

Budget Edition 2015-2016

Brasher Falls Central School District

The Brasher Falls Central School Board of Education has been faced with an extremely difficult task of developing the 2015-2016 proposed school budget. The entire process has been delayed by the posturing of the Governor in trying to reform the teacher evaluation process. The New York State Budget was passed on April 1, 2015 and the state aid school runs were distributed after that, enabling the district to finally plug revenues into their budget development process.

New York State school districts will receive an increase of \$1.3 Billion in state aid for the 2015-2016 school year. The aid amounts to a 6 percent increase from the current year.

Our District will receive an increase in foundation aid, BOCES aid, transportation aid, and excess cost aid of approximately \$617,426. The district will also receive an increase in building aid of \$675,000, to be used in payment of the capital building projects.

School Districts derive revenue from three sources: state aid, federal aid and property tax. This year's spending plan incorporates a 1.77% tax levy increase which is approximately \$85,100. This increase keeps the district below the NYS Property Tax Cap. The projected change in the tax rate will be \$.39 per thousand. For a

home assessed at \$100,000, the increase in taxes before the star exemption would be \$39.00, or \$3.25 per month.

The increase in aid has enabled the Board and administrative team to reinstate some of the staff reduction from the 2014-2015 budget including the following positions: 1 business teacher, .5 art teacher, 1 AIS teaching assistant and 1 elementary teacher.

There is also a proposal on the ballot to purchase three buses: one 66 passenger bus, one 48 passenger bus and one 42 passenger/wheelchair accessible bus. The state pays 90% of the cost of the buses and the interest over the five year payback period. The District will trade in three buses for a \$59,000 price reduction. The total amount for the buses is not to exceed \$291,000.

Mary-Margaret Bellinger, Arthur Siebert, Laura DiMatteo, Seth Belt, and Michael Hornung have submitted petitions and are on the ballots for the two available school board seats. The budget hearing will be on May 5, 2015 at 6:00 PM in the auditorium. The budget vote is Tuesday, May 19, 2015 from 12:00 Noon until 8:00 PM.

If you have questions, please call Paul M. Harrica, Interim Superintendent of Schools.

Budget Hearing:

Tuesday, May 5, 2015

6:00 p.m.

at the Middle/High School Auditorium

Budget Vote:

Tuesday, May 19, 2015

12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

at the Middle School Gym of the Middle/High School Building

In Summary,

We encourage you to come in to the St. Lawrence Central Middle School Gym of the Middle/High School Building on May 19, 2015 between **12 p.m. and 8 p.m.** and vote on the following issues:

Proposition 1: Authorization to expend the sum set forth in the estimate of General Fund Appropriations in the amount of \$21,855,723 for the 2015-2016 school year,

Proposition 2: Authorization to purchase one 66 passenger school bus, one 48 passenger school bus and one 42 passenger/wheelchair accessible bus at a cost not to exceed \$291,000, and if necessary, to issue a five-year statutory bus bond.

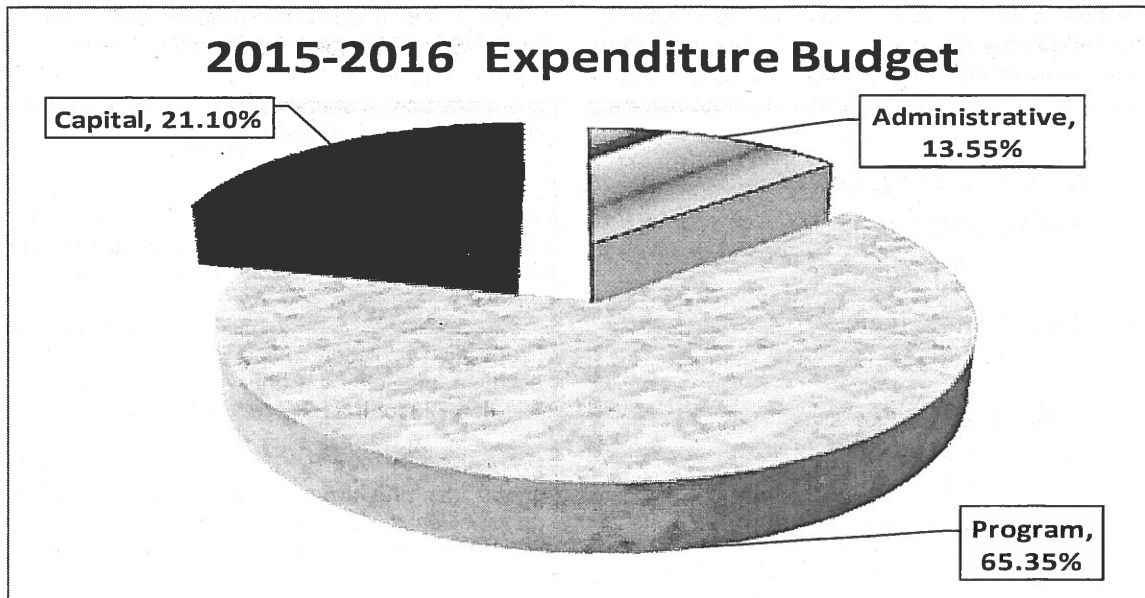
In addition, two school board members need to be selected.

