



Leopard's Tale



May 2009

PUBLIC HEARING

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

7:00 PM

LCS Multi-Purpose Room

VOTING

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

11:00 AM—9:00 PM

**Laurens Central School
Home & Careers Room 115**

WHO CAN VOTE?

- ◇ You are eligible to vote if you are:
- ◇ A citizen of the United States
- ◇ 18 years of age or older
- ◇ A resident within the school district for a period of 30 days or more preceding the meeting at which he/she offers to vote
- ◇ Voted in a general election in the past 2 years or be on the polling list at the school district

May 19, 2009

SCHOOL DISTRICT VOTING DAY FOR:

- Proposed 2009-2010 School Budget
- One Open Seat on the Board of Education
- One 60 Passenger Bus with Wheelchair Capabilities
- Establishment of Capital Reserve Fund

The May newsletter is dedicated to providing residents with information about the 2009-2010 proposed school budget, the candidate running for the open board seat, the proposed bus purchase. In addition to this information, we hope you will enjoy reading the section on “District Accomplishments.”

Please support our school by voting on May 19th.



Thank you to the Laurens American Legion for
sponsoring this issue of the
Leopard's Tale Newsletter.

Dear Residents of the Laurens Central School District:

It seems hard to believe that we are entering the last two months of the school year. The days pass by so quickly, and we now seem to move from one important event in the school to another without a moments rest in between.

As you read this newsletter you will find it to be organized in two main sections; the first provides information about the proposed budget for the 2009-2010 school year and the upcoming vote. The second is a "Special Highlights" section that is filled with information about the many accomplishments and special programs our students have participated in during the past year. I hope you are able to take the time to read both sections of the newsletter as much information is provided.

The first and primary purpose of this newsletter is to provide residents with information so that they can make an informed decision about the budget, the upcoming votes, and the election of a candidate to the Board of Education. The budget is broken down in to three separate components as required by the State, those being: the Administrative, Program and Capital Components. The Property Tax Report Card and a "Meet the Candidate" section are also provided. Readers will also find information about the proposed bus purchase and establishment of a reserve that will be on the ballot.

As many have read in the newspaper, all schools across the state are going to see a freeze in the Foundation Aid provided by the State. Foundation Aid for schools is based on the concept that each school should be given a basic level of aid per student. The purpose of this aid is to insure that all students across the state receive a basic and foundational education; hence the term "Foundation Aid." When the formula was implemented it showed what we had known for many years; the state was, in fact, under-funding small, rural schools. Once implemented, Foundation Aid provided our district with significant increases in state aid. As a result, over the past two years we were able to accomplish three important goals with our budget: provide sound educational programs for our students, present an affordable budget to the community that would require a tax levy well under the cost of living, and establish a plan for long term financial security of the district. We are most fortunate to have had two years of financial growth and stability.

This year, with the freeze in Foundation Aid, the Board of Education and I have worked very hard to develop a budget that continues to provide sound educational programs while at the same time be affordable to our community. **Therefore, we are pleased to be able to put forth a budget that for a second year in a row will require a tax levy of approximately only 2%.** This tax increase is well under the "Cost of Living" increase as determined by the federal government and will be one of the lowest tax increases in the area. **In addition, this will be the third year in a row that the proposed budget is under the Contingent Budget Level established by the state.**

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the community for its support of the district over the past several years. Our school is moving forward in a very positive direction, and with your continued support, we will be able to provide an excellent education for our students, as well as function as the center of activity for the community.

Please go to the polls on May 19th. You will be voting a budget that reflects both the needs of the students and the community, and you will be supporting a school that has a history of providing an excellent education for our children.

L Laurens, ... Where

C Community and School Create

S Success

Romona N. Wenck
Superintendent

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

In accordance with Section 2018-1 of the Education Law, absentee ballots may be applied for at the school district office, located on the second floor of Laurens Central School.

Applications must be received by the District Clerk at least 7 days before the election of 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.

Persons are qualified for an absentee ballot if they are absent from the district while the polls are open because:

They are away for business, occupation or studies;
They are confined in a hospital or jail;
They have a physical disability or illness; or
They will be absent because of vacation.

Issues to be voted on:

Proposition #1—Basic Budget

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Laurens Central School District be and hereby is authorized to expend the sum of \$8,716,751 for the 2009-2010 school year budget.

Proposition #2—Board of Education Election Candidates for the Board of Education

To elect one member of the Board for a five year term commencing July 1, 2009 and expiring on June 30, 2014. Incumbent Sheryle Lifgren Charity.

Proposition #3—Purchase One (1) 60 Passenger School Bus with Wheelchair Capabilities

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Laurens Central School District undertake the acquisition of one (1) 60 passenger school bus with wheelchair capabilities at an estimated maximum cost of \$124,462, to be paid entirely from the Bus Reserve Fund that was established in December, 2002.

