

BUDGET SPOTLIGHT

South Huntington Union Free School District
SPECIAL ISSUE- BUDGET VOTE TUESDAY MAY 19, 2009

The South Huntington School District has recently completed its portion of the annual budget process with the adoption of the budget to be presented to the community for approval on May 19, 2009. This special *Spotlight on the Budget* issue provides an overview of the adopted budget and outlines related issues, including property tax implications for the community. As it does each year, the Board conducted its budget review sessions with the public during the months of March and April to determine how best to allocate the community's resources to deliver a budget that both supports quality education and minimizes the tax burden on our residents.

This year was one of the toughest in my recent memory, certainly since 1991. I am reminded of the opening sentence of *A Tale of Two Cities*, by Charles Dickens, referring to the time of the French Revolution: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." And lately it seems like we may need our own revolution in order to get Albany to pay attention to the financial inequities forced upon Long Islanders.

Economically, for South Huntington and for the country as a whole, it has been "the worst of times." At several of the recent budget workshops, many residents spoke of the hard times we are all facing, and I want you to know that the Board listened and heard you. We have also listened to the parents of our students who are opposed to having some of our extracurricular activities and sports programs dismantled as we seek ways to economize. The Board considered all of this input with the upmost care, and in the end we are solidly behind the budget presented in this brochure, as we feel it represents the interests of the entire community.

And as far as our students are concerned, it has been, and should continue to be, "the best of times." In recent years the

district has enjoyed a time of academic achievement and social progress, along with a general environment conducive to a safe and healthy education. This environment has been created thanks to the hard work of many dedicated professionals at every level in our schools, and we are proud of their excellent work.

The Board takes very seriously its commitment to provide an excellent education for our students, while being mindful of costs. And we are very appreciative of those union members who, in consideration of the needs of the community, decided to accept our proposition of a 5-day salary giveback as a means of preserving jobs. Many of the employees in those unions are community residents, your neighbors, and they are keenly aware of the economic hard times we are all facing.



We firmly believe in the intent of our legislators to continue the fight in Albany to secure funds that we as Long Islanders know are rightfully ours. Your Board of Education will continue to assist in that fight and make our voices heard. Until we receive our fair share, Albany must continually be reminded that the communities on Long Island cannot afford "business as usual."

The Board hopes that you find the information contained in this brochure informative and helpful. If you have questions after you review the information, please feel free to call the Assistant Superintendent for Business,

Mrs. Karen Occhiogrosso, at 631-812-3001 to address your concerns or so that we can provide any additional information you need prior to the May 19 vote.

Sincerely,

Jim Kaden, President
On behalf of the South Huntington Board of Education

This budget is the result of a collaborative effort between the administration and the Board of Education, who spent many months closely scrutinizing every aspect of the district's operating expenses.

Providing the very best education for the children of South Huntington is our commitment to you. Next year's tax increase of 2.92% impacts everyone. Here are some issues of which we all need to be aware:

#1 Our fiscal conservation has been paying off. As a result of it, we have been able to keep tax increases to a minimum for the past 6 years. This year has been noticeably different, due in part to the effect of the Wall Street collapse on the New York State economy, and we have had to make some very hard decisions for next year's budget. The district has been able to hold the line on tax increases, despite Albany's decree that our state aid will not increase next year, or the following year. In preparation for next year and the uncertainty of years to come, the Board of Education has been looking at ways to minimize the tax burden on our residents and still deliver a budget that supports a quality education.

#2 While we have been able to maintain the programs and services that are essential to improving student achievement, we have had the difficult task this year of curtailing some of the extracurricular clubs and sports programs offered. These cuts have been made as judiciously as possible, and the Board, hopefully without the constraints of operating under a contingency budget, will continue its efforts to think innovatively and find ways to offer extracurricular programs.

#3 The state has promised just over \$28 million in aid to the South Huntington School District. This amount is about the same as last year's award. With mandated and contracted expenses taken into account, we are working at a disadvantage from the outset. In order to cut costs and help save jobs, many of which are held by local residents, the Board asked each of our unions for a 5-day give-back salary concession for next year. (This amounts to working for 1 week without pay.) All of the unions except two agreed, enabling the district to save jobs in the cooperating unions. Unfortunately, the district will be forced to cut 26 teaching positions, which will result in a minimal increase in class size in grades K-12.

