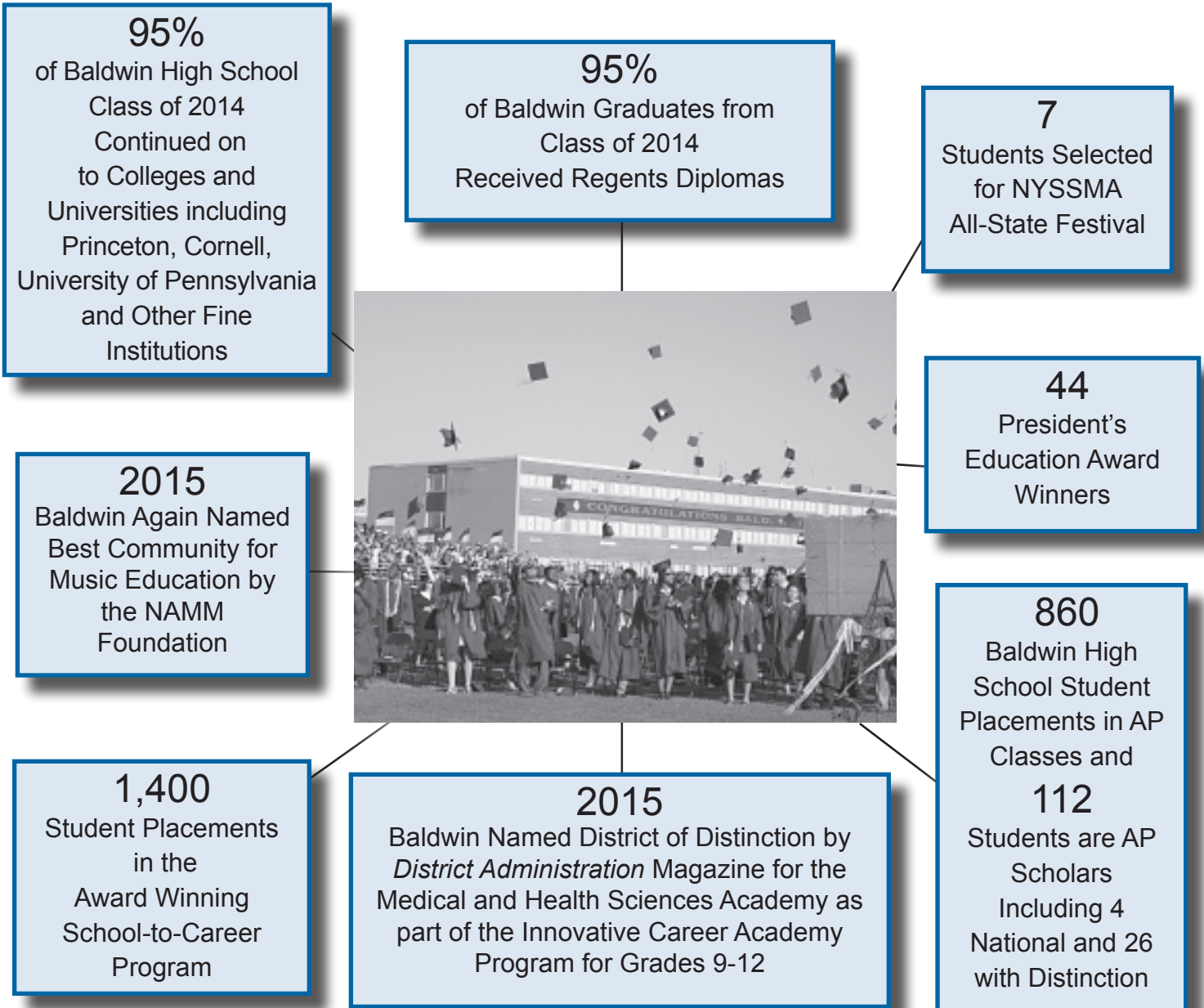


Baldwin Beat

www.baldwinschools.org

Budget Issue – May 2015

Budget 2015-16...Sustaining Student Success



**Budget Vote, Tuesday, May 19, 2015
Baldwin High School, 7 AM - 10 PM**

Message from the Board

At the start of the presentation during the budget work sessions and road shows, the Board of Education and district administration asked this important question: "What is the purpose of a school budget?" Because it is ultimately about our students and the signature programs we are so proud of as a district and community – from our model school-to-career and career academy programs to our highly regarded fine and performing arts groups, and winning athletic teams.

It has not been easy to sustain our programs with the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) as well as going into the fourth year of the state tax cap limiting the school budget, which has been made worse by unfunded state mandates. State aid for next year is still not a given because it is tied to reforms to the teacher evaluation system. Our district (like all districts statewide) has had to make cuts and adjustments to stay within the cap.