Qualifications of Voters

1. Eighteen years of age or older,
2. A citizen of the United States,
3. A resident of the Brasher Falls Central School District for 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

**BRASHER FALLS CENTRAL SCHOOL
THREE COMPONENT BUDGET**

Function	2014-2015 Budget	2015-2016 Proposed Budget	← 3 Components of Total Budget →		
			Administrative	Program	Capital
Board of Education	\$ 17,832	\$ 17,956	\$ 17,956	\$ -	\$ -
Central Administration	\$ 184,187	\$ 187,071	\$ 187,071	\$ -	\$ -
Finance	\$ 226,262	\$ 262,784	\$ 262,784	\$ -	\$ -
Legal and Personnel	\$ 57,524	\$ 58,401	\$ 47,585	\$ 10,816	\$ -
Central Services	\$ 1,203,090	\$ 1,291,086	\$ 10,262	\$ 10,261	\$ 1,270,563
Insurance & BOCES Admin/Capital	\$ 536,904	\$ 570,251	\$ 490,301	\$ 78,950	\$ 1,000
Supervision & Curriculum Development	\$ 720,335	\$ 666,281	\$ 370,103	\$ 296,178	\$ -
Instruction- General Education	\$ 5,220,685	\$ 5,492,768	\$ -	\$ 5,492,768	\$ -
Instruction- Special Education	\$ 2,247,497	\$ 2,248,295	\$ -	\$ 2,248,295	\$ -
Health Services	\$ 91,948	\$ 94,800	\$ -	\$ 94,800	\$ -
Psychological Services	\$ 52,164	\$ 53,705	\$ -	\$ 53,705	\$ -
Co-curricular Activities	\$ 61,600	\$ 56,100	\$ -	\$ 56,100	\$ -
Interscholastic Athletics	\$ 175,798	\$ 181,034	\$ -	\$ 181,034	\$ -
Pupil Transportation	\$ 1,246,615	\$ 1,283,088	\$ 73,059	\$ 1,210,029	\$ -
Employee Benefits	\$ 6,458,602	\$ 6,520,092	\$ 1,502,963	\$ 4,514,974	\$ 502,155
Debt Service	\$ 2,792,154	\$ 2,812,011	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,812,011
Interfund Transfers	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ 34,500	\$ 25,500
	\$21,353,197	\$ 21,855,723	\$ 2,962,084	\$ 14,282,410	\$ 4,611,229
% of Total	100.00%	100.00%	13.55%	65.35%	21.10%