#4 The federal government has said that help is on the way. Several district programs have benefited from the \$600,000 per year that should make its way to South Huntington in the next two years. One of the intentions of the federal funds was to save jobs, and because of those funds, and the 5-day give back we asked of our employee unions, we were able to save approximately 64 jobs in South Huntington.

Open for additional information 

Revenue Summary

and where it comes from

The revenues shown below are the amounts the district is scheduled to receive for the fiscal year 2009-2010.



#1 State Aid\$28,082,400

State aid is the money the district receives from the state and is formula driven.

#2 Interest on Investments\$700,000

Interest and investments are the money the district receives via property tax, which is invested for the short term to generate revenue for the district.

#3 Health Services\$1,800,000

The district charges other districts, whose students are attending private and parochial schools in our district for services such as nursing, psychologists, etc.

#4 Adult Education\$40,000

This is revenue received for classes taken by adult learners.

#5 Miscellaneous\$1,440,000

This category includes all the other revenue received that does not fall into one of these other classifications.

#6 Rental Income\$1,064,074

Rental income is revenue received from the former library, Memorial building, etc.

#7 Employee Health Care Contributions \$1,675,000

These contributions are revenue that the district receives from employees' contributions to their health insurance.

#8 Intergovernmental Funds\$936,825

This is the money that the library gives toward the bond.

#9 Appropriated Fund Balance\$2,900,000

These are funds given back to the public to reduce the tax levy.

TOTAL\$38,638,299

Total proposed budget \$131,764,922

Amount to be raised by property taxes\$93,126,623

COMPARISON TO LAST YEAR'S BUDGET

2008-2009

2009-2010

Total Budget

\$129,470,076

\$131,764,922

School Tax Increase

2.40%

2.92%

The 2009-2010 tax rate of 2.92% amounts to an increased rate over last year of \$57.04 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

ESTIMATED TAX INCREASE ON ASSESSED VALUE OF A HOME IN SOUTH HUNTINGTON

ASSESSED VALUE	ANNUAL ESTIMATED TAX INCREASE	ESTIMATED MONTHLY COST	ESTIMATED DAILY COST
\$1,000	\$57.04	\$4.75	\$.16
\$2,000	\$114.08	\$9.51	\$.32
\$3,000	\$171.12	\$14.26	\$.48
\$4,000	\$228.16	\$19.01	\$.63
\$5,000	\$285.20	\$23.77	\$.79
\$6,000	\$342.24	\$28.52	\$.95
\$7,000	\$399.28	\$33.27	\$1.11
\$8,000	\$456.32	\$38.03	\$1.27



This is where the money will go for the **2009-2010 School Year**



#1 59.07% - Instructional Codes:

This budget includes supervision, teaching, special education, psychology, social workers, librarians, adult education, athletics, and nursing services, as well as gifted and talented, music and art, technology, summer, and guidance programs. [\$77,830,031.]

Also included in this budget group are textbooks and repairs to equipment and supplies.

#2 20.90% - Employee Benefits: This budget includes teachers' retirement costs, employee retirement costs, health insurance premiums, dental insurance, life insurance, long term disability, workers' compensation, and unemployment insurance. [\$27,540,000.]

#3 6.90% - Facilities Maintenance and Operations: This budget includes monies for the Supervisor of Plant and Facilities and office staff. This also includes the salaries for all custodial, grounds, and maintenance workers, overtime for the workers, electric, gas and water, tools, workshops and seminars, travel and conferences, refuse removal, telephone, and supplies for grounds and maintenance. [\$9,095,206.]

#4 4.92% - Transportation: This budget includes student transportation, the bus garage, and the operation of the bus facility. [\$6,481,714.]

Also included in this budget are expenses such as:

- Property insurance, salaries for the director, assistant, dispatcher, and office staff, the cost of bus drivers' salaries and overtime, repairs, diesel and gas costs, and parts and materials for buses
- Costs for water, telephone, electric and fuel oil, salaries for the mechanics, supplies, equipment repairs, and other items necessary to run the department
- Costs for contract transportation of students to district schools, private and parochial schools, handicapped transportation, field trips, late buses, and other bus needs
- Contract transportation with BOCES.

#5 4.38% - Debt Service: This budget includes TANS interest payments and bond interest (including the new library bond repayment), and principal, including the 2003 bond and bus financing interest. [\$5,772,158.]

