

# BERLIN NEWS

BERLIN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MAY 2009 • BUDGET ISSUE

## The 2009-2010 Proposed Budget

*The budget for the 2009-2010 school year is \$18,281,716.*

### A Message from the Board President

Dear Residents:

At the Board of Education meeting on April 21st, the Board approved for school year 2009-10 a spending plan with a zero tax increase. The proposed budget of \$18,281,716 is a decrease of \$112,715, or minus .69%, from the current school year.

In these demanding financial times, the Board charged the administration in December to provide a spending plan with a zero tax increase. I am pleased that they were successful, especially in the face of declining state aid. In addition to the staff reductions with the Stephentown Elementary closing, two additional elementary positions were identified, as enrollment in the district continues to decline. Retirements this year are at the secondary school. Each position was evaluated, and based on a declining enrollment; the determination was made to not replace a special education teacher and a sixth grade classroom teacher.

The Board also voted to a separate proposition for year two of our five year program to replace vehicles in our aging fleet of school buses. The five year goal is to replace all pre-2000 high mileage buses. Additionally, the Board voted a separate proposition for a \$100,000 project to address ADA/handicap requirements. Last year, voters approved funds for ADA compliance at the high school: curb cuts for wheel chair access to the front entrance and

retrofitting of classrooms for handicap use. This year, voters are asked to approve funds to make the front entrance at the Berlin Elementary School handicap accessible. If approved by the voters, the district will receive 75% state aid for this expenditure, with a local cost of \$25,000 for this \$100,000 project.

At the school board election on May 19, voters will be asked to vote on the budget, candidates for board seats, the proposition on buses, and the proposition on the \$100,000 project for ADA compliance at the Berlin Elementary School. There are two board seats up for election this year. The candidates are Gina Goodermote versus John Nash, and Julie Darling versus John Greene.

Students are our first priority. The proposed budget meets our fundamental responsibility to provide our students with a quality education, and does so without an additional impact on the tax levy. Please come to the budget hearing on May 5, to learn more about the budget and ask questions. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. in the high school auditorium.

Frank Zwack  
*President*

## BUDGET VOTE, BOARD ELECTION & PROPOSITIONS

May 19, 2009 • Noon – 9 p.m.

Berlin Fire Hall, Community Avenue

## DISTRICT HEALTH COUNCIL NEWS

### Third Annual Health Fair to be Held May 20, 2009

The Berlin Central School District Health Council is pleased to announce the 3rd Annual Health Fair with this year's theme, "Eat Well, Play Hard, Live Healthy" being held on Wednesday, May 20, 2009 from 11am – 7pm. The Health Fair is being held on a Wednesday this year so that high school students can be included in the fair. We have some other important changes to our health fair that we would like to share with you.

The first is that we will have the Mobile Mammography Van present at the Health Fair. The van will be conducting FREE mammograms during the Health Fair. Breast cancer in women is one of the leading causes of illness and death among women age 40 and over and also one of the most curable with early diagnosis and treatment. FREE mammograms are available to all women over the age of 40 regardless of whether or not you have insurance. The only requirement is that you call ahead to schedule an appointment. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact Tammy Whitman at 658-2684 ext. 230.

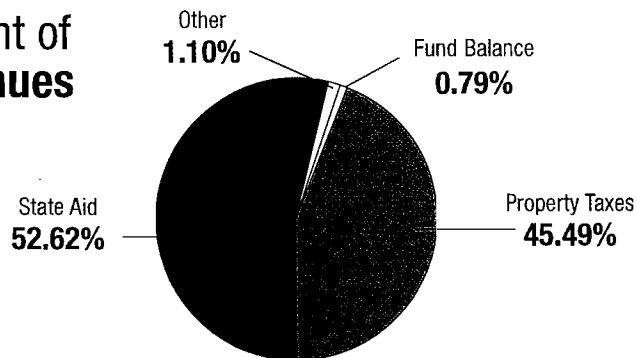
This year we are having a more holistic approach to health, so in addition to the many services and screenings that have been available the past two years (blood pressure, blood glucose, vision, hearing, BMI); we will also have resources available related to mental health and financial health. There will be many vendors available to provide assis-

