



LINDY SPOTLIGHT

LINDENHURST PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Lindenhurst Union Free School District

SPECIAL BUDGET EDITION 2011

District Website: www.lindenhurstschools.org

BOARD PROPOSES BUDGET REDUCTIONS FOR 2011-12

*Spending Proposal Makes Prudent Reductions,
Preserves Programs for Lindenhurst Students*

For the second straight year, the Lindenhurst Board of Education is proposing a series of prudent reductions through the 2011-12 spending plan, in an effort to minimize the tax impact on community residents. While planning the district's operating budget is never easy, this year was immensely difficult, given the financial challenges our district is facing. As has been widely publicized, the New York State budget calls for a reduction in state aid to school districts throughout the state. For Lindenhurst, this means a loss of over \$3 million in state aid.

Another hurdle that we are facing is the increase in mandatory pension and health insurance contributions for 2011-12, which equates to \$2.7 million. Combining our large reduction in aid with rising costs over which we have no control has handed us an immense challenge: How do we continue to provide vital programs and services for Lindenhurst students without asking our community to fund massive increases in the tax levy?

The Board and administration have worked together, with input from community residents, to form a proposed budget that not only preserves most curricular and co-curricular programs for our students, but limits our expenditure increase close to a

contingency level. The proposed budget represents a budget increase of 2.23%, which equates to a tax levy increase of 6.89%. It is important to note that a contingency (failed) budget would result in an increased tax levy of approximately 6.3%.

The proposed budget includes a series of reductions, including the closing of E.W. Bower Elementary School due to declining enrollment throughout the district. In addition to the 37 teaching/staff positions eliminated last year, the proposed budget includes a reduction of an additional 32.9 positions. In addition, some athletic teams were eliminated such as Junior Varsity 9/Junior Varsity 2 teams. A complete list of reductions can be found on page two of this newsletter.

While the spending plan does reflect a series of reductions, it preserves the core academic and co-curricular programs that form the basis of a Lindenhurst education. Full-day kindergarten has been maintained, along with a full instructional music program, fine arts and dance program, Alternative Learning Center, Gifted and Talented Program (Orion), and JROTC. These were programs that many community members,



parents, and students asked the Board to maintain. According to Board President Edward Murphy, "As a Board, we are proud that we worked together with the community to preserve programs for our students."

Moving forward, our district is currently negotiating with five out of six employee units, including the Teachers Association of Lindenhurst. The Board remains mindful of the economic impact on the community of all decisions made with each unit.

Please remember to vote on Tuesday, May 17. Polls will be open from 6 am to 9 pm at the regular polling locations. As a reminder, all budget documents can be found on the district's website, www.lindenhurstschools.org.

Since the beginning
of the budget process,
the Board has cut
approximately
\$2.9 million

LINDENHURST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
350 Daniel Street,
Lindenhurst, New York 11757

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A Passed Budget Means:

- Full-day kindergarten preserved
- Full instructional music program preserved
- Full fine arts program preserved
- Dance program preserved
- Alternative Learning Center preserved
- Gifted and talented Orion program preserved
- JROTC program preserved
- Full foreign language program preserved
- Full range of English, social studies, science and technology programs preserved

Budget Increase:
2.23%
Tax Levy Increase:
6.89%

Reductions in the Proposed Budget Include:

- Closing of E.W. Bower Elementary School
- 32.9 teaching/staff positions eliminated, including teachers, administrators, custodians clericals, nurses, and aides
- Elimination of junior varsity 9/junior varsity 2 athletic teams
- Combined varsity and junior varsity bowling and golf teams
- Elimination of three assistant coaching positions
- Adjustment of some busing routes and elimination of select bus "matrons"
- Sixth-grade study skills

What a Contingency (Failed) Budget Means

If the proposed budget does not pass on May 17, the Board of Education has three options. It can resubmit the same budget for voter approval for a second time; it can submit a revised budget for voter approval; or it can vote to immediately adopt a contingency budget. If the budget does not pass on the second vote, the Board must adopt a contingency budget. For Lindenhurst, a failed budget would mean:

- Further loss of programs and staff
- No use of district facilities by outside organizations without payment
- No purchase of new equipment, including computers

Budget Increase:
1.88%
Tax Levy Increase:
Approximately 6.3%

The proposed budget is close to a contingency level. The difference between a passed budget and failed budget for the average homeowner is approximately 12 cents per day.

PROPOSED 2011-2012 BUDGET

Chapter 436 of the Laws of 1997 requires all school districts to divide their budget into three components: Administrative, Program, and Capital.