By looking at expenses line by line along with some creative thinking, the board and district administration have been able to make the best of a bad situation. For example, we've added a variety of college-level courses through such higher learning institutions such as Molloy College, SUNY Farmingdale, and Syracuse University to supplement our already vibrant open-enrollment Advanced Placement program. In addition, we will expand our Career Academies to add STEAM to STEM with New Media (communications arts) as an option. And in hiring a transportation consultant for \$20,000 (payable only if there were a concurrent \$20,000 in savings), we have made busing efficiencies that will save the district \$250,000 this school year, and \$500,000 next year. We have also expanded the ESL/Foreign Language administrative position to K-12 due to the new Part 154 regulations as well as the fine and performing arts administrative position to K-12 after taking into consideration parents' concerns. Please see the box to the right for additional budget highlights.

In this school budget vote, we also request residents vote to establish a new capital reserve fund to replace the one expiring. This is a viable way to address necessary repairs to the district buildings and grounds in this difficult fiscal climate without further raising the tax levy and with no further cost to taxpayers. Establishing this new fund would require a vote for Proposition 3: Creating a Capital Reserve Fund.

Please read this special budget issue of *The Baldwin Beat*, and ask questions at the Budget Hearing on May 6 or the PTA and community roadshow presentations so that you can make an informed vote on May 19.

Highlights of the 2015-16 Budget

- **Maintains** current level of staffing based on enrollment.
- **Funds** educational programs, including full-day kindergarten; middle and high school sports; middle and high school musicals; district intramurals; Sportsnite and Intramural Night; fourth grade instrumental music and Suzuki violin; Arts in Education funding (flow-through available to PTA); Long Island High School for the Arts and Doshi STEM placements; Saturday Night Alive; and NYSSMA majors.
- **Strengthens** professional development for all staff.
- **Adds** 5 ESL teachers as required by Part 154 regulations.
- **Adds** 13 high school college-credit courses through higher education institutions such as public affairs and financial literacy - at no additional cost to the district.
- **Expands** Career Academies to include New Media (communications arts).
- **Expands** Fine and Performing Arts and ESL/Foreign Language administrative positions to K-12.
- **Expands** high school character education assemblies.

Sincerely,

*The Baldwin School District
Board of Education*

Karyn Reid, President
Mary Jo O'Hagan, Vice President
Eric Harrison
Joel Press
Deborah Rebore

Proposed Three-Part Budget*

<u>Program</u>	<u>Approved 2014-15 Budget</u>	<u>Proposed 2015-16 Budget</u>	<u>Dollar Change</u>
76.99% of 2015-16 Budget	\$94,377,907	\$95,807,316	\$1,429,409
<u>Capital</u>			
13.09% of 2015-16 Budget	\$16,010,321	\$16,290,925	\$280,604
<u>Administration</u>			
9.92% of 2015-16 Budget	\$11,605,687	\$12,335,552	\$729,865
Total	\$121,993,915	\$124,433,793	\$2,439,878

*As presented in the February budget work sessions and required by education law

Revenue Profile**

<u>Description</u>	<u>Approved 2014-15 Budget</u>	<u>Proposed 2015-16 Budget</u>	<u>Dollar Change</u>
All State Aid	\$25,218,230	\$25,218,230	\$0
Miscellaneous Sources	\$1,300,000	\$1,194,991	-\$105,009
Appropriated Reserves	\$2,300,000	\$3,000,000	\$700,000
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$2,523,954	\$3,108,622	\$584,668
Anticipated Property Tax Revenue	\$90,651,731	\$91,911,950	\$1,260,219
@1.39% tax levy increase	\$121,993,915	\$124,433,793	\$2,439,878

**As presented in February budget work sessions.

Key Factors Impacting Baldwin School District

- Loss of aid through the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) over 4 years = **\$12.4 million.**
- Use of district reserves over 5 years = **\$17 million.**
- Use of fund balance over 5 years = **\$14 million.**
- The state aid portion of Baldwin's education has dropped from 28.49% to 21.49% over the last 25 years.
- State aid for next year remains unknown with state runs still not released.
- Utility bills (fuel and electric) continue to rise sharply.
- Unfunded state mandates including APPR (teacher evaluation) and new Part 154 regulations (ESL/bilingual education)= hundreds of thousands of dollars in unreimbursed costs.
- New state tax credit/freeze compromises every district's ability to pierce the tax cap.