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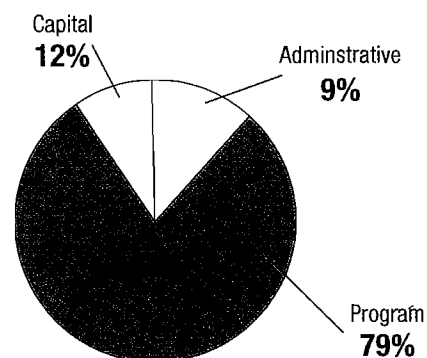
## REVENUE

	2008-2009 Approved Budget	2009-2010 Proposed Budget
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$ 481,114	\$ 143,641
Use of Reserves	—	—
Legislative Item	—	—
Foundation Aid	7,155,531	7,145,817
Sound Basic Education	—	—
Pre-K Aid	—	77,358
Handicapped Program Aid	228,955	256,457
Building Aid	142,514	142,089
BOCES Aid/Refund	329,794	397,814
Software, Library, & Textbook Aid	79,715	77,230
Transportation Aid	1,455,296	1,534,320
Categorical Aids	15,271	13,589
Medicaid/Medicare Reimbursement	55,080	55,080
BOCES Classroom Rental	7,000	7,000
Tuition	6,300	9,500
Driver Education	16,000	22,000
Miscellaneous	11,900	20,600
Interest	77,200	45,000
Penalties on Unpaid Taxes	15,000	17,000
SUBTOTAL	10,076,670	9,964,495
Real Property Taxes	8,317,221	8,317,221
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$18,393,891</b>	<b>\$18,281,716</b>

### Percent of Revenues



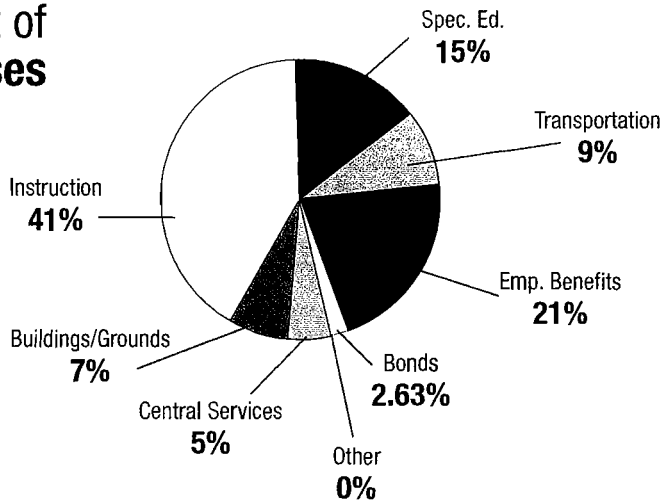
### Percent of Three Part Budget



# EXPENSES

	2008-2009 Adopted Budget	2009-2010 Proposed Budget
<b>GENERAL SUPPORT:</b>		
Board of Education/Community	\$ 38,835	\$ 19,885
Central Admin./Finance	565,457	547,218
Legal/Personnel/Public Info.	83,579	83,545
Operations & Maintenance	1,387,432	1,312,993
Insurance/Ass'n. Dues	43,402	62,100
BOCES Administration Expense	139,955	127,914
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2,258,660</b>	<b>2,153,655</b>
<b>INSTRUCTION:</b>		
Supervision/In-Service	741,687	743,021
Regular Instruction	5,544,318	5,575,302
Special Education	2,722,845	2,822,225
Continuing Ed./Driver Ed.	17,710	21,710
Library/Technology	541,819	514,032
Guidance/Health Services	458,671	460,596
Co-Curricular/Sports	184,477	175,764
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>10,211,527</b>	<b>10,312,650</b>
<b>PUPIL TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>1,683,977</b>	<b>1,615,970</b>
<b>UNDISTRIBUTED EXPENSES:</b>		
Employee Benefits	3,755,388	3,804,019
Debt Service/Interfund Transfers	484,339	395,422
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>4,239,717</b>	<b>4,199,441</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$18,393,891</b>	<b>\$18,281,716</b>

## Percent of Expenses



## Questions About the Budget

### What will be the impact on taxes?

The proposed budget of \$18,281,716 will result in an estimated 0 (zero) % increase in the total amount of taxes raised. Tax rates for individual towns will be established in August.

### What happens if the budget is defeated?

If the budget does not pass, the Board of Education has three options:

- Resubmit the budget without change for another vote.
- Resubmit a revised budget of another vote.
- Adopt a contingent budget.

