



SCHOOL BUDGET FORUM

2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 2024

BMS LIBRARY & ZOOM



- The Parent-Teacher Organization for Berlin Memorial Elementary School charged with:
 - Building and supporting our community of students, teachers and families.
 - Running events that support and emphasize learning.
 - Advocating for the resources and tools that allow our schools to educate our children for the professions of the future.
- We represent all of YOU – the parents and guardians of our children.
- We are all also – members of the greater Berlin Community.

Neighbors. Friends. Tax payers. Voters.

FRAMEWORK

- Review the Finance Committee's recommended budget for the schools as part of the Town of Berlin budget.
- Review the School Committee Budget for level services education.
- Learn what the unfunded budget will mean for students next year.
- Share the Plan for Town Meeting.

TOWN OF BERLIN – FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

- The Town of Berlin has historically placed a premium on supporting the schools for our children.
 - The budget for schools (BMS, Tahanto & Assabet Regional) equates to more than half of the total town budget.
- The Town of Berlin provides additional services that we all rely on to work and be available when needed.
 - Fire & EMS Services
 - Road maintenance & snow removal, etc.
 - Town Recreation services (sports programs, holiday celebrations, etc.)
 - Library

TOWN OF BERLIN – FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

- Historically, town voters have voted against development that would bring in alternative budget resources.
 - This has left our town with it's primary revenue source of property tax.
 - Any increase in our town's budget means an increase to property tax.

WARRANT FOR TOWN MEETING

- FY24 Budget Note (pg 19-20)

- “Free Cash” was used last year to fund part of the BMS assessment.
- Town REMOVED that free cash amount from the voter approved assessment total showing a budget of only \$3,924,434.
- But, Voters supported the total assessment of: \$4,307,149.

- Why is this Important?

- Voter’s voted to support and pay the total assessment needed for the schools.
- Reflecting the real voter approved amount demonstrates the district’s efforts to keep the budget increase to a minimum – only 5% over last year.
- The real number also reflects the Actual Operating Budget.

WARRANT FOR TOWN MEETING

- The Town Select Committee asked the School Committee to keep their recommended budget within 2.5% increase.
 - Yet, Finance Committee Recommends a FY25 budget:
 - Total Government: +8.4%
 - Public Safety: +6.2
 - Public Works: -6.2%
 - Human Services: +33.4%
 - Culture & Rec: +11.4%
 - Benefits & Services: +10.8%
 - Inter-government (includes school budgets): -4.0%

WARRANT FOR TOWN MEETING

- The Finance Committee recommended amount for the BMS Assessment is \$4,022,545.
 - **7% less than** last year's voted total assessment.
- The Finance Committee recommended amount for the Tahanto Assessment is \$3,286,541.
 - Exactly 2.5% increase over last year's assessment. (But 7% less than the requested amount for FY25).

BBRSD – FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

- Administration developed their budgets to provide LEVEL SERVICE accommodations for learning.
 - No new programs, activities, support services or staff
- Cost of inflation as of March 2024 (affecting food, fuel, power, etc.) is 3.5%
- The Teacher's Union Contract (approved last year, non-negotiable) includes a 3% raise for teachers.
- Cost of Special Education Transportation has gone from \$171/run to a forecasted \$400/run.
- While there is a DECREASE in needed Special Education Tuition – the FY24 budget was used to create in-house capability.
 - Many of those gains will not be funded if the FY25 budget isn't approved, therefore raising the total needed Special Education costs again. Most savings will be lost.