#6 2.40% - Central Services: This budget includes monies for the Board of Education and salaries and operating expenses for the internal claim auditors, District Clerk, Superintendent's Office, Personnel Office, Treasurer's Office, Business Office (benefits, payroll, accounts payable, etc.), Purchasing Office, legal services, independent auditors. [\$3,160,081.]

#7 0.45% - Insurance: This budget includes property and liability insurance, student accident, excess liability, and crime, auto and school board liability. [\$598,800.]

#8 0.35% - Judgments/Claims, BOCES Charges:

These are charges for rental of BOCES facilities, as well as BOCES administrative charges. These costs are spread over the 18 BOCES component districts. Judgments and claims are just for that purpose. [\$455,000.]

#9 0.17% - Interfund Transfers: These are monies set aside to be transferred to the federal aid fund for 20% of the cost for summer handicapped services, as required by the State Education Department. [\$230,000.]

#10 0.23% - Data Processing: This department's budget includes salary for office staff, equipment repairs, travel and conference, photocopy use, and data-processing supplies. [\$301,137.]

#11 0.12% - Printing and Mailing: This department has a mail clerk and 2 part-time employees who perform in-house district printing. This budget includes salaries, photocopy use, photocopy supplies, repairs on equipment, and general supplies. [\$154,119.]

#12 0.05% - Central Receiving: This is where supplies are received and stored. It has a budget for supplies and other items necessary to run this department. [\$63,551.]

#13 0.03% - Dues: This includes dues for memberships in various organizations for art and music, Board of Education, school business manager, superintendent, adult education, and principals. [\$42,825.]

#14 0.03% - Teen Center: This budget includes the cost for fuel oil, electric and gas, water, telephone, and refuse removal. [\$40,300.]

#15 0.0% - Census: This budget is used for the district's demographics study for projecting enrollment through the years. [\$00,000.]

100% Total

\$131,764,922.



If the proposed budget does not pass, we will be required to adopt a contingency budget.

State law requires certain mandatory reductions in order to reduce expenditures to a level below that which the voters rejected. Under a contingency budget, the cuts we have already made would become even more severe. Sound fiscal management dictates that applied fund balance should not be used to lower the tax rate in a contingency budget situation because those funds are often needed to lessen the tax rate in the following fiscal year to compensate for the contingency reductions that must be added back in. If we are in a contingency budget situation, **our tax rate would be 5.52%.**

CONTINGENCY REDUCTIONS

Total Contingency Reductions totaling \$545,070 would mean the following mandated cuts:

- **Equipment**

Instructional (Art, Music, Science, Technology), Buildings and Grounds, Extra-Curricular and Athletics, Buses

- **Student Supplies**

Instructional (Agenda Books, Art, Music, Physical Ed., Library, Elementary Classroom), Extra-Curricular & Athletics

- **Use of Facilities By Outside Organizations**

- **Administrative Cap**

- **Co-Curricular & Athletics**

- Chaperones (Concerts & Dances)

- Proctors, Timekeepers, Scorers

- Security & Other Professionals

- Equipment Repairs

- School Association Dues

A Contingency Budget Would Give Taxpayers a 5.52% Tax Rate Increase

Mark your calendar and vote: Tuesday, May 19th 3PM-10PM at Walt Whitman High School

Candidates Running For the Board of Education

Join us for Meet the Candidates Night on Wednesday, May 6th at 7:30 PM in the South Cafeteria at Walt Whitman High School.

A more detailed bio on each candidate will be available on that night. There are 3 vacancies to fill and 3 residents running to fill those vacancies.

Edward J. Nitkewicz

I am running for the South Huntington School District Board because I believe all of our children deserve a quality and complete education.

We are facing dramatic changes necessitated by the economy and the disproportionate share of the state tax burden we carry. We have the administration, the teachers, the parents, and students in place to deliver and create the high-quality educational experience our community has come to expect in South Huntington. We need to reassess the valuable but limited resources we presently have available. We further need to set priorities that will position us to provide a full educational experience for the children of today while rebuilding our system so that it functions more independently of financial crises like the one we now face.

Public education is a right. More importantly, it represents an opportunity to provide every child a means to find their love of literature, science, art, math, and history. It is our legacy to the parents, leaders, and innovators of tomorrow.



