

HIGH BRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

50 Thomas Street ♦ High Bridge ♦ NJ ♦ 08829

◆ 2008-2009 BUDGET NEWSLETTER ◆

2008-2009

Proposed Budget

by
Dr. Patricia Ash
Superintendent of Schools

The annual school budget is the district's management tool prepared yearly to reflect available revenues and to indicate how those revenues are to be utilized. This plan is presented for public vote on April 15, 2008. Please note the following highlights of the 2008-2009 budget:

- The Administration and Board carefully scrutinized every line item in order to adopt a cost-effective budget.
- Just the increased fixed cost of contracted salaries, health care benefits, worker's compensation rates and special education services totaled more than \$150,467 over last year's budget.
- Given the magnitude of these increased costs, it is notable that the Board has been able to keep the budget increase to \$150,467 or to 2.4%.

- To do this the Board exercised cost-saving measures that included a reduction of one teaching position in salaries due to a reduction in class sizes at certain grade levels.
- State aid for the 2008-09 budget increased by 2%. However, this was offset by a decrease in out-of-district tuition from our special education programs.
- The property assessment for the Borough of High Bridge that was provided by the Borough increased from 2007 to 2008 by \$4,093,200.
- This increase in assessment has increased the value of a penny of spending from \$38,055 in 2007-2008 budget to \$38,465 in 2008-2009 budget. This is an increase of \$409.
- Therefore, the \$150,467 increase in spending combined with the increase in assessments will cause an increase in taxes of .033 cents from \$1.308 to \$1.341.

- The Board continues to operate at an unsafe surplus level of only \$48,225 (which is just over a half of one percent). If any unforeseen expenditures would arise the Board would have difficulty meeting those expenditures due to the dangerously low surplus levels.

Needless to say, the 2008-2009 budget continues to be very lean and basic, but it will enable us to maintain current class sizes as well as current curricular and co-curricular programs and the basic operations of our two facilities. However, further reduction would likely impact class size and programs.

In closing, the Board of Education believes that the community's greatest asset is its schools, that our public school system is a partnership with parents and the community; and we are collectively dedicated to providing the children of High Bridge with a strong educational foundation. The Board and superintendent consider the 2008-09 budget worthy of your support.

SENIORS – PLEASE READ

2007 PROPERTY TAX REIMBURSEMENT on the increase of your property taxes that were paid by you starting in 2005.

This program may be for you:

- IF:** You are age 65 or older or you are receiving social security disability benefits as of December 31, 2007, and
- IF:** You have lived in N.J. continuously since before January 1, 1995 as a homeowner or renter, and
- IF:** Your total annual income is less than:

For 2006: \$43,693 if you are single
\$53,576 (combined income) if married

For 2007: \$45,135 if you are single
\$55,344 (combined income) if married, and

IF: For both 2006 & 2007 you paid the full amount of property taxes due on your home by December 31.


Call the Board of Education office at 638-6552 for a
2007 Property Tax Reimbursement Application.

2008-2009 School Board Budget Election **YOUR VOTE COUNTS**

Tuesday, April 15, 2008

The polls will be open from
3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the
High Bridge Rescue Squad Building
located at 95 West Main Street.

School Board Candidates:


Jeffrey Raefski – 3 year seat
Daniel Gallagher – 3 year seat
Robert Imhoff – 3 year seat
Ether Tai – 3 year seat, Kay Musnuff-Daughters – 1
year seat, Valerie Jordan – 1 year seat

Please visit our website at www.hbschools.org
and click on the **Budget Tab** to find out more
information from our school budget hearings
held March 24, 2008 & April 3, 2008.