### Does a budget defeat limit the money spent for employee salaries?

No, salaries are defined by contracts and are legal obligations of the district regardless of the passage of the budget.

### ENROLLMENT FACTS:

The March 2009 enrollment report shows total enrollment of 956 students, with 924 students attending district schools, 19 students attending special education programs outside the district, and 13 students attending programs at BOCES or HVCC.

# 2009-2010 School Budget and BOE Vote

This year voting will be done via machines at the Berlin Fire Hall at 11 Community Avenue in the town of Berlin. Voters will be asked to vote on four items:

## THE 2009-2010 BUDGET

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Berlin Central School District is hereby authorized to expend a sum, not to exceed \$18,281,716, in the 2009-2010 school year, and to levy the necessary tax therefore on taxable property of the district for the tax year beginning July 1, 2009.

## PROPOSITION NO. 1

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Berlin Central School District, Rensselaer County, New York, is hereby authorized to purchase five school buses (two (2) van-style buses \$82,000; three (3) 65-passenger buses \$306,159) and is further authorized to expend therefore an amount not to exceed \$388,159.00, to be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of said School District and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law; and in anticipation of such tax, obligations of said School District shall be issued.

**Budget Hearing**  
**May 5, 2009 • 7:00 p.m.**  
**Junior/Senior High School**

## PROPOSITION NO. 2

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Berlin Central School District, Rensselaer County, New York, is hereby authorized to replace, reconstruct, and construct ADA accessibility improvements to Berlin Elementary School building, including all original furnishings, equipment, machinery, apparatus, appurtenances, site improvement, and incidental improvements and expenses in connection therewith, and is further authorized to expend therefore an amount not to exceed \$100,000, to be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of said School District and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law; and in anticipation of such tax, obligations of said School District may be issued.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION SEATS

There are two Board of Education seats up for election this year. Both seats are 3-year terms (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2012)

### Incumbents:

Julie Darling

Donald French

### Challengers:

Julie Darling

John Greene

Gina Goodermote

John Nash

### *District Health News* *continued from page 2*

tance and support, including a financial planner who will be available to discuss financial concerns or issues in private.

We are also very excited to announce that we have two great guest speakers coming to the Health Fair. Brian Holloway, former pro athlete and national speaker will be a guest speaker for our high school students. We will also be providing a wonderful guest speaker for our parents and community members to wrap up the evening at 7pm.

We will be raffling off two **HUGE** grand prizes. For our high school students, we will be raffling off a **Wii gaming station** with accessories. High School students will all receive one chance to win the Wii. Students have the opportunity to earn additional chances for the Wii that day as we will also be sponsoring a food drive. For each canned good a student brings to the Health Fair (up to a maximum of 5), they will receive one additional chance to win the Wii for each canned good brought. These are very popular among both children and adults and one of our lucky high school students will be taking it home!

For our adults and all other students attending the health fair from 3pm – 7pm, we will be raffling off a **laptop computer**. Everyone who attends the health fair will receive a ticket to be entered into the drawing. Prizes will be raffled off at the end of our guest speaker presentations. The winners **must be present** at the guest speaker's presentation to win.

Please mark your calendars now for this exciting event. If you have any questions or would be interested in hosting a booth at the Health Fair, please contact Tammy Whitman at (518) 658-2684 ext. 230.

# Program Promotes Reading, Public Library



Stephentown Elementary School kicked off their annual Books and Beyond Program on January 9, 2009. The program ended March 14, 2009. This was the second year we partnered with the Stephentown Memorial Library in an effort to promote family reading at home and also increase the use of the public library.

This year's theme was Ice Scream for Reading. Students read 20 minutes every night and colored an ice cream cone on their reading log. When a row of ice cream cones was complete, students returned the reading log to school and earned a scoop on our ice cream cone bulletin board. Third grade helped keep track of our progress by creating graphs using the computer program, Graph Club.