Proposition #4—Establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund

To authorize the Laurens Central School District to establish a capital reserve fund pursuant to Section 3651 of the Education Law of the State of New York (the "Fund"); that the Fund shall be known as the "Capital Reserve Fund-2009" of the District; that the Fund shall be established for the purpose of funding all or a portion of the costs of the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, expansion, renovation, alteration and improvement of District buildings, facilities, grounds and real property, including the acquisition of original furnishings, equipment, machinery and apparatus required in connection therewith; that the ultimate amount of the Fund shall be not greater than \$ 1.5 million plus interest earned thereon; that the probable term of the Fund shall be not longer than ten years; and that the sources of the monies for the Fund shall be (a) amounts applied thereto from budgetary appropriations of the District from time to time, (b) amounts from unappropriated fund balance of the District as directed by the Board from time to time; (c) to the extent specifically directed by the Board, State aid received as reimbursement for expenditures by the District in connection with District capital improvements projects and (d) such other sources the Board or the voters of the District may direct from time to time, all as may be permitted by law.

LAURENS CENTRAL SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION

Cynthia Struckle, President
Robert Holstead, Vice President
Sheryle Lifgren Charity, Member
Frances Nichols, Member
Thomas Francisco, Member

Sections 1608, 1716, 2554, and 2590-e of the Educational Law, as amended by Chapter 474 of the Laws of 1996 require the following additional information as a part of the budget process which, because of space limitations, are included in the detailed budget document available in the Main Office/Superintendent's Office, as follows: (1) Superintendent salary, benefits, and other remunerations; (2) School district report card.

BUDGET COMPONENTS

Administrative

Program

Capital

The laws relating to the budget vote require the budget to be presented to the residents for their review divided into three sections: Administrative, Program and Capital components. Although presented in three components for informational purposes, the vote cast will be on the total budget. Listed below are the individual items included under each of the budget components.

Administrative *Expenses for the following:*

- ◇ Board of Education
- ◇ District Clerk
- ◇ District Meeting
- ◇ School Administrative Costs
- ◇ Auditing
- ◇ Treasurer
- ◇ Tax Collector
- ◇ Purchasing
- ◇ Fiscal Agent
- ◇ Legal Services
- ◇ Personnel Services
- ◇ Public Information Services
- ◇ Curriculum Development and Supervision
- ◇ Research, Planning and Evaluation
- ◇ Supervision—Regular School
- ◇ Central Data Processing
- ◇ Central Printing and Mailing
- ◇ Employee Benefits
- ◇ BOCES Administrative Costs

Program *Expenses for the following:*

- ◇ Inservice Training—Instruction
- ◇ Teaching—Regular School
- ◇ Programs for Students with Disabilities
- ◇ Occupational Education
- ◇ Teaching—Special Schools
- ◇ School Library and Audio Visual
- ◇ Educational Television
- ◇ Computer Assisted Instruction
- ◇ Attendance
- ◇ Guidance
- ◇ Health Services
- ◇ Psychological Services
- ◇ Social Work Services
- ◇ Pupil Personnel Services
- ◇ Co-Curricular Activities
- ◇ Interscholastic Athletics
- ◇ District Transportation
- ◇ Recreation, Youth Programs
- ◇ Local Services
- ◇ Employee Benefits

Capital *Expenses for the following:*

- ◇ Operation of Plant
- ◇ Maintenance of Plant
- ◇ Debt Service
- ◇ Transfers to Capital and Debt Service Fund
- ◇ Employee Benefits

Administrative Component Details

NAME OF ACCOUNT	2008-09	2009-10
<u>BOARD OF EDUCATION</u>		
Board of Education	\$9,100	\$10,600
District Meeting	\$600	\$600
District Clerk	\$1,375	\$2,600
School Association Dues	<u>\$4,650</u>	<u>\$4,950</u>
<i>Total Board of Education</i>	\$15,725	\$18,750
<u>CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION</u>		
School Administrative Costs	\$138,680	\$143,876
BOCES Administrative Costs	<u>\$107,800</u>	<u>\$108,000</u>
<i>Total Central Administration</i>	\$246,480	\$251,876
<u>FINANCE</u>		
Treasurers Office	\$70,808	\$62,704
Auditing	\$32,300	\$34,100
Tax Collector	\$4,011	\$3,582
Fiscal Agent Fees	\$0	\$0
Purchasing	\$2,500	\$2,500
Tax Refund	<u>\$1,000</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>
<i>Total Finance</i>	\$110,619	\$107,886
<u>STAFF</u>		
Appraisal	\$0	\$9,000
Personnel	\$30,600	\$23,600
Public Information and Service	\$2,250	\$2,250
Records Management	<u>\$1,358</u>	<u>\$1,184</u>
<i>Total Staff</i>	\$34,208	\$36,034
<u>CENTRAL SERVICES</u>		
Central Printing and Mailing	\$9,275	\$9,274
Central Data Processing	\$41,500	\$43,000
Insurance	<u>\$2,250</u>	<u>\$2,250</u>
<i>Total Central Services</i>	\$53,025	\$54,524
<u>ADMINISTRATION AND IMPROVEMENT</u>		
Curriculum Development & Supervision	\$79,589	\$82,773
In-Service Training	\$0	\$0
Research, Planning & Evaluation	<u>\$25,900</u>	<u>\$24,200</u>
<i>Total Administration & Improvements</i>	\$105,489	\$106,973
<u>EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</u>		
	\$76,524	\$80,182
<i>TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET</i>	\$642,070	\$656,225