Function	Total	Admin.	Program	Capital
Central Administration	305,727	305,727		
Finance	832,885	832,885		
Legal Services	440,000	352,000	88,000	
Personnel	207,075	207,075		
Public Information	127,449	127,449		
Operation of Plant	7,334,371	95,000		7,239,371
Maintenance of Plant	3,201,875			3,201,875
Technology, Central Printing & Insurance	2,186,598	2,186,598		
Curriculum Development & Supervision	318,156	318,156		
Instruction	77,142,698	5,669,857	71,472,841	
Transportation	8,182,254	130,000	8,052,254	
Board of Education	59,175	59,175		
Community Service	98,370	51,750	46,620	
Employee Benefits	33,869,892	3,929,956	26,504,343	3,435,593
Debt Service	5,304,952			5,304,952
Interfund Transfers	541,000		216,000	325,000
Totals	\$140,152,477	\$14,265,628	\$106,380,058	\$19,506,791

Lindenhurst Union Free School District
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Lindy Spotlight is the school district's community newsletter, containing pertinent information on the activities and issues of the district, published six times annually, and mailed free of charge to all district residents. The district reserves the right to publish information pertaining to students regarding school activities, academic honors, sports programs, scholarships, etc.

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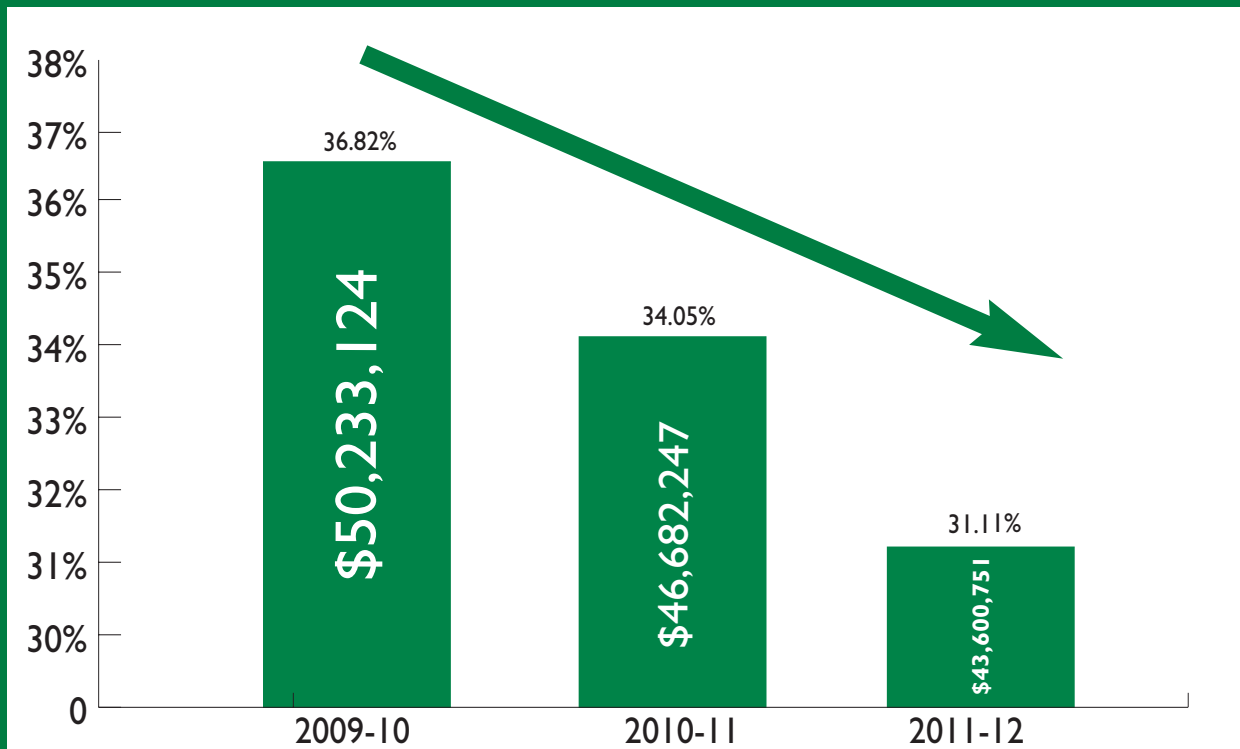
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The Lindenhurst School District hereby advises students, parents, employees, and the general public that it offers employment and educational opportunities, including vocational educational opportunities, without regard to gender, race, color, national origin or disability. Inquiries regarding this nondiscrimination policy may be directed to: Title IX Coordinator Anthony V. Amesti at (631) 867-3090 and/or Section 504 Coordinator Louis J. Aiello at (631) 867-3100 at the Central Administration Building, 350 Daniel Street, Lindenhurst, New York 11757.

STATE AID SLASHED FOR YEARS



As detailed in the chart, the percentage of Lindenhurst's budget that is funded through state aid has rapidly decreased over the years. For 2011-12, we are losing approximately \$3 million. The Lindenhurst School District is receiving less money from the state than 3 years ago. This trend causes a shift in expenses from the state to local taxpayers, meaning that Lindenhurst taxpayers are assuming a greater percentage of the burden for increased costs.