Placing the 2015-16 Budget in Context

The budget for 2015-16 proposes to stay within the tax cap with a **tax levy increase of 1.39%** and a **budget-to-budget increase of 2%** - in order to sustain the educational programs and opportunities for Baldwin students.

➔ Long Island Funding Facts

Long Island school districts do not receive their fair share through the state aid formula. Excluding New York City:

- Long Island accounts for 30% of the annual taxable sales in the state.
- Over 36% of state income taxes were paid for by Long Island residents.
- Yet, only 20% of state aid is directed to Long Island schools.

➔ Cost-Saving and Revenue-Producing Measures in Baldwin

Baldwin School District has worked hard to find efficiencies within the budget. Some of the initiatives have included:

- Increased in-district programming such as Hastings Academy and special education.
- Paperless high school and middle school report cards and progress reports.
- Working toward conversion from oil to natural gas for heating.
- Savings from the refinancing of serial bonds.
- Establishment of an elementary free and reduced lunch program.
- Revenue from leasing of properties.
- Savings from rerouting of school buses.



➔ Lower Cost Per Pupil

Highest	\$35,620
Average	\$26,781
BALDWIN	\$23,508
Lowest	\$20,905

Of the 41 K-12 school districts in Nassau County, Baldwin School District ranks *6th lowest* in per pupil spending, based on BOCES data from the 2013-14 school year.

➔ Lower Central Administration Expenses

Of all the school districts in Nassau County, Baldwin School District ranks *7th lowest* in central administration expenses per pupil for the 2013-14 school year.

Budget Questions and Answers

What is the difference between the tax levy and the budget-to-budget increase?

The tax levy is the amount of money collected from taxpayers (after all other revenue sources such as state aid and tapping reserve balances are applied to the school budget). The more state aid, the lower the tax levy on residents. The budget-to-budget increase is the difference in the total budget from one year to the next.

Why is the cap on the tax levy lower than last year?

The formula is based on several factors such as the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the current tax levy, capital levy, building aid and the allowable growth factor. Anything above a 2% increase in either the Teacher or Employee Retirement Systems can be claimed as an exemption for the following year. The tax cap is lower this year primarily because of a reduction in debt service. Therefore, the proposed cap for 2015-16 is 1.39% while the cap for 2014-15 was 1.51%.

What is Foundation Aid and why is it important to school districts?

The Foundation Aid formula was enacted by the state legislature in 2007 to create a more equitable formula for state funding by taking into account the needs of students, a school district's ability to pay, and regional cost differences in educating students. Due to the fiscal crisis and ensuing state budget deficit, Foundation Aid has been frozen since 2009. The loss of Foundation Aid for schools, including Baldwin, is significant because it is the largest category of state aid and the incremental yearly increases over the last 8 years have been lost. For Baldwin, of the \$25 million in state aid last year, \$17 million was through Foundation Aid, which has remained static.

What is the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA)?

The Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) was introduced in 2009-10 to reduce the state's budget deficit. It resulted in an unprecedented \$2.56 billion in statewide cut in aid. Over the last four years, it has been used to reduce state aid to school districts by \$7.38 billion. The GEA has resulted in a \$12.4 million loss for Baldwin School District.

What about state aid for 2015-16?

Though state finances have improved and state aid for Baldwin in 2015-16 has increased, Governor Andrew Cuomo has stated that he will continue to withhold this funding until reforms are made to the teacher evaluation process (APPR). Therefore, school districts are not guaranteed their state aid until the teacher evaluation reforms are established.

What is included in this budget?

While the budget is still a lean one to stay under the tax cap, central administration has focused on keeping Baldwin's signature programs for 2015-16. This includes expanding the high school Career Academies and School-to-Career program and maintaining districtwide programs like mentoring, athletics, and arts and music.

What about the stability of the district reserves?

While the district has drawn heavily from reserves to compensate for the loss of state aid, it has been done carefully and conservatively. However, continuing to draw from reserves is not sustainable long term.

Proposition 3: Establish a Capital Reserve Fund



Proposition 3 is a separate proposition on the ballot to establish a fund for capital improvements to the district buildings. Due to the fiscal climate, it is no longer possible to add capital projects to the budget, which

would increase expenses and the tax levy.

Education law allows school districts to create a capital reserve fund, and in May 2011, Baldwin residents voted to establish a capital reserve fund and to spend monies from a capital reserve fund over a five-year period of no more than \$5 million.

That capital reserve fund has been fully funded. The district must now establish a new capital reserve fund over the next five-year period for no more than \$5 million.

The purpose of the fund will include capital improvements such as reconstruction of cur-

rent facilities, paving, athletic fields, fencing, playgrounds, masonry and lintel repair, window replacement, floor replacement, interior door replacement, technology infrastructure, plumbing, ventilation, piping and heating distribution, security systems, and ceiling and light replacement and air handling.

