

www.bethpagecommunity.com **BUDGET EDITION 2016**

# BETHPAGE

## Union Free School District

### NEWSLETTER

## BETHPAGE BOARD OF EDUCATION PROPOSES LOWEST TAX LEVY EVER

Due to the Bethpage School District's diligent planning and fiscal responsibility, the proposed 2016-17 school budget includes all existing programs and extracurricular activities while carrying a projected tax levy DECREASE for residents.

Explained below, this budget has two additional propositions up for public vote. These propositions assist us in preparing our schools and students for the future, as well as address some more cost-intensive, necessary projects like replacement of old fuel tanks at JFK.

As the May 17 budget vote approaches, the district would like to invite all residents to attend the budget hearing on May 3 and any future Board meetings, as these provide an opportunity for taxpayers to ask questions about the proposed budget. You can also find budget information on the district's website at [www.bethpagecommunity.com](http://www.bethpagecommunity.com).

-0.17%

Tax Levy Decrease

### PROPOSITION #2


A capital reserve fund is essentially a savings account school districts establish for capital work. The current fund was established in May 2008 following a supportive public vote on its creation. Since the account was created by the public, use of the monies from the account need to be approved by the public. Proposition #2 seeks approval for the Board to expend \$2.9 million for the following projects:

- \* STEM labs at each elementary school
- \* Replacement of 30-year-old fuel tanks at JFK
- \* Asbestos abatement at JFK
- \* Stonework in BHS lobby

This proposition is NOT for permission to borrow funds. It is for permission to expend funds the district has already saved for the purpose of capital improvement work.

### PROPOSITION #3

Proposition #3 seeks approval to extend the length of the term on our current capital reserve fund, as well as to expand the maximum amount that the district can put into the reserve. The district seeks to allow the fund, which was established in May 2008, to remain active through May 2028 and be funded with a maximum of an additional \$15 million during that time.

	SCHOOL YEAR		
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
TAX LEVY	0.78%	0%	-0.17% <small>*projected</small>

BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, May 17  
7 AM - 9 PM • Bethpage HS Gym



# MESSAGE

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Parents and Residents,

I am pleased to report to all of you that the state of our district is incredibly strong.

As you read on the first page, there will be a DECREASE to the tax levy this year. That is resulting from a dramatic decrease in mandated pension costs and the wise choice of the Board of Education to retire some debt early. Those two items represent an annual savings of \$1.1 million. What is equally remarkable is that this decrease follows last year's zero percent tax levy increase and the prior year's low increase of 0.78 percent. It is hard to believe that we have been able to provide such a rich educational program with such historically low increases.

Academically, this district has some of the highest-performing schools in New York State. Last year's students excelled on all 12 state assessments, with our third-graders coming in first in the county on the ELA and our fourth-graders coming in second in the county on the ELA. We received calls from numerous districts asking what the key to our success was and we always talk about the climate of cooperation between parents, teachers and administrators. BHS once again made the list of Best High Schools in America by the Washington Post and Newsweek.

As superintendent, I have the distinct privilege of going to numerous events, where I get to see our students

shine. I visited Hofstra University, where we are forging a partnership with the School of Engineering. I had the pleasure of observing BHS students engaged in lessons on material sciences at the Composite Prototype Center. I was in New York City to see our robotics team perform incredibly well in an international competition. I get to visit with the Philosophy Club as they prepare to go to the national finals of the Ethics Bowl in North Carolina. I was at the County Bowling Championships and saw our girls team win the county championship. I saw our Challenger basketball team win their opening game in front of a gymnasium packed with classmates, teachers, administrators and family members. I visited the Art Supervisors Association's Nassau All-County Art Exhibition, where I was amazed at the quality of the artists we have in all our schools. I attended both "The Lion King" at JFK and "Grease" at BHS and was impressed with the talent and dedication of everyone involved. I cannot wait for the performance of our first-ever elementary drama production, "Seussical," in June.

There are great things happening in the Bethpage Schools, and it is extraordinary that these exciting programs have come about with such record-low tax levies.