BBRSD – FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

- It is not possible for BBRSD to keep the budget request at an increase of 2.5%
- BBRSD did keep the increase request for level service education in FY25 to 5% overall

SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUDGET, 2024-25

Berlin Assessment Comparison

<u>Berlin Operating</u>	<u>FY24 Assessment</u>	<u>FY25 Assessment</u>	<u>\$ +/-</u>	<u>% +/-</u>
Berlin Memorial School:	\$4,307,149	\$4,508,106	\$200,957	5%
Berlin Tahanto MS/HS:	\$3,206,381	\$3,542,292	\$335,911	10%

<u>Berlin Capital</u>	<u>FY24 Assessment</u>	<u>FY25 Assessment</u>	<u>\$ +/-</u>	<u>% +/-</u>
Berlin Memorial School:	\$468,410	\$543,132	\$74,722	16%
Berlin Tahanto MS/HS:	\$654,351	\$498,188	(\$156,163)	(24%)

FY24 Total:	\$8,636,291
FY25 Total:	\$9,091,718
\$:	\$455,427
%:	5%

BERLIN MEMORIAL BUDGET COMPARISON

Berlin Memorial School FY25 Budget Comparison

<u>Expense Category</u>	<u>FY24 Budget</u>	<u>FY25 Budget</u>	<u>\$ Difference</u>	<u>% Difference</u>
Administration	\$ 231,517	\$ 258,448	\$ 26,931	12%
Instruction	\$ 2,865,209	\$ 3,084,229	\$ 219,020	8%
Other Services	\$ 386,204	\$ 489,349	\$ 103,145	27%
Maintenance/Operation	\$ 390,684	\$ 421,586	\$ 30,902	8%
Fixed Charges	\$ 785,787	\$ 809,219	\$ 23,432	3%
Out of District Tuition	\$ 624,391	\$ 114,353	\$ (510,038)	-82%
<u>Grand Total</u>	\$ 5,283,791	\$ 5,177,184	\$ (106,607)	-2%

TAHANTO MS/HS BUDGET COMPARISON

Tahanto Middle School/High School FY25 Budget Comparison

<u>Expense Category</u>	<u>FY24 Budget</u>	<u>FY25 Budget</u>	<u>\$ Difference</u>	<u>% Difference</u>
Administration	\$ 504,859	\$ 547,131	\$ 42,272	8%
Instruction	\$ 5,785,500	\$ 6,059,673	\$ 274,173	5%
Other Services	\$ 999,638	\$ 1,330,081	\$ 330,443	33%
Maintenance/Operation	\$ 956,039	\$ 958,126	\$ 2,087	0.2%
Fixed Charges	\$ 2,012,309	\$ 2,049,581	\$ 37,272	2%
Out of District Tuition	\$ 1,179,875	\$ 1,194,380	\$ 14,505	1%
<u>Grand Total</u>	\$ 11,438,219	\$ 12,138,972	\$ 700,753	6%

AN UNFUNDED EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN

- Staff Positions will be Lost at BMS

- Non Special-Education paraprofessionals
- Recess Aids
- Math & Literacy Tutors & Coaches

- Specials will be Lost at BMS

- Art
- Music & Band
- Technology
- Librarian
- Health

- Classroom Supplies

- Tahanto will Lose

- Middle School Programming
- Specials

- This Year Recognized as US News “Best School” & Blue Ribbon High School

- Can not maintain that level of quality with a shrinking budget.



THE PLAN FOR TOWN MEETING

1. Make an amendment to correct the FY24 budget approved by voters to reflect the true amount: \$4,307,149.
2. Make an amendment to fund the BBRSD School Committee requested budget amount of \$4,508,106 for the BMS Assessment.
3. Make an amendment to fund the BBRSD School Committee requested budget amount of \$3,542,292 for the Tahanto Assessment.
4. Be prepared to vote **AGAINST** a motion to move the budget vote to ballot.
5. Line up parents to speak on behalf of accepting the amendments during the open discussion portion of the proceedings.

HOW DO WE SECURE THE FUNDS FOR OUR CHILDREN?

- Our BMS and Tahanto Families *MUST* show up to Town Meeting.
- Voting is done only by those present at the meeting.

- Talk to EVERYONE.
 - Spread the word.
 - Make an informed vote.

- Childcare provided in the BMS Gym (movie and activities) provided by LINK, Inc. and the Tahanto Honor's Society Members.
 - Kids ages 3 and up
 - Starts at 6:50pm

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Monday, May 6

7:00 PM

BMS Gym