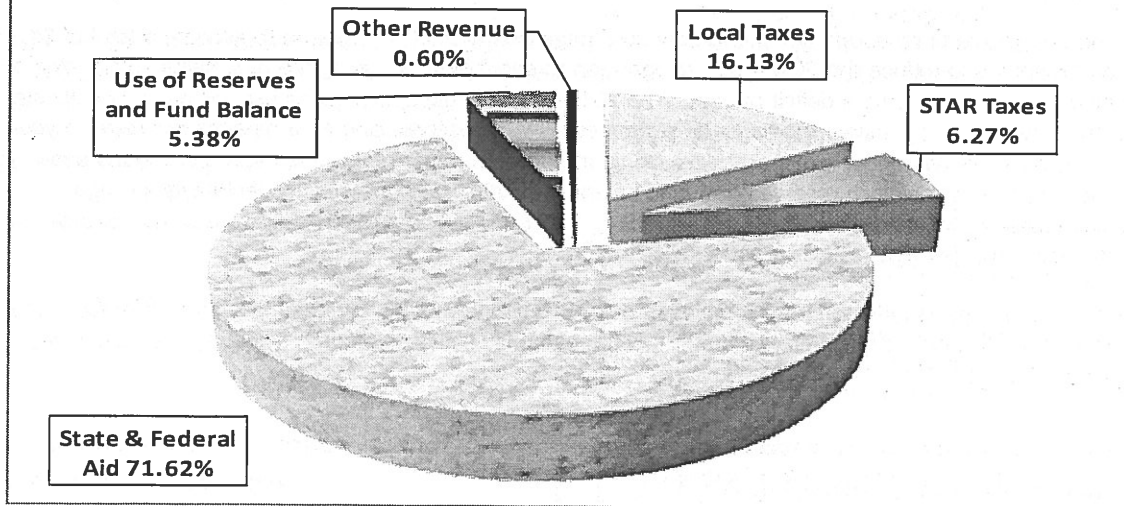


If you would like to view the full budget statement with required attachments, please visit www.bfcsd.org. You may also request it by contacting Cindy Delisle, District Clerk, Brasher Falls Central School District, P.O. Box 307, Brasher Falls, NY 13613, telephone # (315) 389-5131 ext.1108, email cdelisle@bfcsd.org.

HOW WE FUND OUR SPENDING PLAN

Revenue	2014-2015 Current Budget	2015-2016 Proposed Budget
Real Property Taxes - Local	\$ 3,432,215	\$ 3,517,315
Real Property Taxes - STAR	\$ 1,371,144	\$ 1,371,144
Other Tax Items	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
Charges for Services	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000
Use of Money and Property	\$ 21,700	\$ 21,700
Sale of Property	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 92,500	\$ 92,500
State Aid	\$15,010,138	\$ 15,627,564
Federal Aid	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Transfer from Debt Service Fund	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Transfer from Employees' Retirement Reserve	\$ 401,000	\$ 401,000
Transfer from Unemployment Reserve	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$ 850,000	\$ 650,000
TOTAL	\$21,353,197	\$ 21,855,723

2015 - 2016 Source of Revenue



Announcement

We are excited to announce that Joel Truax has been named Valedictorian and Kody Kocsis has been named Salutatorian for the SLC Class of 2015! Best wishes to these amazing young men in their future endeavors!



Questions & Answers

Q: Does the tax levy increase indicate how much my taxes will rise?

A: No. The tax levy is the amount of money the school district can raise through property taxes. The law applies to the school district tax levy, not tax rates or individual tax bills. The amount an individual will pay to contribute to the levied amount is the tax rate. The amounts stated above are estimates. Tax rates paid by individual taxpayers may differ greatly from one household to another, depending on such things as equalization rates and assessed property values. In addition, STAR exemptions can impact an individual tax bill. The school district does not control equalization rates, assessed property values or STAR exemption amounts.

Q: What is the tax levy cap and how does it work?

A: The New York State property tax "cap" limits the annual increase in the tax levies of school districts. Each district will have a different calculated tax levy limit or "cap". If a district proposes a tax levy increase at or below the calculated cap, the district needs a simple majority of 50 percent plus 1 vote to pass the budget. If the district proposes a budget with a tax levy higher than the calculated limit, the district needs a supermajority (at least 60 percent) to pass the budget.

Q: Does the tax cap mean my annual property tax can't increase more than 2 percent?

A: Not Necessarily. New York's property tax cap law establishes a tax levy cap for each school district. The "cap" allows school districts to increase their property tax levy from one year to the next by 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is less, based on a multi-step formula. School districts are then allowed to take certain exemptions that may boost their tax levy limits to more than 2 percent or the inflation rate.

Q: Does the Brasher Falls CSD proposed tax levy increase of 1.77% exceed the maximum allowable under the tax cap?

A: No. The proposed tax levy increase in this budget proposal is *below* the maximum allowable tax levy increase by .06%. The calculated maximum allowable tax levy increase is actually 1.83%.

Q: What is the district contributing to reduce the 2015-2016 Budget Gap? What is the risk?

A: As shown on our source of revenue schedule on the third page, the District is prepared to allocate a total of \$1,176,000 from fund balance and reserves to reduce the 2015-2016 budget gap to avoid staff and program reductions. Balancing a budget with reserves and fund balance is building a deficit budget. The 2016-2017 budget building process will automatically start with a gap of \$1,176,000 and this does not consider increases to expenses. Using reserves and fund balance is similar to you using a savings account to pay bills, however, your expenses increase year to year at a rate higher than your income increase. In addition, if there is no method in place to replenish reserves and fund balance, the district will eventually deplete its savings.