Sincerely,

Terrence Clark  
Superintendent of Schools

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## FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

This year's budget news is obviously good for the taxpayers and residents of Bethpage. A DECREASE in the tax levy is highly unusual. It is important to also remember that this follows last year's levy increase of zero percent and the prior year's increase of 0.78 percent. To have low increases for three consecutive years is the result of long-term planning on behalf of the Board of Education.

The Board has tasked administration with keeping property taxes as low as possible while providing a rich educational experience for students. Two things are driving this in the budget for next year. One is a drop in mandated pension costs. The district costs are going down by \$700,000. The Board has directed administration to return all of this money to the taxpayers. In addition, for the past two years,

the Board has paid down outstanding debt, resulting in a decrease in the budget of \$430,000. Those are impactful savings. We also want to thank our representatives in the State Senate and Assembly who fought hard for an increase in state aid. It is deeply appreciated.

By every measure, these prudent fiscal decisions are paying off for residents and taxpayers. The state comptroller issued a report on the Bethpage Schools in July. After being here for three months, the two auditors found nothing of consequence. The comptroller also recently issued the results of the "fiscal stress test" for every municipality. Bethpage received a zero, the best possible score. Moody's Investor Services continues to strongly rate our credit worthiness given all this positive fiscal news.

# Your Tax Dollars at Work

## A High-Value School District

### Class of 2016 ACCEPTANCES

Adelphi University  
Baruch College of the CUNY  
Binghamton University  
Boston College  
Boston University  
Brandeis University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Clark University  
Clemson University  
College of William and Mary  
Cornell University  
Dowling College  
Fairfield University  
Fordham University  
George Mason University  
Hofstra University  
Hunter College of the CUNY  
Iona College  
Ithaca College  
Johns Hopkins University  
Johnson & Wales University  
Lehigh University  
LIU Post  
Loyola University  
Manhattan College  
Marist College  
Massachusetts Inst. of Technology  
Molloy College  
Mount St. Mary's University  
New York Inst. of Technology  
New York University  
Northeastern University  
Pennsylvania State University  
Princeton University  
Queens College  
Quinnipiac University  
Rochester Inst. of Technology  
Rutgers University  
Sacred Heart University  
Seton Hall University  
Siena College  
St. John's University  
St. Joseph's College  
SUNY at Albany  
Stony Brook University  
Syracuse University  
The University of North Carolina  
at Chapel Hill  
Towson University  
Tulane University  
U.S. Air Force Academy  
University at Buffalo  
University of Connecticut  
University of Delaware  
University of Maryland, College  
Park  
University of Mass., Amherst  
University of Miami  
University of Michigan  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of Rhode Island  
University of Vermont  
University of Virginia  
Villanova University  
West Virginia University  
Williams College

### Our Academic Reputation...

Our district provides a quality education in academics, the arts, athletics, character education and community service.

- Kramer Lane Elementary School was honored by the U.S. Department of Education as a National 2013 Blue Ribbon School Award Winner as an "Exemplary High Performing School."
- Bethpage High School was designated a Reward School for the 2014-15

academic year for its high student performance on state assessments and overall academic progress.

- At No. 450 on the list, Bethpage High School has been ranked by Newsweek Magazine as one of the top high schools in the nation.

### STUDENTS MEETING/EXCEEDING STANDARDS ON HIGH SCHOOL REGENTS EXAMINATIONS

- 99.6% - Graduation Rate
- 97% - Regents Diploma Rate
- 99% - Living Environment (Science)
- 98% - U.S. History
- 95% - English
- 92% - Integrated Algebra

### STUDENTS MEETING/EXCEEDING STANDARDS ON STATE ASSESSMENTS

- Third-grade students were ranked No. 1 and fourth-grade students No. 2 in Nassau County on the ELA assessment.
- Grades 3-8 scored in the top 15 of Nassau County in ELA and math.

### ACADEMICS

- Six students earned National AP Scholar Awards, 44 earned AP Scholar with Distinction Awards, 25 earned AP Scholar with Honor Awards and 62 earned AP Scholar Awards for their performance on the May 2015 AP exams.
- Five Commended Students in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program.
- Bethpage High School had one semifinalist and one finalist named in the National Merit Scholarship Program.
- BHS was named a High Performing School by the State Education Department.
- Google Chromebooks have been issued to all students in grades 3-10.
- The PPS ACE Program provides students with life skills and work experience.