By using the capital reserve, the district can address capital projects strategically and proactively, with no additional cost to the taxpayer.

A capital reserve fund also reduces the need for bond issues and related borrowing costs.

This year, residents vote to establish the capital reserve fund. Should the capital reserve fund be approved, next year voters will vote on specific projects for the following school year.

As in the previous capital reserve fund, the capital projects will not exceed \$1.5 million a year and projects will be clearly stated along with the associated costs on the ballot.

What Happens If the Budget Fails?

If the budget fails on **May 19**, the board could decide to:

1. Put up the **same budget** for a second vote on **June 16**,
2. Make **more reductions** in the budget for a second vote on **June 16**, or
3. Go directly to “contingency,” a zero percent increase over last year’s tax levy.



If the budget fails twice, by law the board must adopt a contingency budget, which would mean approximately **\$1.3 million** in cuts to the budget. These cuts might include:

- Losing teachers and programs.
- No longer allowing community groups to use district facilities or fields.
- Jeopardizing the value of a Baldwin education and owning a home in Baldwin.

Trustees' Message

Great things are happening at the Baldwin Public Library – the Heart of the Community! The Board's goal is to provide access to the services our community wants at the best possible value. Thanks to your ongoing support, we are able to provide innovative collections, programs, and services for all residents from children through seniors. Highlights include:

- Community members checked out nearly 250,000 items over the past year. Over 285,000 people visited the Library in person, while over 143,000 visits were made to our website.
- Over 28,000 people signed up to use our public computers, while many more took advantage of our free Wi-Fi on their own devices. A Library app – Nassau Digital Libraries Mobile – is coming soon.
- Our meeting spaces were used by community groups nearly 300 times in the past year.
- Programs and services are available for all ages. We offered over 1,000 programs in the past year that were attended by over 22,000 people.

- Our Museum Pass program allows your family to visit some of the finest institutions in our area at no cost.

- Our summer reading clubs for children and teens were increasingly popular in 2014, while our new club for adults attracted nearly 200 community members.

- Our new self-paced children's program, "1000 Books Before Kindergarten", encourages parent/child bonding as well as reading and school readiness for children ages 0-5.

- Live Homework Help provides online assistance for kindergarteners through adult learners daily from 2-10 p.m. In-person assistance for elementary through high school students is available in our Homework Centers Monday-Thursday during the school year.

- Our Minecraft server allows children and teens to participate in this online world-building game that promotes creative thinking and STEM skills.

- Cooperative purchases of online services via the Nassau Library System results in a greater variety of resources available with

a significant cost savings.

- Special materials are available exclusively for Baldwin residents, such as our Express Book collection and a collection of eBooks through the OverDrive Advantage program.

While the school and library budgets are presented to voters at the same time, the Baldwin Public Library is a distinct entity with its own budget presented as a separate proposition.

The Board of Trustees is pleased to present a budget with a tax levy increase of 1.69% (within the cap) and an overall budget increase of 1.56%. This is an increase of only \$8 for the average homeowner. We thank you for your support and encourage you and your whole family to take advantage of one of the best values you will ever get for your tax dollars.

Joseph J. Carroll, President
Shireen Abed, Vice President
Ethell Smith, Secretary
Kerry Schwenker, Trustee
Carl Williams, Trustee