The program consisted of many activities. Students visited the Stephentown Memorial Library, where they heard a story, read aloud by Library Director, Laurene Teachout and had an opportunity to check out a book. We also had ice cream Friday's – on this day students that read and turned in a reading log enjoyed a scoop of ice cream during lunch. When students visited the Stephentown Memorial Library with their family, they received a ticket to return to

school for entry in the monthly book drawing. Additionally, we held two family reading nights during the program. The first one was held February 11th at Stephentown Elementary School. Students and their families were invited to school to listen to some of our staff members read their favorite childhood books. The families were encouraged to wear their PJ's, bring a stuffed friend and enjoy the evening. The evening was a great success. The second family reading night was held March 12th. The Stephentown Memorial Library hosted the event in collaboration with the Stephentown Shared Decision Making Team. Families learned about digital reading media, received information on accessing the vast resources on the New York Public library website, enjoyed a guest read aloud, and explored the varied inventory of children's books on tape. The Books and Beyond program culmination celebration was held on March 19, 2009 and featured a visit and workshop by author/illustrator Sylvie Kantorovitz. Ms. Kantorovitz provided an interactive workshop designed to enrich future authors and illustrators.

## Message from the Superintendent

Dear Parents and Community Members:

This large newsletter is the one that carries information on the annual budget proposal and Board of Education election. The voting date is May 19, 2009 at the Berlin Fire Hall from 12:00 noon to 9:00 p.m. The district has made arrangements with Rensselaer County to provide voting machines and election inspectors. In addition to the budget and candidates for board seats, the public is asked to vote on continuing the bus purchase program to replace old buses in need of replacement and to continue the \$100,000 project to address ADA compliance issues.

The budget is less than last year due to the closing of the Stephentown Elementary School, but adds some necessary instructional time for math at the middle school level. The budget also continues staff development training, pre-school education, summer school for elementary, middle school and high school levels, as well as the purchase of some much needed technology equipment.

As we near the completion of the first decade of the 21st Century, much thought is given to educating young people for the new jobs that are the trend of the future. Real change has to occur to ensure that Berlin graduates are competitive and can continue to enroll in top level colleges and universities. The jobs of the future are a departure from the manufacturing world of work so many of us have become

accustomed. In the Capitol District area training for science and math candidates for the Nano Technology world has become a reality. This whole section of the state south from Hudson to north as far as Saratoga has been identified as the Tech Valley area with jobs and businesses focusing on innovation and development of technology related employment. Other jobs in the so called GREEN industry are being developed on a regular basis in our area, also.

As a school district we need to meet the educational challenges that call for higher level skills from our graduates. Our staff, students and even some community people have begun to re-think the systemic change that needs to occur. I am pleased to tell you that some program developments will be part of the 2009-10 school year. As these innovations develop, I hope that you will attend the May Technology Fair at the High School to see where we are and where we are going.

As Interim Superintendent, it continues to be a joy to serve the district as we move to strengthen the educational program. My best wishes for a successful school year for all our students.

Yours truly,  
Charlotte A. Gregory, *Interim Superintendent*

## Budget Vote & Board Election

May 19, 2009 • Noon – 9 p.m.

Berlin Fire Hall, Community Avenue

## Voter Qualifications

To vote, you must be:

- A citizen of the United States
- At least 18 years of age
- A resident of the district for 30 days prior to the vote

## Absentee Ballots

If an illness or business commitment makes it impossible for you to be present to vote on May 19, 2009, please call the District Clerk at 658-2690 to request an absentee ballot and to determine voter qualification.

*Stay Connected Online:*

**[www.berlincentral.org](http://www.berlincentral.org)**

## Hall of Fame Project

Teachers and staff at the Berlin High School are working on a new project for a "Wall of Distinction." The purpose is to recognize "Berlin graduates who have made a difference" in the world. The on going tribute will be displayed in the Berlin Junior/Senior High School. People who are chosen will be permanent members of this honorable monument.

The Wall of Distinction will honor eminent graduates and build pride for current students. The recognition of graduates who have distinguished themselves will serve as role models for current students and inspire them as people who can make a difference.

Teachers are asking alumni, community and school staff to nominate people they believe deserve a place on the "Wall of Distinction". Candidates will be selected by a committee of school administrators, staff and students.

For a nomination form please check the Berlin Schools web site, or contact art teacher Jacqueline Elacqua at Box 259, Berlin, New York 12022

## Candidates for the Board of Education

### TERM:

2009-2012

### INCUMBENTS:

Julie Darling

### CHALLENGERS:

Julie Darling  
John Greene

2009-2012

Donald French

Gina Goodermote  
John Nash

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Thomas Morelli, *Vice President*  
Julie Darling  
Donald French  
Elizabeth Miller  
Jeffrey Paine  
Beverly Stewart

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