

Berlin

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MAY 2025

2025-2026 SCHOOL BUDGET & BOE VOTE

VOTE
TUESDAY
May 20, 2025

12 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Voting will take place at
Berlin Elementary School
53 School Street, Berlin, NY 12022
Tuesday, May 20, 2025
from 12 p.m. – 9 p.m.

- **Budget Vote**
- **Proposition Vote**
- **Board Election Vote**
(3 Open Seats)

THE 2025 – 2026 BUDGET

The Budget for the 2025 – 2026 school year is not to exceed **\$26,266,209**. This is an increase of **3.5%** in the tax levy.

Dear Berlin CSD Residents,

I wish to thank those of you who have actively engaged with the Board and administration throughout the development of the 2025–2026 budget. It has not been without its challenges, including the lack of an on time NYS budget, and the limited opportunities we, like other school districts, have to generate additional revenue.

Despite the challenges, the board has adopted a budget, reflective of our Mountaineer Core Values, and in consideration of stakeholder feedback, which: maintains current opportunities for students and addresses immediate facilities needs, while being mindful of the impact to our taxpayers.

The budget being proposed is \$26,266,209, reflecting the same tax levy as the current year – 3.5%. In the 2025–2026 school year, this exceeds our allowable tax cap of 2.19%, which would require a supermajority (60%) for approval.

In addition to the proposed budget, the ballot will include two separate transportation propositions, and three candidates for three open board seats. More information on both can be found on page 7.

Detailed and comprehensive information related to the development of the 2025–2026 budget can be found on the budget page of the district website; this includes copies of all budget presentations and the links to the livestreams of those presentations. I encourage you to review the information so you are positioned to make a well informed and thoughtful decision. The Budget Vote and Election of Board Members will be held Tuesday, May 20, 2025 from 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. at the Berlin Elementary School. Please consider coming out to vote.

Sincerely,
Dr. Maureen Long
Interim Superintendent



MOUNTAINEER CORE VALUES



EMPATHY: Acting with compassion to build relationships and foster community.



PERSEVERANCE: Understanding that excellence requires hard work, patience, and persistence.



INTEGRITY: Acting with honesty, respect, trust, and transparency.



TEAMWORK: Working collaboratively to achieve a common goal.



PRIDE: Demonstrating a strong connection to our school, district, and community.



GROWTH MINDSET: Modeling a love for life-long learning.



In April, Berlin Middle High School celebrated the outstanding achievements of the Class of 2025's top ten academic students with a dinner reception. The event was a reflection of the power of community and the importance of celebrating student success. Congratulations to this year BHS Academic Top 10 (listed from 10 to 1): Jayli Capasso, Kyle Collen, Curtis Hurd, Madison Bell, Katherine Dundas, Owen Lowry, Haylee Jones, Alexis Rifenburg, Sophia Hart (Salutatorian), and Lillian Gardell (Valedictorian).

Bond Act Provides Improvements at No Cost to Taxpayers

The Smart Schools Bond Act Initiative was passed by New York Voters in November of 2014. This initiative awarded \$2 billion to all public schools based on enrollment and state aid formula. The Berlin Central School allocation is \$947,237.

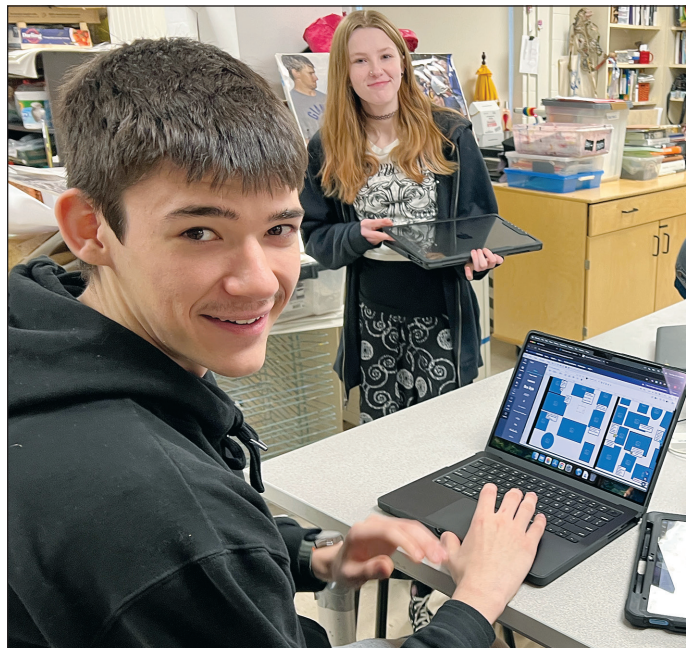
The Smart Schools Bond Act (SSBA) makes these funds available to school districts for improvements to educational technology and school infrastructure. It comes with rules and parameters for the use of these funds. The funds cannot be used to pay salaries or for Questar BOCES services, and cannot purchase software.

In February of 2024 a public hearing was held, followed by a period of public comment. Then, Berlin CSD's Technology Team worked diligently with the Smart Schools Planning Committee to develop the Smart Schools Investment Plan, required to access our district's \$947,237 allocation. The plan was submitted to and approved by the NYS Education Department, and work commenced immediately.

During these challenging fiscal times, our thanks go to Dr. Maureen Long, Mr. Nate Ellis, Mrs. Tammy Dunlop and Mrs. Trish Weber for their involvement in securing the funding. Without utilizing this funding source, many of the essential upgrades and improvements would otherwise fall to the BCSD general fund and taxpayer dollars.

The following improvements and upgrades are in progress.

- Upgrade the Emergency Classroom Notification system within the district (Both Schools as well as the bus garage).
 - > This includes phones, speakers, bells, clocks, intercoms, digital screens, and exterior strobe lights.
- Add Network Switches and uninterruptible power supplies.
- Install/Update projectors and screens for additional large group instructional spaces.
- Replace desktop computers for all district employees.



- Replace older interactive whiteboards.
- Replace teacher Chromebook devices.
- Upgrade Macs and Ipads for MS/HS Art Department. (See Media Arts Story)
- Upgrade science department equipment to replace laptop carts and Vernier equipment.

Much of this work is underway and will see completion in the summer of 2025. The importance of scheduling replacements and upgrades has been considered in the roll-out to ensure the district has a proper cycling schedule for equipment to plan for the future.

Media Arts Explores New Possibilities with SSBA Initiative

Students in Ms. Shannon DeCelle's Media Arts, Yearbook, and High School Career & College (HVCC) programs are diving into the world of cutting-edge technology as they explore the exciting possibilities offered by the newest Mac computers and iPads. These state-of-the-art computers came at no cost to the taxpayers and were funded through the Smart Schools Bond Act Initiative, passed by New York Voters in November of 2014 (see SSBA story). The devices are empowering students to push the boundaries of creativity, productivity, and innovation in their respective fields.

The integration of the latest Mac computers and iPads into the curriculum marks a significant leap forward in students' educational experiences. In the Media Arts programs, students are utilizing the devices for video editing, digital artwork creation, and graphic design, unlocking new levels of creativity with software such as Adobe Photoshop, and Procreate. With the advanced processing power of the Macs and the portability of the iPads, students have the flexibility to work seamlessly across devices, bringing their ideas to life both inside and outside the classroom.

"These tools are not just enhancing their creativity and technical expertise but are also preparing them for a future where technology plays a pivotal role in all industries," said Ms. DeCelle, Berlin Middle High School Art teacher.

COMMUNITY MEMBER SCHOOL MESSENGER REQUEST FORM

Please complete this form <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf8K5CQrpaQpEhQ3hPVHvjhPzKlQ-QgYzC0yUyjCRhKfNf5FQ/viewform> if you would like to opt in to receiving communication from the Berlin Central School District regarding important community and school events. Communications may be in the form of emails, text messages or phone calls.



Class of 2025 Valedictorian and Salutatorian

LILLIAN GARDELL

**2025 Berlin High School Valedictorian
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Biological Neuroscience, Women's Softball Team**



Congratulations to Lillian Gardell, daughter of Shannon and Luis Gardell of Grafton, the 2025 Valedictorian of Berlin High School.

Lillian has been enrolled in one of the most challenging college preparatory schedules that Berlin has to offer. This includes an accelerated track in math and science since seventh grade, honors English and social studies courses since ninth grade, and several dual enrollment and advanced placement courses. Lillian will graduate with a New York State Regents diploma with Advanced Designation.

Lillian will attend Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) this fall for Biological Neuroscience, and play softball for RPI Athletics.

Lillian is a three-sport varsity athlete in soccer, basketball and softball. Lillian has been awarded MVP of all three teams, selected to the Wasaren League All Star team for soccer and softball, Section II Girls Basketball Scholar-Athlete, and recognized for her leadership and ability to be a team player as captain of all three teams.

"Whether she is part of a sports team or working in a research group, Lilly is a team player, excellent communicator and strong collaborator," said BHS Counselor Mrs. Rachel Harrison.

Not only has Lillian been playing varsity softball for the Berlin-New Lebanon (BNL) Athletic program since 8th grade, she has also been playing club softball for Electric City Bombers Travel Softball team since 9th grade, traveling the Northeast competing at a high level.

Lillian's combination of academic achievements and her strength of character earned her an induction into the National Honor Society. Her time as a camp counselor at the Grafton town summer camp has brought out her empathy, patience and ability to advocate for others, which has really shone through during her senior year of high school.

"Lillian is respected not only for her achievements but also for her integrity, kindness, and willingness to lift others," said Berlin Middle High School Principal Mr. David Bernsley.

"She is the kind of student others look to for guidance and inspiration, someone who makes those around her better simply by being herself."

Lillian received the prestigious RPI Medal in her junior year just as her mother, Shannon, did during her junior year of high school. Her parents both attended RPI, and it is with great pride that she will be attending as well. Lillian is happy to have her father, Luis, coaching her final high school season of softball and her mother championing the BNL sports program as booster club co-president.

Lillian embodies the spirit of a Mountaineer: a scholar, athlete, leader, and role model who has left a lasting impact on our school community and we are sure she will do the same at RPI in the fall.

SOPHIA HART

**2025 Berlin High School Salutatorian
State University of New York at New Paltz
Music Education**



Congratulations to Sophia Hart, daughter of Kathryn and Ben Hart of Stephentown, the 2025 Salutatorian of Berlin High School.

Sophia has been enrolled in one of the most challenging college preparatory schedules that Berlin can offer, including an accelerated track in math and science since eighth grade and honors courses in English and Social Studies since ninth grade. In her junior year, she challenged herself with Advanced Placement English, HVCC U.S. History courses along with Precalculus and Physics.

This year, as a senior, Sophia was accepted into the New Visions Visual and Performing Arts program and is taking college level courses, focused on her strengths in the arts.

Sophia will graduate with a New York State Regents Diploma with Advanced designation.

Sophia is a member of the National Honor Society, band and jazz band, chorus and chamber choir, and is Student Council Secretary. Her leadership is apparent as she serves as Vice President of her class, a student mentor LINK leader, and a camp counselor in Stephentown's summer camp.

Sophia's extracurricular commitments are endless. She has had important roles on the Berlin-New Lebanon (BNL) Athletic program's varsity soccer and basketball teams this year and in the Berlin Dramateers productions.

This spring she lit up the stage in the Dramateers production of *Alice in Wonderland Jr.*, as Alice. She brought a commitment to the stage, managing the end of basketball season, preparing several solos and duets for the Berlin High School Pops concert, and fulfilling commitments at the New Visions program in Troy. During the fall Sophia was in a Schenectady Light Opera Company production of *Mean Girls* as well.

Sophia is proud to have her parents involved in her ventures, from being accompanied by her father, Ben, on guitar in several of her Berlin performances, to her mother, Kathryn, treasurer of the BNL booster club and go-to for the Dramateers during their performances for hair design.

Sophia has a self-described passion and love for all things musical. "Sophia feels that music is what has helped her to balance 'everything'; it keeps her calm and able to manage her stress while working at a high level," said BHS Counselor Mrs. Rachel Harrison.

"She inspires those around her to strive for greatness, always encouraging her peers to pursue their dreams," said BMHS School Principal Mr. David Bernsley.

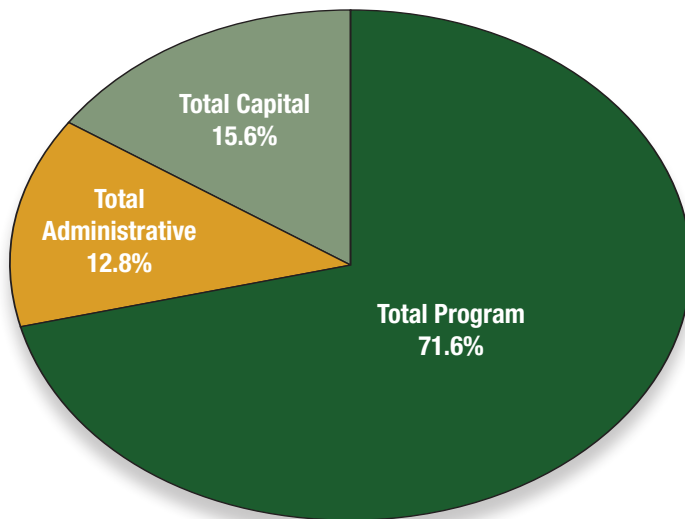
Sophia will be pursuing music education in the fall at SUNY New Paltz. Her compassion and dedication to helping others will make her an extraordinary music educator and successful wherever the future takes her.

REVENUES:

	Actual 2024–2025	Proposed 2025–2026
State Aid	12,805,537	13,058,536
Real Property Taxes	10,506,381	10,874,224
Miscellaneous/Federal	690,339	706,100
Reserves (ERS, TRS)	524,820	627,349
Fund Balance	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total Revenue	25,527,077	26,266,209

THREE-PART BUDGET

All public schools in New York State are required by law to report their spending in the three categories: Program, Administrative and Capital.



Berlin Central School District's Odyssey of the Mind Team won first place at Regionals and Advanced to State Finals in Syracuse, where they placed 10th in New York State! Congratulations Mountaineers: Adel Derstine, Francis Maxfield, Jesse Cummings, Alaina Chittenden, Clara Church, Caraline Webster, and Rosalee Riccardi!

EXPENSES:

PROGRAM BUDGET

	Actual 2024–2025	Proposed 2025–2026
Regular Education	5,303,021	4,922,964
Special Education	3,973,048	4,266,045
Occupational Education	618,950	709,350
Continuing Ed/Driver Ed	11,000	0
Library/Technology	658,068	789,563
Guidance	369,632	443,461
Health/Psychological Services	318,796	485,337
Co-Curricular/Sports	379,690	324,058
Transportation	1,625,628	1,746,289
Employee Benefits	4,963,090	5,119,766
Total Program Budget	18,220,923	18,806,833

ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

	Actual 2024–2025	Proposed 2025–2026
Board of Education	29,078	37,000
Central Administration	322,059	262,258
Finance	497,248	556,875
Legal/Personnel/Public Info./Records	224,248	262,196
Central Printing/Mailing/Data Processing	232,077	154,320
Insurance/Dues	84,500	100,009
School & Dept. Supervision/Security	881,535	871,200
Curriculum & In-service	138,061	138,683
BOCES Administration Expenses	186,908	187,622
Employee Benefits	776,031	788,788
Total Administrative Budget	3,371,745	3,358,951

CAPITAL BUDGET

	Actual 2024–2025	Proposed 2025–2026
Operations & Maintenance	1,556,100	1,604,090
Debt Service	1,971,269	1,991,520
Transfer to Other Funds	23,000	100,000
Employee Benefits	384,040	404,815
Total Capital Budget	3,934,409	4,100,425
Total Budget Expenses	25,527,077	26,266,209

Berlin Central 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	\$ 25,527,077	\$26,266,209	\$25,788,366				
Increase/Decrease for the 2025-26 School Year		\$739,132	\$261,289				
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		2.90%	1.01%				
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.95%					
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$10,506,381	\$10,874,224					
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)	\$10,506,381	\$10,874,224	\$10,506,381				
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$387,289	\$392,673					
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$10,129,218	\$10,343,636					
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$10,119,218	\$10,481,551					
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$10,126	-\$137,915					
Administrative Component	\$3,371,745	\$3,358,951	\$3,198,890				
Program Component	\$18,220,923	\$18,806,833	\$18,655,498				
Capital Component	\$3,934,409	\$4,100,425	\$3,933,978				
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.							
If operating under a contingency budget, revenue related to tax increase, truck sale and replacement, distance learning, and interest earnings would be lost. Equipment would be removed throughout the budget. The Capital Outlay Project would be removed. Distance Learning would be removed. Other potential reductions include, curriculum development support, in-service training, BOCES services, additional instructional support, and administrative support.							
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Description</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>School Bus Proposition to purchase two school buses. (no budgetary impact in the 2025-2026 school year)</td> <td>\$350,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Description	Amount	School Bus Proposition to purchase two school buses. (no budgetary impact in the 2025-2026 school year)	\$350,000		
Description	Amount						
School Bus Proposition to purchase two school buses. (no budgetary impact in the 2025-2026 school year)	\$350,000						
** 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)							

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2025-26 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹
\$360

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2025-26 by the qualified voters of the **Berlin Central School District, Rensselaer County**, New York, will be held in the **Berlin Elementary School Gymnasium** in said district on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 between the hours of **12:00 pm and 9:00 pm**, prevailing time, 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.

Contingency Budget

If the voters reject a school budget, the Board of Education has three options under the NYS law:

- submit the same budget for a second vote;
- submit a revised budget for a second vote; or
- adopt a contingent (or contingency) budget

When the voters of a NYS school district fail to approve a school budget the second time, the district is required by law to operate under a contingency budget.

What happens when a contingent budget must be adopted?

State law mandates that under a contingent budget, a school district must adopt a budget with no tax levy increase and eliminate all non-contingent expenses, such as certain student supplies, certain equipment purchases and community use of school facilities that results in a district expense. The administrative budget would also be subject to certain restrictions.

What would a contingent budget mean for Berlin?

If operating under a contingent budget, the tax levy can be no greater than the prior year tax levy (zero percent increase).

Based on the Adopted Budget, the tax levy would need to be reduced from \$10,874,224 to \$10,506,381, a decrease of \$367,843. Additional reductions of \$110,000 would be required. Therefore, the budget would need to be reduced by \$477,843 if operating under a contingency budget.

Capital Outlay Project: BES North Portico/ADA Entrance

This year's budget vote incorporates a \$100,000 Capital Outlay Project at Berlin Elementary School. With the designated priority being a critical reconstruction of the Berlin Elementary School's north entrance portico. This entrance serves as the sole accessible entry point to the building, adhering to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines. The scope of the work includes addressing water infiltration in the roof seams, replacing the copper roof that has reached the end of its useful life, and implementing sediment filtration in clogged downspout drainage. The \$100,000 capital outlay is anticipated to yield a 75% return in Building Aid in 2026-2027, resulting in a reimbursement of \$75,000 to the capital project fund balance. As the district addresses critical buildings and grounds infrastructure projects through this type of outlay, the building aid will continue to facilitate the recoupment of funds on an annual basis. This strategic cycle will enable the district to maintain its buildings and grounds on a proactive maintenance schedule, mitigating the need for larger emergency projects in the future.



Inspiring Engineering Breakthroughs and Challenges

Berlin Middle High School's Science Department recently hosted the annual Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) Engineering Ambassadors (EAs) visit. The RPI EAs presented three different labs that reflected real-world challenges, focusing on Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Computer-Aided Design (CAD): Semiconductor Chips & How They Work, Engineering Forensics, and Welding/Soldering. The ambassadors aimed to inspire students by visiting their school district and engaging them in various engineering disciplines through hands-on labs related to their fields of study. Eighteen presentations were given to students ranging from 6th through 12th grade during the EA's visit.

Rensselaer County Soil & Water Conservation District were also special guests, speaking to over 70 Mountaineers about the Eel Project, a project supported by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Hudson River Estuary Program and National Estuarine Research Reserve. This project is a citizen science eel-monitoring program that tracks the number of young of year (YOY) eels in tributaries of the Hudson River. The project provides crucial baseline data on the young eel populations in the Hudson River and gets students and community members engaged with their local streams. Conservation District Technician Nate Woodworth spoke to the Mountaineers about careers in Soil & Water Conservation and Envirothon, a competition in which a team of Mountain-



neers competes each year, focusing on soil, wildlife, forestry, aquatics, and a current environmental condition. Envirothon advisors, BMHS Science teachers Mrs. Amanda Hayes and Mr. Nick Toole, hope that this visit will lead to a partnership with Mountaineers participating in the Eel Project.

Mrs. Deanna Baker Honored with Friends of Education Award

Congratulations to Berlin Elementary Teacher and Helping Hands Coordinator Mrs. Deanna Baker, who was honored with the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) Friends of Education Award! CASDA presents this award annually to recognize the selfless contributions of individuals who dedicate themselves to serving students and enriching their school communities.

Deanna Baker has been with the Berlin Central School district for close to 20 years. In addition to her work in the classroom, Mrs. Baker is always thinking of special ways to support the whole school community, whether searching out additional funding to provide new tools to support her students with extra needs, or supporting families.

Mrs. Baker is also a community member and her impact goes well beyond the doors of her classroom as the Special Education teacher and head teacher in the BES Shooting Stars programs.

"As a special education teacher Mrs. Baker has risen as the go-to for anyone in need," said Berlin Elementary Kindergarten teacher Mrs. Katie Hooks.

Mrs. Baker's efforts range from the Helping Hands program (a program designed to help families in need in the community with weekend food bags to help ensure that they have food for



Mrs. Deanna Baker, CASDA's 2025 Friends of Education award recipient.

the weekend), holding school supplies drives and collecting and organizing clothing donations for students who might need a change of clothes, a warm coat and even winter gear.

During the holiday season, Deanna coordinates the BCSD Holiday Bears. This program provides families in need with holiday gifts and clothing to ensure all students have a special holiday experience.

Elementary School Principal, Mrs. Jodi Cataldo, reflected on Deanna's commitment to the school district and its families: "Deanna is always thinking of special ways to support her students and the whole school community.

"She has worked hard to develop the Shooting Stars program and serves as a mentor for teachers in the elementary building."

In 2019 Deanna received the CAPCOM Federal Credit Union "Making a Difference Award."

When describing her, then BCSD parent and community member, Ms. Melanie Winters, said, "She is patient, attentive, and just the right amount of silly to keep her little learners engaged and excited. Her caring heart dives deep into the community, and her acts of service spread wide."

Deanna Baker was honored at CASDA's Annual Awards and Friends of Education Celebration on May 1, 2025.

PROPOSITION #2: Student Transportation Mileage Distances

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the following proposition and shall submit such proposition to the voters at the May 20, 2025 Annual Meeting and include such proposition in the District's Notice of Public Hearing, Annual Meeting, Budget Vote and Election:

Shall the following resolution be adopted, to wit:

RESOLVED, that the Berlin Central School District (the "District") be authorized to transport District resident students for lesser or greater distances than the distances authorized by the New York State Education Law, including: (A) students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 who reside less than two (2) miles from school, (B) students in Grade 7 – Grade 12 who reside less than three (3) miles from school, and (C) students who reside more than fifteen (15) miles from the school that they attend within the geographic boundaries of the District.

PROPOSITION #3: Bus Purchase

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the following proposition and shall submit such proposition to the voters at the May 20, 2025 Annual Meeting and include such proposition in the District's Notice of Public Hearing, Annual Meeting, Budget Vote and Election:

Shall the following resolution be adopted, to wit:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Berlin Central School District is hereby authorized to (1) acquire in fiscal year 2025-2026 two (2) 66 passenger school buses at a cost not to exceed \$350,000 which is estimated to be the maximum cost thereof, (2) expend such sums for such purpose, (3) levy the tax necessary therefor, to be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education, taking into account state aid received, and (4) in anticipation of the collection of such tax, to issue bonds and notes of the District at one time or from time to time in the principal amount not to exceed \$350,000, or enter into a lease-purchase agreement at a principal amount not to exceed \$350,000 to acquire such vehicles.

REGARDING PROPOSITION #2: To continue transporting students at a lesser distance than NYSED requirements, voter approval is required. Please see the proposition above for more details.

Board of Education Candidates

There are 3 candidates running for three seats. All seats are three-year terms (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2028). Voters will be asked to vote for three candidates. The candidates will appear on the ballot in the order they are shown below from left to right.



ELAINE SMITH

I am a 1992 graduate of Berlin Central School. I then went on to receive my Bachelor's degree from SUNY Brockport. Before deciding to stay at home to raise my children, I worked at the Arc

of Rensselaer as a Program Coordinator. In addition to leading a team of Direct Support Professionals, one of my responsibilities was to plan and facilitate person-centered trainings.

These sessions helped to develop meaningful life goals for adults with disabilities. In doing this work, I learned how important it is to truly listen to the needs of others. It also taught me how to work through challenges with an open mind. I believe these skills will help me as a board member, to be in service to others. I am a person who tries to find the positive, even in challenging situations.

Currently, I have two children attending school in Berlin, a son in 10th grade and a daughter in 8th grade. I have always been an advocate and ally of the Berlin school. I speak proudly of my connection to the community here. While my kids were at the elementary school, I dedicated my time and energy to being the PTO co-president. I am now ready to take on a new role as a board member. If elected, I will continue to be an advocate for the families, teachers and students.



KIM COLLEN

My name is Kim Colleen and I am running for Berlin Central School District Board of Education. I have completed three years of service already but feel I have more to offer.

I have lived in the district, specifically in Grafton, for the past 14 years. My two boys have attended Berlin since Kindergarten. Jake graduated in 2024 and Kyle is a senior this year.

I have worked as a Physician Assistant for the past 30 years. I enjoy meeting new people, listening to their concerns and helping them.

I have come to love this school as well as the community and want to make it the best it can be. We have made great strides over the past few years and hope to continue that work. I believe we all need to come together, problem solve, offer solutions, and work as a group, with the goal of making Berlin Central an example of a well-run rural district.

There will always be challenges, but I have faith in our current staff and administration to continue their hard work. I have no doubt they have the students well-being and success as their driving force.

According to the New York State School Board Association, a board member should be an effective communicator, consensus builder, community participant, decision maker, information processor, a leader and a team player. I believe I possess these characteristics and hope I can continue to serve Berlin.



REBEKAH LAMPHERE

I have resided in the Berlin Central School District nearly my entire life. Born in Berlin, after graduating from BCSD, I attended Paul Smith's College for Urban Tree Management and Cornell University for Plant

Science. After graduation, I returned to raise my family. I own and manage a landscape design/installation business, Hartland Designs Inc. I have employed many BHS students, often giving them their first job. I served on the Berlin Free Town Library Board for 21 years. I have a grown son, Gable, who lives in Petersburg; a daughter, Graziella, a Berlin senior; and a son, George, a Berlin sophomore. I own property in Petersburg and Grafton, so I know how important it is to keep taxes low. I also know how important it is to provide our kids with the best possible education. Graziella and George have thrived at BCSD because of its excellent teachers and staff, strong music and art programs, inclusive sports programs, and the academic choices they have had. I am grateful for this school and want to help it continue its mission to provide a safe, nurturing atmosphere and continue to develop strong academics. When parents consider homeschooling and private school alternatives, I want them to choose Berlin, not because it's a last resort, but because Berlin has developed a reputation for being an excellent choice for enrichment, academics, and emotional growth.

Berlin

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

P. O. Box 259 • Berlin, NY 12022

NONPROFIT ORG.
AUTOCR
US POSTAGE PAID
BERLIN, NY 12022
PERMIT NO. 1

POSTAL PATRON

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Andrea Beckwith – *Audit Committee, Merged Sports Committee*
Kim Collen – *Health & Wellness Committee, Merged Sports Committee*
Derrick Gardner – *Facilities Committee*
Penni Eggsware – *Health & Wellness Committee, Merged Sports Committee*
Sherry Bowman-Kluck – *Merged Sports Committee*
Katie Snyder – *Vice President - Facility Committee, Audit Committee*
Frank J. Zwack – *President – Audit Committee*

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Maureen Long

<https://berlincentral.org/district/board-of-education/>

**BUDGET
VOTE**
Tuesday, May 20

VOTER QUALIFICATIONS

To vote, you must be:

- A citizen of the United States
- At least 18 years of age
- A resident of the district for 30 days prior to the vote

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Qualified district residents who are unable to go to the polling place on May 20th can cast their votes by absentee ballot. For an application, call the District Clerk at 518-658-1500 Option 8, Extension 1010. Completed applications must be received by the District Clerk at least seven (7) days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election, if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter.

All completed ballots must be received by the district clerk no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20, 2025.

SAVE THE DATES

- Berlin CSD 2025-2026 Budget Vote — May 20th, 12:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. BES
- Berlin Elementary School's 4th Annual Night of the Arts 3rd-5th Grade Concert — May 29th, 6:30 p.m. - BES
- Berlin Elementary School's 1st & 2nd Concert — May 30th, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. - BES
- BMHS Arts Alive! Student Art Exhibit & Poetry Night — June 3rd, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. - BMHS
- Berlin Middle School 8th Grade Moving Up — June 16th, 6:00 p.m.
- Berlin High School Academic Awards — June 11th at 6:00 p.m. BMHS
- Berlin Elementary Kindergarten Moving Up — June 25th, 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
- Berlin Elementary 5th Grade Moving Up Ceremony — June 26th, 9:30 a.m.
- Berlin High School Senior Graduation — June 27th, 7:00 p.m.

CONNECT WITH US

DISTRICT CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<https://berlincentral.org/district/calendar/>

MOUNTAINEER WEBSITE

www.berlincentral.org

FOLLOW US ON

TWITTER AND FACEBOOK

Facebook @BerlinCentralSchoolDistrict

Twitter at @BerlinCSD

Athletics @BerlinNY_AD

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR

YOUTUBE CHANNELS

Communications BCSD

or Streaming BCSD