EXPENDITURES		2014-15	2015-16	BUILDING AND GROUNDS		2014-15	2015-16	TOTAL BUDGET		2014-15	2015-16
7410	Library Materials			450	Light, Heat & Water	\$148,000	\$150,000		\$4,189,175		\$4,254,565
410	Books	\$120,000	\$121,365	451	Custodial Supplies	19,500	17,000		Budget Increase	\$202,155	\$65,390
412	Audio-Visual - E-Books	10,000	16,350	452	Repairs & Alterations	55,300	130,000		Budget % Increase	5.07%	1.56%
412A	Audio-Visual	37,500	37,500	454	Building Insurance	52,500	51,500		OPERATING BALANCE	\$277,558	\$394,837
413	Databases/Online Svs.	41,600	39,275	469	Grounds Maintenance & Building Service				Committed to		
413B	Periodicals	18,600	19,075		Contracts	<u>97,600</u>	<u>97,100</u>		Retirement Fund	<u>-99,269</u>	<u>-98,075</u>
415	Pamphlets/Maps	75	75			\$372,900	\$445,600			\$178,289	\$296,762
416	Binding	<u>150</u>	<u>100</u>						Contingency Fund	<u>-100,000</u>	<u>-100,000</u>
		\$227,925	\$233,740							\$78,289	\$196,762
OPERATING EXPENSES				ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES				ANTICIPATED INCOME			
417	Film Rental/AV Lic.	\$1,000	\$1,000	437A	Professional Fees	\$60,300	\$63,100		Interest	\$2,900	\$3,000
429	Cultural Programs/Educational Services			437B	Auditing	10,500	11,000		State Aid	8,400	8,629
430	Supplies	76,000	45,500	437C	Recording Secretary	100	100		Fines	37,900	35,100
431	Telephone	4,000	4,000	437D	Legal & Classified Advertising	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>		Miscellaneous Receipts	48,300	49,600
432	TWX/Data Phone	10,800	9,600			\$71,300	\$74,600		Applied from Previous Budget	<u>160,000</u>	<u>160,000</u>
433	Postage	5,100	3,900	SALARIES						\$257,500	\$256,329
434	Printing	7,500	7,700	141	Staff	\$2,059,700	\$2,122,750		Real Property Tax Levy	\$3,931,675	\$3,998,236
435	Workshops, Seminars & Conferences	9,000	12,000	142	Custodial	<u>168,000</u>	<u>176,300</u>		Total Income	\$4,189,175	\$4,254,565
438	Institutional Dues	1,950	2,100			\$2,227,700	\$2,299,050				
439	Equipment			9000 FIXED CHARGES							
	Maintenance	91,000	42,650	10.0	District Retirement	\$392,300	\$362,850		Real Property Tax Levy	\$3,931,675	\$3,998,236
439A	ALIS Fees	40,300	37,500	30.8	Social Security/Medicare	165,550	170,125		Tax Levy Increase	\$199,855	\$66,561
439B	NLS Fees	26,800	24,900	30.9	NYS MTA Tax	7,550	7,575		Tax Levy % Increase	5.36%	1.69%
440	Processing Costs	<u>4,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>	40.8	Compensation Insurance	31,000	34,350				
		\$320,850	\$238,250	50.8	Unemployment Insurance	100	100				
				55.8	Disability Insurance	1,900	1,225				
FURNITURE & FIXTURES				60.8	Health Insurance	<u>360,100</u>	<u>372,100</u>				
203	Equipment	<u>\$10,000</u>	<u>\$15,000</u>			\$958,500	\$948,325				
		\$10,000	\$15,000								

Approved by resolution of the Board of Trustees at a meeting held February 18, 2015



CAR-RT SORT
 Non-Profit
 Organization
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Baldwin, NY 11510
 Permit No. 109

Baldwin School District
 960 Hastings Street
 Baldwin, NY 11510-4758
 www.baldwinschools.org
 516-377-9200

Board of Education
 Karyn Reid, **President**
 Mary Jo O'Hagan, **Vice President**
 Eric Harrison
 Joel Press
 Deborah Rebore

Superintendent of Schools
 Dr. Shari L. Camhi
 Cristina Schmohl, *Newsletter Editor*

Current Resident

Baldwin Budget 2015-16: Sustaining Student Success

BUDGET CALLS

Residents are encouraged to call Ed Cullen, Assistant Superintendent for Business, for information on the proposed 2015-16 budget at 377-9272.

BUDGET HEARING

The Annual District Meeting and Budget Hearing will be held on May 6 at the District Office at 8 p.m. After a presentation by the Baldwin Board of Education and the Baldwin Public Library Board of Trustees, there will be the opportunity for community input and questions.

Click on "Budget Information" at www.baldwinschools.org for materials from the budget work sessions and PTA presentations – as well as to email any budget questions you still may have



VOTE & ELECTION CALENDAR

Monday, April 27
 PTA Candidates Forum
 District Office
8 PM

Wednesday, May 6
 District Meeting & Budget Hearing
 District Office
8 PM

Tuesday, May 19
 Election & Budget Vote
 Baldwin High School
7 AM to 10 PM

On the Ballot

*School District Budget (Proposition 1)
 Election of two trustees to the Board of Education (Trustees serve without compensation)*

*Baldwin Public Library Budget (Proposition 2)
 Election of one trustee to the Library Board (Trustees serve without compensation)*

Establish Capital Reserve Fund (Proposition 3)

Voter Registration Information: Residents may register to vote in school district elections at the District Clerk's office or at any school building during school hours when school is in session. The last day to register is May 14. *You are already registered if you are registered for regular elections and have voted in the last four years.*

Absentee Ballots: Applications are available at the District Office. Applications received by mail and requests for applications received by phone will be mailed or made available for pick up. For further information, call the District Clerk at 377-9271.