- Improving SAT and ACT scores.
- Districtwide bullying prevention programs.
- Continued increase in AP and college course participation.

### THE ARTS

- 44 All-County musicians, two All-State musicians and one All-National musician.
- Eight Long Island String Festival Association participants.
- Twenty-seven Bethpage students were represented in the Art Supervisors Association All-County Exhibit, with one Senior Scholarship Winner.

### ATHLETICS

- 25 teams were designated Scholar-Athlete Teams due to their high academic averages.
- 45 All-Conference, All-Division, All-League and All-Class student-athletes.
- 20 All-County athletes.



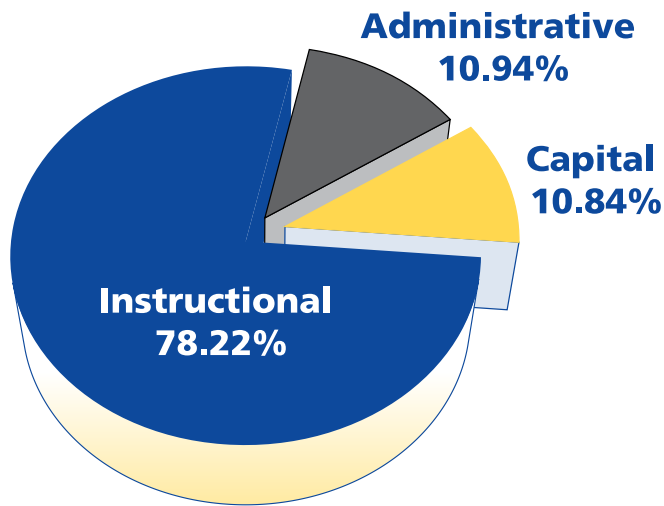
# PROPOSED 2016-17 SCHOOL BUDGET

Category	Approved Budget 2015-16	Proposed Budget 2016-17	\$ Difference	% Change
<b>GENERAL SUPPORT</b>				
Board of Education	\$104,255	\$95,556	(\$8,699)	-8.34%
Central Administration	\$409,235	\$414,112	\$4,877	1.19%
Finance	\$926,209	\$949,352	\$23,143	2.50%
Human Resources	\$928,627	\$864,111	(\$64,516)	-6.95%
Central Services	\$5,581,798	\$5,982,100	\$400,302	7.17%
Special Items	\$857,426	\$887,037	\$29,611	3.45%
<b>TOTAL GENERAL SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$8,807,550</b>	<b>\$9,192,268</b>	<b>\$384,718</b>	<b>4.37%</b>
<b>INSTRUCTION</b>				
Instructional Administration	\$4,544,681	\$4,763,741	\$219,060	4.82%
Teaching - Regular School	\$27,775,028	\$28,349,112	\$574,084	2.07%
Special Apportionment Programs	\$9,800,514	\$9,679,250	(\$121,264)	-1.24%
Teaching - Special Schools/Adult Ed	\$49,616	\$35,771	(\$13,845)	-27.90%
Instructional Media	\$1,758,895	\$1,791,488	\$32,593	1.85%
Pupil Services	\$3,823,689	\$4,045,160	\$221,471	5.79%
<b>TOTAL INSTRUCTION</b>	<b>\$47,752,423</b>	<b>\$48,664,522</b>	<b>\$912,099</b>	<b>1.91%</b>
<b>PUPIL TRANSPORTATION</b>				
District Transportation Services	\$341,766	\$355,608	\$13,842	4.05%
District Garage	\$1,989	\$1,989	\$0	0.00%
Contract Transportation Services	\$3,396,663	\$3,268,183	(\$128,480)	-3.78%
<b>TOTAL PUPIL TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$3,740,418</b>	<b>\$3,625,780</b>	<b>(\$114,638)</b>	<b>-3.06%</b>
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>				