Thomas G. Teresky

I am running for re-election this year, and I ask for your support.

Our main objective on the school board, as always, is academic achievement in a cost-effective manner. This is not always an easy process. The majority of our cost increases are either mandated by the state and/or federal government or are contractual, mostly with employee unions. This year has been especially difficult, since the state has chosen to greatly reduce our state aid.

The budget put forth this year by the Board of Education will keep intact the strong academic progress we have achieved in the last few years, and we have kept the tax increase this year to 2.92%. This is the second year in a row that we have kept the tax increase below 3%.

I feel that I have done a good job representing the children and the taxpayers of South Huntington for the last 4 years, and I ask for your continued support.



Linda LaCara

For the past 3 years, it has been my privilege to serve as a member of the South Huntington Board of Education. Prior to that, I had attended board meetings on a regular basis for 10 years. I have always believed that the education of our children is the most important job we can undertake as a community.

As a board member, I have made decisions that allow every child in our district to receive the best possible education while being financially responsible to our taxpayers. The tax rates presented to the public in these years have been among the lowest in the Town of Huntington. The current economic crisis is presenting the Board of Education with the most difficult challenges I have experienced during my term. My dedication to our school district is clear. I am passionate about education and the South Huntington School District. With your support, I plan to continue to work through the challenges ahead, seeking the best possible solutions to maintain the excellent education and opportunities all students receive while remaining financially responsible to our taxpayers.



Walt Whitman High School, 301 West Hills Road, Huntington Station, NY 11746

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

The following are some of the many highlights and programs offered to our students:

COUNTRYWOOD and OAKWOOD

Primary Centers. (K-2)

- Dual Language Program available for qualified students.
- Anti-bullying education to foster character development and leadership skills.
- Hands-on science program for all grades.
- Active PTA and SBM teams that inspire and support creative projects.
- Wide range of educational field trips to supplement the academic curriculum.
- After-school academic support programs.
- Infusion of arts and music programs across the curriculum.
- Foster Grandparents Program – building bridges between generations.
- Many classrooms have state-of-the-art technology including SMARTboards and E-Clickers.

BIRCHWOOD and MAPLEWOOD

Intermediate Schools. (3-5)

- Band/Orchestra/Chorus available for all students grades 4-5.
- Challenge Program for gifted students in grades 3-5.
- Hands-on science program in grades 3-5.
- Dual Language Program available for all qualified students in grades 3-5.
- Student Council and Safety Patrol programs encourage student leaders and promote character education.
- Math Olympiad competition available for Grade 5 students.
- Active PTA and SBM teams that inspire and support creative projects.
- Consistent silver and gold awards at major NYSSMA competitions.
- Before and after-school academic support programs.
- Many classrooms have state-of-the-art technology including SMARTboards and E-Clickers.

SILAS WOOD Sixth Grade Center and

STIMSON Middle School (7-8)

- Faces in the Crowd, Project Wisdom and Silas Superstars

- enhance character education and focus attention on positive behavior.
- Consistent winners in Mathletes and in National History Day competitions.
 - Seventh/Eighth Grade Jazz Band, Marching Band, Chorus and Orchestra provide a wide-range of musical venues for all students. Consistent medal winners at NYSSMA competitions.
 - Social Studies, Math and Science Fair, Robotics, Science Olympiads competitions provide opportunities for research and experimentation.
 - Stimson Stylus [newspaper] offer outlets for creative writing and journalism.
 - Scores on New York State Assessments continue to rise.
 - Accelerated programs in math & science for qualified students.

WALT WHITMAN High School (9-12)

- Is recognized as one of America's 1,000 Best High Schools by Newsweek magazine.
- Had 100 Advanced Placement scholars last year.
- Offered 25 Advanced Placement courses in 2007/08 with 639 AP exams taken, nearly 80% of which yielded qualifying scores.
- Has 3 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists in '08 and 4 National Merit Commended Students on '09.
- Boasts SAT and ACT scores consistently above state and national average.
- Has had consistent winners at the state, national and international DECA competitions including: 39 top 10 in NY State; 20 NY State trophy winners; and 10 international qualifiers in '09; 4 international finalists; 2 third-place international winners, 1 international top ten semi-finalist, and 1 international top ten finalist in '08.
- Boasts an expanding Science Research program, with students participating in the prestigious Intel and Siemens competitions, as well as in authentic laboratory and field research opportunities.
- Fielded teams who participated in Moody's Math Challenge and The Long Island Challenge. Has place winners in the Suffolk County Math Teachers' Association Tournament in 2009.
- Offers a comprehensive athletic program with 14 students named Citibank/News 12 Scholar Athletes; 20 New York State Scholar Athlete Teams, including 8 of the 10 Spring