Careful Reductions, Smart Efficiencies *Help Drive Down Spending*

If the Board of Education had simply rolled over all programs, services, and staffing levels for the next year, the expenditure increase would have been approximately 4.33%, which equates to a tax levy increase of 10.43%. The Board of Education believes such a large increase would not have been responsible to present to the community. In addition to the reductions listed on page two, the district continues to implement efficiencies where feasible. While the district has no control over major increases like contributions to the pension system, there are measures the district has taken to save money in other areas:

- Last year, the district changed transportation guidelines, resulting in an annual savings of \$750,000
- In 2009-2010, several bargaining units agreed to a zero percent salary increase and the administrators' unit agreed to a minimal 1% salary increase
- Participation in cooperative bidding
- In 2010-2011, the clerical unit agreed to a second zero percent salary increase
- Continued reduction of budget expenditures



Your Investment Paying Off!

- A Lindenhurst High School senior was named a National Merit Commended Scholar.
- 73 students earned Advanced Placement (AP) awards from the National College Board for their outstanding performance on AP exams last year.
- More than 245 students are enrolled in Advanced Placement classes.
- Members of the Class of 2011 have been admitted to prestigious colleges, such as Cornell University, University of Pennsylvania, Cooper Union, Georgetown and NYU.
- Last spring, the Varsity Boys Baseball team captured the New York State Championship.
- The Girls Varsity Volleyball team captured the Class AA Long Island Championship.
- Numerous athletic teams are honored each year with outstanding sportsmanship and scholar-athlete awards.
- Numerous students are honored each year as All-County, All-State, and NYSSMA musicians.
- High School artwork was displayed at C.W. Post University, Five Towns College, Heckscher Museum of Art and Ward Melville Heritage Organization.
- 29 students were recognized with Presidential Service Awards, given to students who complete a minimum of 50 hours of community service.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. What is the proposed budget increase?

A. The proposed 2011-2012 school budget carries an expenditure increase of 2.23% over the current year's budget. This translates to a tax levy increase of 6.89%.

Q. What is the difference between a passed and a failed budget?

While the tax levy increase under the proposed budget is 6.89%, under a contingency (failed) budget, the tax levy increase would still be 6.3%. The difference between a passed budget and a failed budget is \$0.12 per day for the average Lindenhurst homeowner.

Q. What outside factors have influenced this year's budget development process?

A. Like all districts across New York State, the Lindenhurst School District is facing a loss in state aid as proposed by Governor Cuomo. For our district in particular, this represents a \$3 million reduction. In addition, mandatory contributions to the Teachers Retirement System and Employee Retirement System have increased double digits.

Q. What has been preserved through the proposed budget?

A. While the proposed budget does include reductions, it preserves most curricular and co-curricular programs including the majority of the athletic program, the full music performing arts and dance program, ALC, Orion, and JROTC. This is in response to input that the Board of Education and the administration received over the course of several community budget workshops.

Q. Are there any exemptions for which homeowners may qualify to reduce school taxes?

A. All New York State residents who live in their own homes have the opportunity to reduce their school property taxes, regardless of age or income, through the New York State School Tax Relief (STAR) Program. Senior citizens are eligible for enhanced STAR credit. In order to receive this exemption, residents must apply to the Town of Babylon's Assessment Office. Seniors must reapply for the enhanced exemption each year.



RESIDENT VOTING INFORMATION

You may vote in the School Budget Election if you meet the following criteria:

- Have been a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote
- Are at least 18 years of age
- Are a citizen of the United States

Note: If you are registered with the Suffolk County Board of Elections or have voted in a general, special, or primary election within the last four years, you do not need to register. However, to ensure your eligibility, we encourage registration. District residents may register to vote weekdays from 9-4 p.m. at the district clerk's office, located at the McKenna Administration Building, 350 Daniel Street, Lindenhurst.

Absentee Ballot Applications and Ballots can be obtained from the district clerk's office at the McKenna Administration Building, located at 350 Daniel Street. Absentee ballot applications must be received by the district clerk's office at least seven (7) days before the election if ballot is to be mailed, or the day before the election if picked up in person. All absentee ballots must be returned by 5 p.m. on the day of the vote. For further information, please call the district clerk at (631) 867-3070.

VOTING LOCATIONS

District 1: Lindenhurst Middle School, 350 SOUTH WELLWOOD AVENUE. (Area of school district south of the tracks of the Montauk Branch of the LIRR and north of Montauk Highway.)

District 2: Albany Avenue Elementary School, 180 ALBANY AVENUE. (Area of the school district north of the tracks of the Montauk Branch of the LIRR, south of Sunrise Highway, and west of North Wellwood Avenue.)

District 3: William Rall Elementary School, 761 NORTH WELLWOOD AVENUE. (Area of the school district north of Sunrise Highway.)

District 4: E.W. Bower Elementary School, 315 W. MONTAUK HIGHWAY. (Area of the school district south of Montauk Highway.)

District 5: Daniel Street Elementary School, 289 DANIEL STREET. (Area of the school district north of the tracks of the Montauk Branch of the LIRR, south of Sunrise Highway, and east of North Wellwood Avenue.)