Civic Activities	\$14,415	\$12,571	(\$1,844)	-12.79%
Census	\$0	\$24,883	\$24,883	100.00%
<b>TOTAL COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	<b>\$14,415</b>	<b>\$37,454</b>	<b>\$23,039</b>	<b>159.83%</b>
<b>UNDISTRIBUTED - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</b>				
State Retirement - ERS	\$1,403,539	\$1,121,821	(\$281,718)	-20.07%
Teachers' Retirement - TRS	\$5,085,721	\$4,664,854	(\$420,867)	-8.28%
Social Security	\$3,378,032	\$3,517,718	\$139,686	4.14%
Workers' Compensation	\$396,252	\$404,087	\$7,835	1.98%
Unemployment Services	\$5,000	\$1,960	(\$3,040)	-60.80%
Unemployment Insurance Reimbursement	\$35,000	\$26,000	(\$9,000)	-25.71%
Disability Insurance	\$54,584	\$55,931	\$1,347	2.47%
Hospital, Medical, Dental Insurance	\$7,343,042	\$7,773,113	\$430,071	5.86%
Teacher Benefit Trust Fund	\$367,248	\$370,250	\$3,002	0.82%
Other	\$2,435	\$2,220	(\$215)	-8.83%
<b>SUBTOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</b>	<b>\$18,070,853</b>	<b>\$17,937,954</b>	<b>(\$132,899)</b>	<b>-0.74%</b>
<b>UNDISTRIBUTED - DEBT SERVICE</b>				
New Bond Construction (Principal & Interest)	\$2,077,775	\$2,078,625	\$850	0.04%
Full-Day Kdgn (EXCEL) (Principal & Interest)	\$161,504	\$162,482	\$978	0.61%
Tax Anticipation Notes (Interest)	\$75,000	\$60,000	(\$15,000)	-20.00%
Revenue Anticipation Notes (Interest)	\$33,000	\$0	(\$33,000)	-100.00%
<b>SUBTOTAL DEBT SERVICE</b>	<b>\$2,347,279</b>	<b>\$2,301,107</b>	<b>(\$46,172)</b>	<b>-1.97%</b>
<b>UNDISTRIBUTED - OTHER DEBT (SPECIFY)</b>				
ESCO #1, #2 & #3 (Principal)	\$118,529	\$40,144	(\$78,385)	
ESCO #1, #2, & #3 (Interest)	\$42,139	\$22,050	(\$20,089)	
<b>SUBTOTAL OTHER DEBT (SPECIFY)</b>	<b>\$160,668</b>	<b>\$62,194</b>	<b>(\$98,474)</b>	<b>-61.29%</b>
<b>UNDISTRIBUTED - INTERFUND TRANSFERS</b>				
Transfer to Special Aid & Cafeteria Funds	\$169,985	\$130,304	(\$39,681)	-23.34%
Transfer to Capital Fund	\$140,000	\$200,000	\$60,000	42.86%
<b>SUBTOTAL INTERFUND TRANSFERS</b>	<b>\$309,985</b>	<b>\$330,304</b>	<b>\$20,319</b>	<b>6.55%</b>
<b>TOTAL UNDISTRIBUTED</b>	<b>\$20,888,785</b>	<b>\$20,631,559</b>	<b>(\$257,226)</b>	<b>-1.23%</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$81,203,591</b>	<b>\$82,151,583</b>	<b>\$947,992</b>	<b>1.17%</b>