Program Component Details

NAME OF ACCOUNT	2008-09	2009-10
<u>INSTRUCTION</u>		
Teaching—Regular School	\$1,906,113	\$1,879,600
Programs for Students with Disabilities	\$1,436,400	\$1,403,800
Occupational Education	\$287,500	\$290,000
Teaching—Special Schools	<u>\$19,268</u>	<u>\$19,398</u>
<i>Total Instruction</i>	\$3,649,281	\$3,592,798
 <u>INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA</u>		
School Library & Audio Visual	\$97,683	\$107,790
Computer Assisted Instruction	<u>\$79,534</u>	<u>\$75,183</u>
<i>Total Instructional Media</i>	\$177,217	\$182,973
 <u>PUPIL SERVICES</u>		
Attendance	\$16,100	\$17,800
Guidance	\$113,650	\$117,950
Health Services	\$52,050	\$62,813
Social Work	\$0	\$0
Psychological Services	\$40,500	\$41,500
Co-Curricular Activities	\$26,800	\$28,200
Interscholastic Athletics	\$88,250	\$94,250
Pupil Personnel	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
<i>Total Pupil Service</i>	\$337,350	\$362,513
 <u>PUPIL TRANSPORTATION</u>		
District Transportation Services		
<i>Total Pupil Transportation</i>	<u>\$449,130</u>	<u>\$425,755</u>
	\$449,130	\$425,755
 <u>CIVIC ACTIVITIES</u>		
Civic	\$4,492	\$4,500
Census Taker	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$1,568</u>
<i>Total Civic</i>	\$4,492	\$6,068
 <u>EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</u>		
	\$1,209,090	\$1,250,832
 <i>TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET</i>	 \$5,826,560	 \$5,820,939

Capital Component Details

NAME OF ACCOUNT	2008-09	2009-10
<u>CENTRAL SERVICES</u>		
Operation of Plant	\$608,825	\$633,944
Maintenance of Plant	\$36,400	\$37,856
Equipment	<u>\$3,900</u>	<u>\$1,300</u>
Total Central Services	\$649,125	\$673,100
 <u>Employee Benefits</u>	 \$122,440	 \$152,345
 <u>Debt Service</u>	 \$1,222,145	 \$1,414,143
 <i>Total Capital Budget</i>	 \$1,993,710	 \$2,239,588

TOTAL GENERAL FUND BUDGET

	<u>2008-09</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
Administrative Component	\$642,070	\$656,225
Program Component	\$5,826,560	\$5,820,939
Capital Component	\$1,993,710	\$2,239,588
 TOTAL BUDGET	 \$8,462,340	 \$8,716,751

Estimated General Fund Revenues

	Budgeted 2008-2009	Budgeted 2009-2010
Foundation Aid	\$3,684,473	\$3,645,271
Other State Aid	\$1,221,460	\$1,242,458
Building Project Aid	\$1,042,000	\$1,285,050
Property Tax/Interest Penalties	\$2,232,914	\$2,277,472
Miscellaneous	\$71,493	\$66,500
Fund Balance	<u>\$210,000</u>	<u>\$200,000</u>
Total	\$8,462,340	\$8,716,751

Three Part Expenditure Breakdown Percentage of Total Budget

	<u>2008-09</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
Administrative Component	7.59%	7.53%
Program Component	68.85%	66.78%
Capital Component	23.56%	25.69%
Total	100%	100%

**Property Tax Report Card
For
Laurens Central School
2009-2010**

	<u>2008-09</u>	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>% change over previous year</u>
Amount of Budget	\$8,462,340	\$8,716,751	3.01%
Estimated Tax Levy	\$2,227,914	\$2,272,472	2.00%
Projected Growth Enrollment	480	480	0%
Consumer Price Index	3.36%	4.00%	19.05%

Purchase One (1) 60 Passenger Bus

Purpose:

To vote on the purchase of one 60 passenger school bus with wheelchair capability for transportation of students to and from school, field trips and sporting events. The bus will be paid for entirely out of the bus reserve, therefore there will be no impact on the school budget or tax levy.

