



Tuesday, May 20
7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

BKW Elementary School
Cafeteria

Also on the ballot:
See pg. 4 for a list of
propositions.

More about
District Expenses



AT-A-GLANCE

2025-26
PROPOSED BUDGET

\$24,737,328

BUDGET DECREASE
FROM 2024-25

\$-1,051,934 / -4.08%

2025-26
TAX LEVY INCREASE

\$368,556 / 3.3%

BKW residents to vote on budget proposal on May 20

On May 20, Berne-Knox-Westerlo residents will decide on a proposed \$24,737,328 spending plan for the 2025-26 school year. Under the proposal, spending would decrease by 4.08% from the current year.

The spending decrease is a result of the district supplementing its past revenue with its fund balance and reserves over the past several years. This year's budget will limit usage of the reserve funds for the upcoming school year.

This year's proposal seeks to realign spending and prepare the district to rebuild reserves to navigate the current financial landscape facing districts throughout New York State. The proposed budget for 2025-26 seeks to maintain all programs, staff, and services for next year and will add two cost-saving self-contained special education classroom spaces to the elementary and high school campus, while re-establishing the district's School Resource Officer to provide safety and security on our school campus.

The proposed budget carries a 3.3% tax levy increase which is within the district's assigned tax levy "cap" of 3.3% as defined by New York's tax levy cap legislation. A simple majority of voters (50% plus one) is needed to pass the budget.

The 2025-26 budget also addresses factors related to current economic conditions, such as rising transportation expenses, utility and heating costs, increasing insurance and retirement premiums.

"The 2025-26 budget will continue our district's commitment to our students, families, and school community," said Superintendent of Schools Bonnie Kane. "Our budget will focus on providing diverse curriculum offerings, allow for supportive outreach through clubs, programs, and activities, and build supportive social-emotional connections so students can learn and grow in a safe and healthy environment."

FINANCIAL LITERACY OFFERS RESPONSIBLE PLANNING FOR STUDENTS

Financial literacy is a valuable skill at any age, and at BKW, we aim to make financial literacy accessible from the start, helping students lay the groundwork for confident money management as they prepare for life after graduation. For many students, an introduction to maintaining their finances allows them to understand how to maintain or improve their financial lifestyle.

"Personal finances play an important role in everyone's lives," shared BKW Mathematics Teacher Mr. Morin. "To have an opportunity to introduce this topic at the high school level allows our students to get a better understanding of how to save, plan, and enjoy their future savings responsibly while improving budgeting skill sets. It's a great course for our students to have access to, especially at this stage of their life."

This year, BKW students are being introduced to a several that will help them define what areas are important to assist in budgeting, saving and planning. Building experience and receiving important updates on how to save and manage your money will continue to pay dividends for today's students.

Budget Summary

2025-2026

REVENUES:

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

CATEGORY	2024-25 BUDGETED	2025-26 PROJECTED	2025-26 CONTINGENCY
Other Revenue	\$684,500	\$408,000	\$408,000
Total State Aid	\$11,838,876	\$11,591,886	\$11,591,886
Reserves	\$940,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Fund Balance	\$1,257,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000
Tax Levy	\$11,068,886	\$11,437,442	\$11,068,886
TOTAL	\$25,789,262	\$24,737,328	\$24,368,772

-4.08% DECREASE

EXPENDITURES:

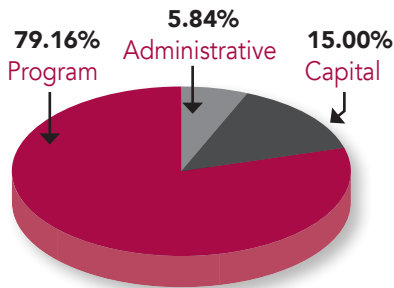
WHERE THE MONEY GOES

CATEGORY	2024-25 BUDGETED	2025-26 PROJECTED	2025-26 CONTINGENCY
General Support	\$959,005	\$1,136,639	\$1,071,639
Operations	\$1,255,993	\$1,362,240	\$1,321,735.16
Instruction	\$11,722,908	\$11,037,981.77	\$10,870,394.34
Transportation	\$1,495,442	\$1,513,351.24	\$1,503,351.24
Employee Benefits	\$7,245,825	\$7,239,035.99	\$7,169,572.26
Debt Service	\$3,110,089	\$2,448,080	\$2,432,080
TOTAL	\$25,789,262	\$24,737,328	\$24,368,772

-4.08% DECREASE

THREE-PART BUDGET:

New York law requires school districts to present their budgets divided into three expenditure categories—program, administrative and capital—and compare them to the previous year's costs. BKW's three-part budget is as follows:



CATEGORY	2024-25 BUDGETED	2025-26 PROJECTED	2025-26 CONTINGENCY
Program	\$20,058,757 77.78% OF BUDGET	\$19,582,440 79.16% OF BUDGET	\$19,270,388.84 79.08% OF BUDGET
Administrative	\$1,464,423 5.68% OF BUDGET	\$1,444,568 5.84% OF BUDGET	\$1,444,568 5.93% OF BUDGET
Capital	\$4,266,082 16.54% OF BUDGET	\$3,710,320 15.00% OF BUDGET	\$3,653,815.16 14.99% OF BUDGET
TOTAL	\$25,789,262	\$24,737,328	\$24,368,772

BKW BOYS' BASKETBALL PROGRAM MAKES HISTORY; CAPTURES CLASS C TITLE

For the first time in school history, this year's team captured the first state championship for the boys' basketball program. They accomplished this feat with a 63-47 win over Honeoye in the Class C state championship game on Saturday, March 22. The 2024-25 team delivered an undefeated record (26-0) for its Bulldog fanbase. Great work, Champion Bulldogs!



Required School District Budget Notice

2025 - 2026

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL	Budget Adopted for the 2024-25 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2025-26 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2025-26 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$25,789,262	\$24,737,328	\$24,368,772
Increase/Decrease for the 2025-26 School Year		\$-1,051,934	\$-368,556
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		-4.0790%	-5.5081%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.95%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount			
	\$11,068,886	\$11,437,442	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable			
	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable**			
	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy			
	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C – D)	\$11,068,886	\$11,437,442	\$11,068,886
F. Total Permissible Exclusions			
	\$ 289,845	\$299,740	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions			
	\$10,779,041	\$11,137,702	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)			
	\$10,779,041	\$11,137,702	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval –See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)**			
	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component			
	\$1,464,423	\$1,444,568	\$1,444,568
Program Component			
	\$4,266,082	\$3,710,320	\$3,653,815
Capital Component			
	\$20,058,757	\$19,582,440	\$19,270,389

* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2025-26 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

Should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law, the projecting contingency budget for the 2025-26 school year will required additional staff reductions: 1 FTE instructional, 1 FTE custodial/maintenance and the SRO. In addition, a contingency budget will result in reductions of supply lines, field trips, the addition to of the social worker, graduation funds and the vehicle replacement.

** List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)

Description	Amount
Proposition to purchase buses at a cost not to exceed \$523,894	\$523,894
Proposition to establish a Capital Reserve Fund-Facilities	\$2,000,000
Proposition to establish a Capital Reserve Fund-Transportation	\$2,000,000

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2025-26 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	
Town of Berne	\$ 394
Town of Knox	\$ 383
Town of Middleburgh	\$ 382
Town of New Scotland	\$ 388
Town of Rensselaerville	\$ 389
Town of Westerlo	\$ 395
Town of Wright	\$ 411

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2025-26 by the qualified voters of the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District, Albany County, New York, will be held at BKW Elementary School in said district on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m., prevailing time in the BKW Elementary School cafeteria, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

¹ The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

2025-26

Board of Education

Matthew Tedeschi, *President*
Kimberly Lovell, *Vice-President*
Nathan Elble
Lisa Joslin
Rebecca Miller

Superintendent

Bonnie Kane

Editor

Richard Meddaugh

Produced in cooperation with
the Capital Region BOCES
Engagement & Development Services.

BERNE-KNOX-WESTERLO

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

1738 Helderberg Trail
Berne, NY 12023

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 4
Berne, NY

POSTAL CUSTOMER



BERNE-KNOX-WESTERLO
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



bkwschools.org



[instagram.com/bkwschools](https://www.instagram.com/bkwschools)



[facebook.com/BerneKnoxWesterlo](https://www.facebook.com/BerneKnoxWesterlo)



[youtube.com/@bkwcscd](https://www.youtube.com/@bkwcscd)



Tuesday, May 20, 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.
BKW Elementary School Cafeteria

On the ballot :

PROPOSITION 1

Vote on a \$24,737,328 proposed budget for the 2025-26 school year.

PROPOSITION 2

Vote to approve the purchase of three (3) diesel school buses at a cost to not exceed \$523,894.

PROPOSITION 3

Vote to establish a Facilities Reserve Fund in an amount to not exceed \$2,000,000 within a term of ten (10) years.

PROPOSITION 4

Vote to establish a 2025 Transportation Reserve Fund in an amount to not exceed \$2,000,000 within a term of ten (10) years.

BOARD ELECTION

Elect two members of the Board of Education to a three (3) year term commencing on July 1, 2025, and expiring June 30, 2028, to succeed Matthew Tedeschi and Rebecca Miller whose terms expire on June 30, 2025. Matthew Tedeschi and Rebecca Miller will be running for re-election during this year's budget vote.

BKW MUSIC DEPARTMENT BUILDING CREATIVE STEAM

In just two years and under the leadership of BKW Music Teachers Mrs. Higgins and Mr. Slingerland, the district has reestablished itself in the wonderful world of music and choral competition. To put it simply, the district is creating opportunities for musical growth and allowing students to tap into their creativity on our campus, and in local and statewide competitions.



The last two years have reintroduced the district's presence at the following milestone events: the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Solo Festival, Marching Band, Color Guard, Area All-State and the yearly school musical. In addition, musical ensembles and after-school clubs continue to grow in participation numbers.

"We are incredibly fortunate to have students rekindling the joy of learning to play and perform music as part of their BKW experience," shared Higgins. "Music is a vital component of any district's curriculum, and it's clear how it brings a positive and uplifting spirit to our school community."

VOTER ELIGIBILITY

All voters must be U.S. citizens, age 18 or older, and be residents of the district for at least 30 days before the vote. Preregistration is required. You may be asked to show proof of residency (such as a valid ID that lists your address) when voting. For information on registering to vote, please contact Anne Farnam at anne.farnam@bkwschools.org.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS and EARLY VOTING

Absentee ballot voting is available. The new Early Mail Voter Act allows for early voting via mail without any reasons needed for voting early. You must fill out an application to vote by early or absentee ballot. There are separate applications for voting by early voting or absentee ballot, but the application process and deadlines are the same. To receive an application, contact the District Clerk Anne Farnam at (518) 872-1293 ext. 5133. If you request a ballot mailed, your application must be received by 5 p.m. on May 13, 2025. If you plan to pick up your ballot, your application must be received by 5 p.m. on May 20, 2025.