- '08 varsity teams.
- Offers a full Arts Program including dance, graphic arts, concert orchestra, chorus, marching band, jazz band, and musical and drama productions. Top performers in NDA All-American Music Competition, 16 selected to SCMEA- All-County, 4 selected to NYSSMA All-State, The Marching Band placed fourth in NY. New, professional dance studio and program. Consistent award winners at NYSSMA, New York City, and Washington, DC competitions.
 - Had students in '08 who received over \$16.3 million in scholarships.
 - Had over 59% of its graduates who went to 4-year colleges accepted into most competitive, highly competitive, and very competitive colleges in 2008.
 - Had a 2008 class graduation rate of over 99.7%
 - Has a teacher who received Gold Certification when 95% of his students passed a Financial Literacy test, including numerous students who received WISE Financial Literacy Scholar Awards.
 - Had several students make top ten in Suffolk County in foreign language exams.
 - Has 9 students who won awards at Young Professionals Chamber of Commerce (YPCC) Business Leadership Competition.
 - Produces the Gold medal winning literary magazine Xanadu.
 - For a second year in a row has sent a student to the prestigious Fox Chase Center for a research study program.

Recent District Highlights

- Ranked in top 16% nationally by Expansion Magazine. (ranks larger school districts on how well they prepare their students for the workforce.)
- Voted one of the "Best 100 Communities for Music Education in America."
- District-wide effort to include state-of-the-art technology including SMARTboards in many classrooms at all grade levels.

PROPERTY TAX REPORT CARD

	BUDGETED 2008-09	BUDGETED 2009-10	% CHANGE
TOTAL SPENDING	\$129,470,076	\$131,764,922	1.77%
AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TAXES	\$90,878,412	\$93,126,623	2.47%
PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT	5,996	5,996	0
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX			3.80%

	ACTUAL 2008-09	ESTIMATED 2009-10
RESERVED FUND BALANCE	\$9,991,232	\$10,992,217
APPROPRIATED FUND BALANCE	\$2,800,000	\$2,900,000
UNRESERVED, UNAPPROPRIATED FUND BALANCE	\$5,178,803	\$4,877,708
UNRESERVED, UNAPPROPRIATED FUND BALANCE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUDGET	4.00%	3.70%

SAMPLE BALLOT

YES

NO

PROPOSITION NO. 1

BUDGET

Shall the budget of \$131,764,922 be adopted and the amount thereof, less state aid and other income, be raised by tax upon taxable property of South Huntington Union Free School District, Town of Huntington, County of Suffolk, New York, for the school year 2009-2010.

VOTER INFORMATION

BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING:

Date: Tuesday May 12, 2009

Time: 7:30PM

Location: District Offices, 60 Weston Street, Huntington Station, NY 11746, (631) 812-3070

BUDGET VOTE:

Date: Tuesday May 19, 2009

Time: 3PM –10PM

Location: Walt Whitman High School, 301 West Hills Road, Huntington Station, NY 11746, (631) 812-3800

VOTER ELIGIBILITY:

In order to vote, you must be a United States citizen, 18 years of age or older, and must have been a district resident for at least 30 days prior to the vote. Eligible voters include those who have voted in federal, state, county or school district election within the past four years, those who are registered with the Suffolk County Board of Elections and residents who registered during the school's district registration period.

ABSENTEE BALLOT:

Applications for absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk one week prior to the vote. If an absentee voter intends to pick up the ballot in person, that application must be filed with the District Clerk by 5PM on the day of the vote. Persons designated by the Suffolk County Board of Elections as "permanently disabled" need not make an application, since they will automatically receive an absentee ballot by mail. For more information, please call the District Clerk's office at 631-812-3070

ATTENTION SENIOR CITIZENS:

Special arrangements have been made so that senior citizens can park behind Walt Whitman High School and have easy and quick access that is on one level (no steps or stairs). Ask security when you first enter the High School driveway for easy directions to this special parking area.