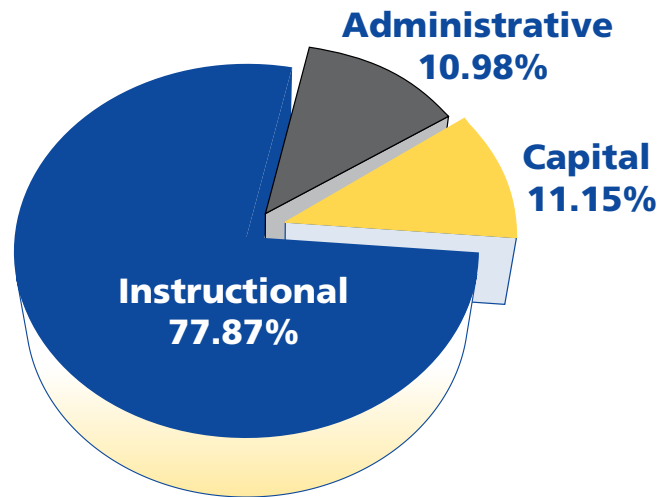


# THREE-PART BUDGET EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS

## 2015-2016 Approved Budget

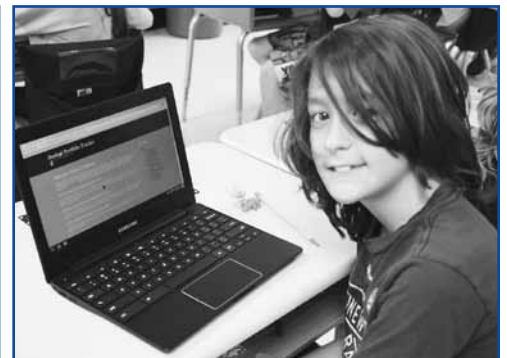
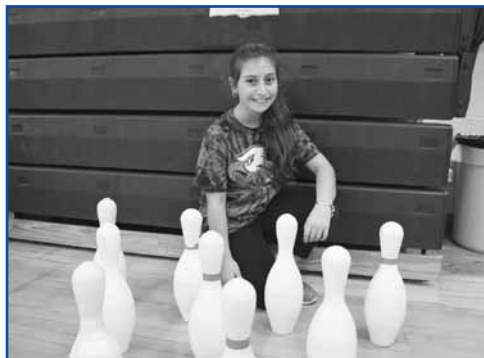


## 2016-2017 Proposed Budget



The State of New York requires all school districts to make available the proposed budget in three component parts: Administrative, Instructional Program, and Capital. Detailed copies of the expenditure budget are available in each school building, at the Bethpage Public Library, and on the web: [www.bethpagecommunity.com](http://www.bethpagecommunity.com).

"ADMINISTRATIVE CAP"	12.270%	12.360%		
BUDGET COMPONENT	2015-16 APPROVED BUDGET	2016-17 PROPOSED BUDGET	DOLLAR AMOUNT CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE
ADMINISTRATIVE	\$8,883,272	\$9,022,353	\$139,081	1.566%
INSTRUCTIONAL	\$63,515,135	\$63,973,589	\$458,454	0.722%
CAPITAL	\$8,805,184	\$9,155,641	\$350,457	3.980%
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$81,203,591</b>	<b>\$82,151,583</b>	<b>\$947,992</b>	<b>1.167%</b>



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT A CONTINGENCY BUDGET

A negative tax levy cap is a unique and valuable situation for residents: not only may taxpayers see a small decrease in their school taxes next year, but it creates a real anomaly in the event of a defeated budget.

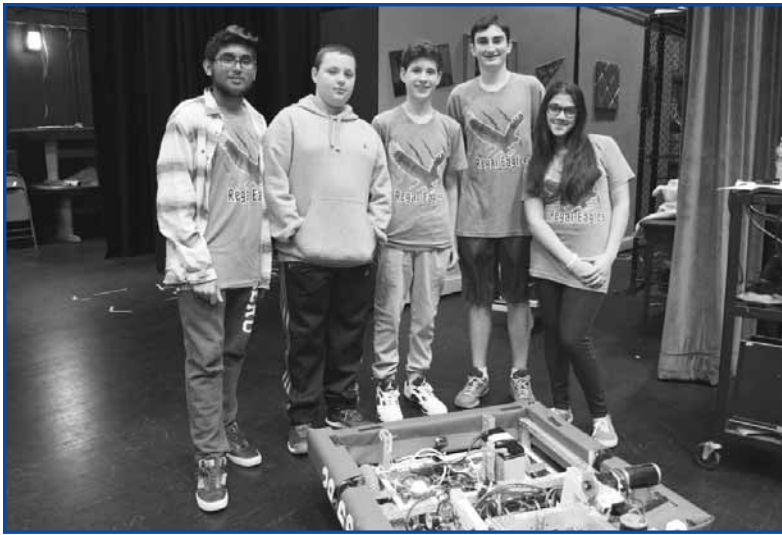
If the community does not pass this proposed budget with 50% plus one of the votes, the Board of Education will be

forced to consider holding a second vote in June, or going to a contingency budget.

In this year with a tax levy cap of -0.17%, a contingency budget will actually allow the district to keep the tax levy at exactly the same number that it was last year. This would translate to a 0% tax levy increase for residents, which is **higher** than the -0.17% that is being proposed.

Yes, you are reading that correctly. ***A contingency budget could cost the taxpayers more money than the proposed budget.***

A contingency budget would also set certain restrictions on district expenditures and would negatively affect the supplies and equipment we can provide our students with next year.



## STEM in Our Schools

The district is committed to providing our students with opportunities to advance in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). We already have 11 Advanced Placement classes in those areas. We have increasingly been emphasizing engineering and have seen an uptick in the number of students pursuing engineering as a college major. Over the past two years, our high school students have partnered with the Composite Prototyping Center in Plainview to gain experience working with former Grumman engineers in the study of material sciences as applied to aeronautics. Next fall, we will be partnering with Hofstra University in delivering a new course at BHS, Principles of Engineering, where students will work with high-level computer programs and a variety of materials to design and analyze potential solutions to real world problems. Our Science Research program has students preparing entries for a number of prestigious competitions, such as Intel and the Long Island Science and Engineering Fair. The BHS

Robotics Club, Regal Eagles, competes in the prestigious FIRST Robotics competition. This year they competed in New York City with an international field, finishing fifth out of 66 teams with several individual awards for students and mentors.

There are a variety of activities taking place in our elementary schools, including the JASON program for our Argonauts, Solar Car construction, the designing and building of dams, and an array of Living Environment activities. On May 17 one of the propositions before the voters will ask for approval to build new, state-of-the-art STEM labs for each elementary school so that students in grades K-5 can work on hands-on projects. JFK students are exposed to variety of STEM with computer programming and technology design as part of their middle school programs.

We have greatly expanded our Hour of Code activities throughout the district as part of our 21st Century Scholars' Program and the number of students participating has been tremendous!

## Community Partners

The district is grateful for the community partnerships we have forged. Groups like PTA, PAL, Dads' Club, BBAI, Discovery, Moms and Dads for Music, Kiwanis, the Lions Club, Bethpage Athletic Camps, the Bethpage Senior Citizens and the Bethpage Educational Foundation all work with us to enrich the lives of our students. Their work is critical to our success. Our PTAs are dedicated to providing programs that concentrate on the whole child. The Dads' Club sponsors the annual National Honor Society Night and the annual Athletic Dinner. Discovery provides a safe zone for students whose working parents need child care. The Bethpage Educational Foundation has provided innovative mini-grants for teachers, subsidized costly field trips and purchased cultural programs for all of our schools. The Lions Club donates dictionaries to every third-grader in the district, and Kiwanis works with the Student Civic Association and Key Club on various community service projects. BBAI helps to defray the costs of keeping up our fields. Bethpage Music Association constantly raises funds for student scholarships. The Bethpage Senior Citizens continually share their joy at the annual Senior Citizen Prom. Bethpage Athletic Camps donated kayaks being used in our 21st Century Scholars' Program. We are all fortunate to live in a community where civic organizations take such an active role in the schools, and where everyone works together to better the education of our youngest residents.

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## 21st Century Program Thrives

The 21st Century Scholars' Program is running in all five schools for students in grades 4-12. Each year, those seniors who have completed the program receive a scholarship from the Bethpage Educational Foundation. Equally important, they have completed a program that seeks to expand the boundaries of learning beyond the classroom. At a time when too many educators across the nation are focused on assessments, the 21st Century Scholars' Program provides unique learning opportunities for the students of Bethpage. This year's participants learned to kayak in the BHS pool; engaged in various literature circles; made visits to colleges; attended the Metropolitan Opera, various Broadway shows and the ballet; completed workshops on the Hour of Code, Native American Study and Pi Day; and went on many field trips, including a culinary tour of Manhattan and a tour of the National September 11 Memorial Museum.

# SAT SCORES on the *Rise*

The SAT scores for Bethpage High School are bucking the national trend by going up! Ten years ago, the Board of Education asked administration to address the issue of lower scores, particularly on the critical reading portion. Bethpage is now well above the state and national averages on ELA and way beyond the national average on the math section.

The Board asked for a long-range plan to address the fact that



students were underperforming when compared to the state and national averages. Summer reading assignments and grade-level vocabulary lists were introduced. Chromebooks are utilized in our elementary and middle school classes to access the literacy software Achieve 3000. The rise in reading Lexile scores has been impressive. Courses were added that emphasized literacy, and literacy teaching assistants were added at the middle school. The district offers SAT prep classes both during the day and after school.

In the most recent administration of the SAT for which we have statistics, BHS was 17 points above the state average and eight points higher than the national average on



the critical reading section. BHS students performed even better on the math section, scoring 26 points higher than the state average and 15 points higher than the national average. While our scores have been increasing, the national scores have been decreasing. There has been a steady upward trajectory going back for the past several years, and we are doing everything possible to keep that trend going!

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## Frequently *Asked* Questions



**Q. What is the proposed budget increase, and is the proposed budget within the New York State tax levy cap legislation?**

A. The proposed budget carries a -0.17% school tax levy increase, which is within the state tax levy cap.

**Q. What does the proposed budget support?**

A. The proposed budget will maintain the instructional programs for all schools. It also supports additional Chromebooks, summer school, TGIF, 21st Century Scholars, clubs and extracurricular activities, robotics, the K-12 inclusion program, artist-in-residence programs, security enhancements and full-day kindergarten. The district's class size policy remains unchanged.

**Q. What are the implications of a contingency budget?**

A. A contingency budget would require the district to eliminate certain expenses by law, particularly things like technology equipment.

**Q. Where can I find additional budget information, and where do I vote?**

A. Additional information about the proposed budget can be found on the district's website, [www.bethpagecommunity.com](http://www.bethpagecommunity.com). Voting will take place on Tuesday, May 17, 2016 from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the high school gymnasium.



# BETHPAGE SCHOOLS

Bethpage Union Free School District

Bethpage, NY 11714

## Board of Education

Michael J. Kelly, *President*

Sandra Watson, *Vice President*

Anna Israelton, *Trustee*

John Lonardo, *Trustee*

James A. McGlynn, *Trustee*

Kurt Spears, *Trustee*

Marie Swierkowski, *Trustee*

## Central Administration

Terrence Clark,

*Superintendent of Schools*

David Schneider,

*Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Technology*

Caroline Lavelle,

*Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources*

Joseph A. Marchesiello,

*Assistant Superintendent for Business*

Patricia Hantzidiamantis, Ed.D.,

*Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services*

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# VOTING INFORMATION

**Budget Vote Tuesday, May 17, 2016**

**7 a.m.-9 p.m. at Bethpage High School Gymnasium**

## Qualifications for Voting:

You must be:

- A citizen of the United States.
- Eighteen years of age or older.
- A resident of the district for a period of 30 or more days prior to the vote.
- Registered to vote with the school district or the Nassau County Board of Elections (provided that you voted in a school election during the four calendar years prior to the year for which such registration is being prepared).

## Budget Vote Registration:

Any person who is not registered to vote in the general election is not eligible to vote in the school district election, but may do so by registering. Continuous voter registration is available during school hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. (only when school is open) at the Administration Building (District Clerk's Office). Note: For the May 17, 2016 vote, you must register by Thursday, May 12, 2016.

## Budget Hearing:

The district will conduct an official budget hearing on Tuesday, May 3, 2016 beginning at 8 p.m. at Bethpage High School (Little Theater).

## Budget Vote:

Tuesday, May 17, 2016, 7 a.m.-9 p.m. at Bethpage High School (Gymnasium). Parking in the rear of the building.

## Absentee Ballots:

Applications may be obtained from the District Clerk in the Superintendent's Office at the Administration Building: 10 Cherry Avenue, Bethpage, or on the district's website (see address below). All absentee ballots must be received in the District Clerk's Office by 5 p.m. on the day of the vote.

**More comprehensive budget information is available on the district website at [www.bethpagecommunity.com](http://www.bethpagecommunity.com).**

# EVERY VOTE COUNTS!