Cost for 1 Bus: \$124,462
Less Trade In: - \$2,200
Sub-Total: \$122,262

Price per bus: \$122,262
Less State Aid: - \$110,036
(approximately 90%)

Cost to district per bus: \$12,226

Capital Reserve

This year when you come to vote, you will also receive a ballot regarding the establishment of a Capital Reserve. The purpose of this Capital Reserve will be to allow the school district to set aside, or reserve funds, for future potential work on school facilities. With proper planning the district would use the funds in the reserve so that when repair or maintenance is needed, the money, or at least part of the money needed to complete the work will be available without having to increase taxes.

In the past, when the district had to purchase a bus, the funds were included in the general budget and had a direct impact on the tax levy. Several years ago the district established, through voter approval, a Capital Bus Reserve for the purpose of offsetting the cost of buses. Since the establishment that reserve, buses have been purchased with funds that have been set aside annually in the reserve with no impact on the budget or taxes.

The establishment of this Capital Reserve will allow the district to set aside funds for future building and facilities projects. Examples of potential future projects would include repair of the roofs over the 1955 and 1988 sections of the building, and a variety of work that needs to be completed at both the bus garage and town library. **This reserve will have nothing to do with the present building project.**

Below you will find a variety of questions that are typically asked regarding the establishment of a Capital Reserve:

What is a Capital Reserve?

A Capital Reserve is a fund that can be used to pay the cost of any object or purpose for which bonds may be issued. It is generally used for the purpose of setting aside money for future capital projects.

How is a Capital Reserve established?

The creation of a Capital Reserve requires authorization by a majority of the voters at any special or annual meeting. The voters must approve a specific amount of money to be placed in the reserve for a maximum of 10 years.

How are funds in the Capital Reserve maintained?

The funds in a Capital Reserve may be deposited in segregated amounts as directed by the Board of Education and usually come from fund balance remaining at the end of a school year.

How are funds in a Capital Reserve expended?

Use of the funds in a Capital Reserve must be approved by a majority of the voters at any special or annual meeting.

The establishment of this reserve will help to create long term fiscal stability for the district with regard to the maintenance and repair of all district buildings and grounds. **I would also emphasize once again, that this reserve will have nothing to do with the existing building project; that it's purpose will be to help to offset costs of potential future projects that will need to be completed so that work can be completed without impacting the general budget or tax levy.**

Meet the Candidate for LCS Board of Education:

Hello to all the friends and neighbors of the Town of Laurens, my name is Jerry Murello and I will be running for the upcoming seat on the Laurens Central School Board of Education. I would like to take this time to introduce myself.

My wife Lisa and I have raised our four children, all of which have attended Laurens Central School, the last two of which shall be completing seventh and eight grade this school year. My involvement with our school has included being an active member of the school's Parent/Student Health Advisory Committee. Currently Lisa and I are active members of the Laurens Central School Booster Club; I also serve on the schools Shared Decision Making Committee. Outside of the school I serve as Unit Commissioner for the Laurens Pack 10 Cub Scouts, and Troop 10 Boy Scouts, and also, as a sitting committee member for the Laurens Youth League Sports program which helps to provide Little League Baseball, and girls softball for the 1st thru 6th grade boys and girls of our community.

I believe the responsibility to ensure that our children are provided a safe and healthy learning environment and to aid in insuring fiscal prudence in the financial operation of our school district belongs to the citizens of the community and with that thought I feel duty bound to contribute my part in that responsibility.

I thank you for your time, and hope that you will come out to vote on May 19th.

Sincerely
Jerry Murello

PUBLIC HEARING

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

7:00 PM

LCS Multi-Purpose Room

VOTING: 2009-2010

School Budget

Board Seat

One (1) 60 Passenger Bus with Wheelchair Capabilities

Establishment of Capital Reserve Fund

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

11:00 AM—9:00 PM

Laurens Central School

Home & Careers Room 115

LAURENS CENTRAL SCHOOL

Laurens, NY 13796

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Cynthia Struckle, President

Robert Holstead, Vice President

Sheryle Lifgren Charity

Frances Nichols

Thomas Francisco

Non-Profit Organization U. S. Postage PAID Permit No. 1 Laurens, NY 13796

SUPERINTENDENT

Romona N. Wenck

BUILDING PRINCIPAL

William Dorritie

EDITOR

Sheryl Dugan

NEWS OF YOUR SCHOOL FOR: