



EXPLORATIONS

Blue Hill Consolidated School

60 High Street • Blue Hill, Maine 04614

March 31, 2016

From the School Board — Budget Information

Like all school budgets, ours has a lot of moving parts; some we can control, some we can partially control, and others we have no control over at all. After repeatedly pruning expenses which we felt could be deferred or eliminated, we are presenting a budget to the Town which we see as both prudent and responsible. The bottom line for the budget for next year is that more high school students, an increase in secondary tuition rates, and mandated secondary special education fees are expected to increase by \$172,271. The rest of the budget, which covers Pre-K through 8, is \$4,561 LESS than last year. The result is a total increase of slightly over 3%.

A major factor in our budget rise over the years has been a significant increase in the student population. Fifteen years ago the BHCS board engaged in making contingency plans in case the population dropped another 15% to 150. This year the BHCS student body has fluctuated between 265 and 280—almost back to the record levels of 25 years ago. Since 2010 our BHCS enrollment is up by 17-20%. Our secondary tuition bill has been driven by both numbers and increasing tuition costs. In 2010 tuition + IVF (Insured Value Factor charged by private schools) was \$9,238; in 2016-17 we are projecting the cost per student to be \$11,395—more than a 23% increase.

After being approved for a grant from the Maine Revolving Renovations Fund, we are requesting that the Town approve bundling the major maintenance projects recommended by our engineers as high priority into a warrant article which we will pay off interest-free over the next five years. Our school was awarded \$338,000 to complete the work needed. \$101,000 of the total was forgiven by the state so we can complete \$338,000 worth of needed upgrades and repairs for \$237,000 interest-free. We hope our efforts to keep up with required maintenance at BHCS will be supported at Town Meeting.

We are extremely fortunate to have so many community members, parents, and staff who work without pay to enable the school to present programs above and beyond what the budget permits. A recent example is our IDEA Center which allows our children and grandchildren high-level STEM opportunities while funding 85% of the costs through grants and donations.

If anyone would like to really understand the budget and the budget process in greater detail, please come to the board budget meetings next year. They primarily take place in January and February. If you have questions about this year's budget, please call us.

Sincerely,
BHCS School Board
Jan Snow 374-5185
Jim Lacasse 374-2673
Annie Rice 460-7314
Sean Walsh 939-3708
Ben Wootten 374-2466

Kudos

Kudos this week go to our fabulous Maintenance Crew who helped us to catch the person stealing bottles and cans from our 8th grade collection! In addition to keeping our school clean, they also keep an eye on our building. This has been very unfortunate for our 8th graders as the continuous bottle drive is a good fundraiser for them and the bottles have been stolen from the collection multiple times this year. Thank you, Foster, Zach, and Jamie!

Young Author's Camp

This summer there will be an opportunity for students in grades 5-8 to participate in the Maine Writing Project Young Authors Camp. This is the first year the camp is being offered here at BHCS and we are very excited about the program. The session will run from June 27 - July 1. Please see the attached flier for complete information.

Reminder

Jump Rope for Heart fundraising continues. All envelopes are due back at the end of April vacation.

April is Autism Awareness Month

This year Making Strides has a few events that will take place during the month. Starting off we are hoping you will help us "Light it Up Blue" on Monday April 4 by wearing blue to school. Then we start a campaign to see if we can achieve a quarter mile of quarters. Details will be forthcoming in handouts that will be sent home this Friday.

BEEM Bash—WHAT IS A MURDER MYSTERY?

Excellent question. It's a game. A fun game. People attending the BEEM Bash can be participants (or not, if uninterested). There are about 15 critical roles; the rest are roles that can interact with the main characters and figure out who committed the murder. There is no public speaking and no stage acting.

Each player will get a one-page description of his/her character. Maybe you own the resort, Margaritaland. Maybe you are the bartender...who has a way with the ladies. Maybe you are the Hollywood Starlet, or perhaps a honeymooner. Your character description gets emailed to you in advance.

The night of the event you'll be handed an envelope. It'll have your name tag, some fake money, and an Objectives sheet. The objectives will tell you things you know that you should or should not tell others (like, you were worried about getting fired). As you start to mingle with the other players, you'll want to extract information from them (and vice-versa). You'll use your fake money to bribe, beg, or extort. After the mingling: a murder!

Sergeant Lord will stand up and issue instructions. You'll get a second envelope with additional information specific to your character. You'll need to think through all of your information and figure out whodunnit. You might even have some pieces of evidence that could help convince the players of your innocence.

In the end: you'll fill in a card stating whodunnit, who was best dressed, who was the best actor, and how much money you had left. The winners in each category will win a small prize.

It's bound to be a great night! If you have no interest in the murder mystery, that's okay, too. Come hang out with your friends, have some snacks, bid on incredible silent auction items, and dance the night away!

Tickets: \$35 at the door, \$30 if purchased before 3/31; BHCS staff and guest are \$15. Come in Caribbean attire and receive a free beverage. Buy online at www.bhcs.org/beem or bring money to the school office.

Dates to Remember...

Fri., Apr. 1	Don't forget to vote!
Sat., Apr. 2	Town Meeting, 9:00 AM
	BHCS Gym - PTF will be providing childcare
Fri., Apr. 8	BEEM Bash, 6 PM -10 PM
	Murder Mystery at the Barncastle
Apr.11 & 12	BHCS Production of The Wizard of Oz



Free for picking it up:
Kimball piano, 20 years old, in Bucksport.
Contact Dick Howard 374-2420

Transgender, Family and Friends Group (TGFF) provides support for families, friends and transgender people of all ages. TGFF meets Thursdays April 7 and April 21 at 7:30 pm, at First Congregational Church, Blue Hill. Details, contact Susan Yaruta-Young, (207) 460.6155 or email: syyoung@myfairpoint.net. In case of stormy or icy weather, please contact Susan to see if the session is on.