

Who we are

The Bolton Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a local affiliate of the Connecticut and National PTAs. The overall purpose of PTA is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

The next Budget Referendum is on Tuesday, May 20, 2014. You can vote at Town Hall from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm!



Bolton High School was once again named as one of Connecticut's Best High Schools by U.S. News and World Report and is in the top 1,000 high schools in the country!

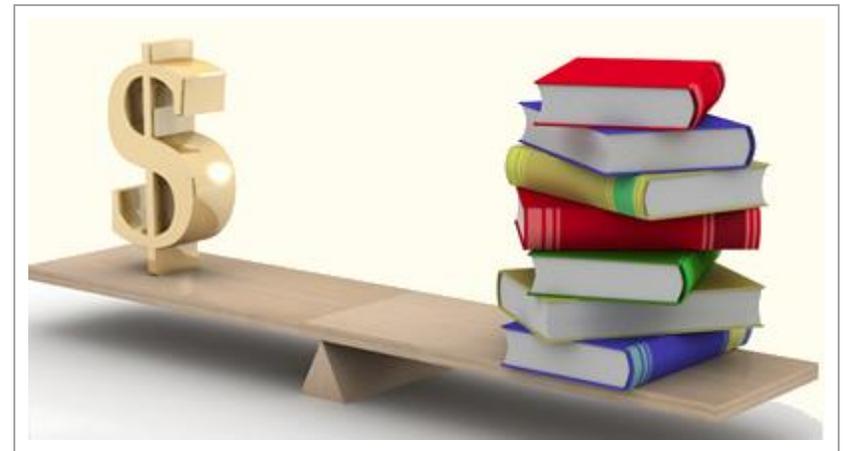


everychild.onevoice.

Produced and paid for by the Bolton PTA
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A Parent's Guide to the Bolton Budget Process

2014-2015 Budget



**PRODUCED AND PAID FOR BY
THE BOLTON PTA**

Alison Cole, Treasurer

How does the budget for our schools get decided?

The simple answer is that the budget for the entire Town of Bolton, including our schools, gets decided each year through a budget referendum vote that is open to all registered voters of Bolton. But before that vote can happen, a lot of work takes place to develop and fine tune the proposed budget. Here's how it works:

Fall of Prior Year

- The Superintendent of Schools works with school administrators and staff to determine the Bolton Public Schools' needs for the following school year.

January

- The Superintendent of Schools presents her proposed budget to the seven members of the Bolton Board of Education (BOE).

February

- The BOE holds multiple budget workshops where they review the Superintendent's proposed budget line by line and ask the Superintendent specific questions about what was included and excluded in the budget. All of these workshops are open to the public and residents are encouraged to attend, ask questions and provide input.
- The BOE then modifies the budget as necessary and votes on the proposed budget.

March

- The Superintendent presents the BOE approved budget to the members of the Board of Finance (BOF) at several meetings. These meetings are open to the public and residents are encouraged to attend, ask questions and provide input.
- The BOF determines whether to allow the BOE's proposed budget to go to referendum without any changes or the BOF may require the BOE to cut a certain amount from the proposed budget.

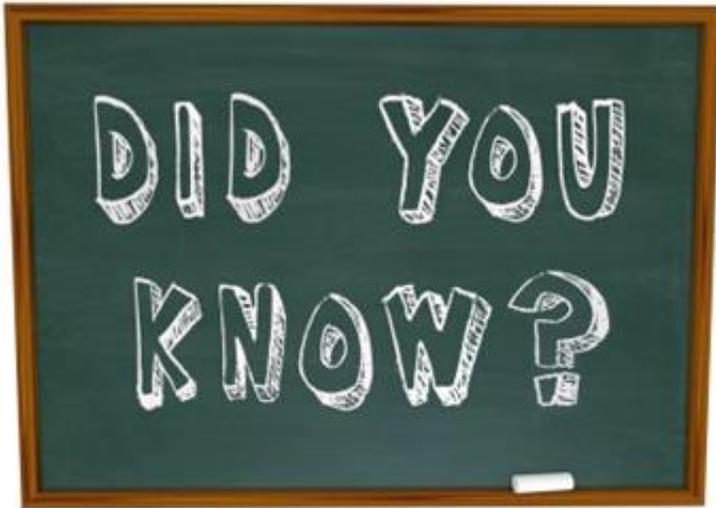
April

- The BOF schedules a Public Hearing so that the Bolton residents may ask questions about the proposed BOE and Board of Selectmen budgets before the BOF finalizes the budget for referendum.
- After the Public Hearing, the BOF finalizes the budget that will go to referendum.

May

- The Annual Budget Referendum is held in Bolton and YOU have your chance to vote "yes" or "no" on the proposed budget!
- If the budget fails to pass, subsequent referendums are held every 7-21 days until a budget is adopted

The next Budget Referendum is on Tuesday, May 20, 2014. You can vote at Town Hall from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm!



*In accordance with our Town Charter, “The Annual Budget Referendum may adopt, reject, but **cannot increase** the budget or any portion thereof...”*

The budget failed to pass at the first referendum, so the Board of Finance **HAD TO DECREASE THE BUDGET AMOUNT** before the next referendum. **THE BUDGET CANNOT BE INCREASED.** This means that if you feel that the current budget going to referendum is too low and will not to meet the needs of our schools, a vote of “No” will not mean that the BOF will add money back into the budget before the next referendum. **THE BUDGET WILL CONTINUE TO DECREASE WITH EACH SUBSEQUENT REFERENDUM.**

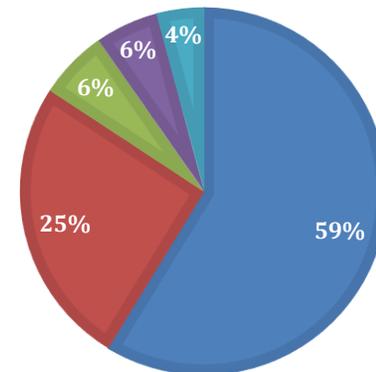
What was proposed in the Board of Education Budget for the coming fiscal year?

- The overall budget proposal was **\$13,776,139**
- This represented a **4.80%** or **\$631,568** increase over the current education budget

What would this money have covered?

DISTRIBUTION OF INCREASE

- Salaries - contracted, non-negotiable
- Benefits - contracted, non-negotiable
- Administration
- Regular Instruction
- Operations/Transportation/Technology



Where does the budget stand now?

- The Board of Finance has ordered the Board of Education to **cut \$457,000** from the proposed budget increase of **\$631,568** for a total proposed budget increase of **\$174,568**

The Board of Education will not make any determination on where this decrease in their proposed budget will be made until after the budget has passed at referendum and the BOE knows the total amount of funds they have available for the coming year, but areas at risk include:

- Unmandated electives at BCS and BHS such as music, art, sports, and world language
 - AP Courses at BHS
- Staff Positions (would result in larger class sizes)

FACT CHECK

Myth: Our teachers are overpaid

Fact: Bolton's teachers are some of the lowest paid in the state and make approximately \$5,000 less than the average Connecticut teacher at all stages of their career. They also pay a higher share of their insurance costs (19.5%) than their peers in Connecticut (18%)

Source: ConnCAN Teacher Contract Database
(<http://www.teachercontracts.conncan.org/find-compare>)

Why should you vote "yes" at the proposed budget referendum?

As parents and taxpayers, we get it. No one wants to pay more in taxes. However, our school system is the gem of our town and it is what continues to draw new residents and new investment to Bolton. Just as it costs all of us more to run our households each year, the cost to run our schools increases every year. Most of the increased cost is just to maintain what we already have - forget about extras!

Voting 'YES' on the proposed school budget will allow Bolton Public Schools to:

- Continue to support high student achievement at BCS and BHS
- Continue to attract students from Columbia and the Greater Hartford Open Choice Program to our high school. These students have other school choices and if those schools offer more academic and elective courses and activities, they will go elsewhere. These students bring much needed tuition to our schools and enrich our school community.
- Properly prepare our teachers and students for the full implementation of the state mandated Common Core Curriculum
- Increase in-district education of Special Education Students; allowing them to attend school with children in their community and avoiding costly outplacements