

Board Notes: March 25, 2026

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Antonio Santana provided the following report at the March 25 BOE meeting:

2026-2027 Budget Update: The superintendent addressed budget cuts that are being proposed to help close a multimillion-dollar budget shortfall related to declining enrollment and rising costs associated with special education, health care and transportation. In speaking to the cuts, he acknowledged the frustration and sadness within the community and among staff and students. "None of this is easy, but is necessary," he said. "Long-term stability is the goal, and I understand these are not just numbers, but they are teachers. We value the work that they do every day." He also spoke to cuts aside from staffing, including consolidating transportation and reducing extracurricular activities. "We must make responsible, balanced decisions with a multiyear approach," he said. He further acknowledged students who are advocating on behalf of their teachers, telling them, "Your voices are heard." To listen to his full report, visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHf9XgrBgSI>.

Celebrating Accomplishments: The superintendent made mention of several successful events held in the district's schools recently, including the Brookhaven STEAM Fair, Bellport Middle School Curriculum Fair, Bellport High School's College and Career Fair, and first responders visiting students at Verne Critz Elementary School.

Kudos to Students: The superintendent congratulated the high school jazz band for performing in Albany as part of the Music in Our Schools Month celebration and the middle school robotics team for competing in the FIRST Long Island Regional Competition.

St. Patrick's Day Parade: The superintendent congratulated Sean Clark, principal of Kreamer Street Elementary School, for being named grand marshal of the local St. Patrick's Day parade.

Discussion from the Board

Special Act Legislation Deficit Bonds/Notes: The Board of Education approved a resolution to increase the district's borrowing authorization to up to \$15 million as part of the Special Act legislation it is pursuing. This reflects an increase from the previously approved \$12 million and includes a structured, multiyear repayment plan. Any borrowing remains contingent upon approval of the Special Act legislation, which requires legislative sponsorship, the governor's approval and oversight by the New York State Comptroller's Office. While the board has authorized borrowing up to \$15 million, this figure represents the maximum allowable amount, not the final amount the district will necessarily borrow.

Budget Presentation: John Belmonte, acting assistant superintendent for finance and management services, presented the fifth of several budget presentations for the 2026-2027 budget. During his presentation, he provided an

updated proposed budget summary that includes additional staffing cuts, a reduction in after-school transportation services, including the 2:30 p.m. late bus, and a reduction of \$160,000 in BOCES services that will be reallocated to the BOCES Special Education budget. With the cuts, the current proposal stands at \$151,595,269, which reflects a 3.01% increase over last year's budget. It also incorporates a 6.51% tax levy increase, which is the district's preliminary tax cap for the 2026-2027 school year. To watch Mr. Belmonte's presentation, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHf9XgrBgSI>.

Staffing Analysis Presentation: Jason Huntsman, assistant superintendent for human resources, provided the Board with an updated staffing analysis that includes structural changes and proposed staffing reductions. The proposal includes a reduction of 59.5 staff positions, with 27.5 positions eliminated through attrition and 32 positions subject to excessing. To watch Mr. Huntsman's presentation, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHf9XgrBgSI>.

Save
the
date

The next meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for
April 15, 2026

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