Q: What steps has the district taken to reduce costs?

A: Examples of cost savings include: sharing services through BOCES, switching our heating system from fuel oil to natural gas, participating in a cooperative bid for supplies and diesel fuel to get the lowest rates, and participating in an electricity consortium to lock in lower electricity rates.

**Brasher Falls Central School District
St. Lawrence Central School
P.O. Box 307
Brasher Falls, NY 13613**

**Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Brasher Falls, NY 13613**

CURRENT RESIDENT

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

We have two vacant five-year seats for members of the Board of Education to be decided at the annual voting.

Last Incumbents:

- Term of five years—Mary-Margaret Bellinger
- Term of five years—Arthur Siebert

Following are brief biographies of the five district residents running for these seats. They are listed in the order in which they will appear on the ballot as determined by a drawing held at our last Board meeting pursuant to New York State Education Law.

Mary-Margaret Bellinger

Mary-Margaret Bellinger has been a resident of the Brasher Falls Central School District for 30 years. She has been employed as an elementary school teacher for the past 15 years by the Massena Central School District. She also assists the elementary Parent-Teacher Organization at events if needed.

As a former student, mother of two children attending school here and member of the Board for the past five years, Mrs. Bellinger wants what is best for the children in the District. She feels the strengths she would bring to the Board of Education include her elementary education background/degree and her ability to work with others, being flexible and helping to bring about compromise.

Arthur F. Siebert

Arthur F. Siebert has been a resident of the Brasher Falls Central School District for the past 25 years. He is currently employed by St. Joseph's Treatment and Addiction Center in Saranac Lake, NY. In addition, he is a Section X Girls' Basketball official and adult literacy volunteer.

Mr. Siebert is a current Board Member and would like to continue serving in this capacity because he genuinely cares about the future of the young people in the District. He feels that advantages he can bring to the Board include being assertive and unafraid of having a difficult conversation, being caring and genuine, and having a history of working with current and past administration and staff.

Laura DiMatteo

Laura DiMatteo has been a resident of the Brasher Falls Central School District for three years. She has been employed by Potsdam Central School for 15 years, serving on committees involved in hiring, scheduling, and the initial A. A. Kingston Middle School "Schools to Watch" Application Committee.

Mrs. DiMatteo believes that she has a great deal of experience and information to bring to the Board of Education. She feels that working in a number of school districts has allowed her to experience many different ways of addressing school-related issues. In addition, she feels that her teaching experience allows her to view situations in a nonjudgmental, unbiased manner. Her goal is to put students' needs for success first and foremost.

Seth D. Belt

Seth D. Belt is a life-long resident of the Brasher Falls Central School District. A member of the St. Lawrence Central Class of 2002, he currently coaches Brasher Falls Youth Basketball and 5th and 6th grade lacrosse. He has been employed by the St. Lawrence County Board of Elections for approximately two years.

As a life-long residence of the District, Mr. Belt feels that Brasher Falls Central School District is the backbone of our community. He would like to be a Board Member because he plans to raise a child in the community and wants to provide all students with the best education possible. He feels that his strengths include strong experience and understanding of the budget process, being open to new ideas, and not being afraid to ask tough questions. Having been actively involved with the community at both the county and local level, he feels that it is extremely important for people to get involved in their community, and he looks forward to bringing his strengths to the table for the district.

Michael Hornung

Michael Hornung has been a resident of the Brasher Falls Central School District for 15 years. He has been employed by MLS Direct Network for nine years.

Having served on the Board of Education in the past, for four years, Mr. Hornung would like to become a Board Member again to help children in the District get the best education St. Lawrence Central can offer. He feels that his experience as a business owner and the ability to think outside the box are strengths he can bring to the Board of Education.

Absentee Ballots

Applications for absentee ballots will be obtainable between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays, from the District Clerk. Completed applications must be received by the District Clerk at least seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter. Absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

Contact Cindy Delisle, District Clerk, Brasher Falls Central School District, P.O. Box 307, Brasher Falls, NY 13613, telephone # (315) 389-5131 ext.1108 or email cdelisle@bfcasd.org.