

B T O D A Y

Binghamton City School District

May 2020

2020-2021 Budget Edition

The Binghamton City School District prioritizes student needs, programming with balanced budget

Dear Binghamton Residents,

City of Binghamton residents will soon vote on the proposed adopted \$123,683,883 budget for the 2020-2021 school year. The budget represents an increase of 1.78 percent from the 2019-2020 school year. If approved by voters, it would result in a tax levy of 1.95 percent, which is the tax levy limit. Voters will also be voting on two open seats on the board of education.

The 2020-2021 school budget seeks to sustain the programming and resources that our students need and deserve. We remain committed to being fiscally responsible to our taxpayers, in both the short and long term. We've had to make difficult budgetary decisions due to the financial crisis school districts around the state are currently facing. We also need to be mindful of potential additional cuts in the event New York State does not receive federal stimulus funding for education due to COVID-19. As with many small city school districts, Binghamton is more dependent on state aid than other districts in the state, and the reduction in state aid is devastating, and we continue to fight for equitable decisions.

Our district is working to support student success and maintain strong educational programs. To minimize the impact of reductions on any single program, we looked across the three-part budget and made equitable reductions across the board. There are 59 positions in this budget which have been eliminated, more than half of which will be through attrition. While these cuts are significant, we worked diligently to minimize the impact on instructional programs as much as possible. We reconfigured administrative responsibilities to make them more efficient, and eliminated non-mandated aide positions for some programs. These reductions were made while preserving student safety and success. Also included under the capital component is funding for a secure vestibule at Horace Mann Elementary School.

This pandemic has affirmed the vital role schools play in our communities. BCSD schools are true community schools. Our buildings provide more than academic programming – through community partnerships and collaboration, we're able to connect our families with resources that support the learning and wellbeing of our students, families and neighborhoods. Our children continue to progress, thrive and excel. Binghamton students receive a diverse, high-quality public education that will


The Bottom Line

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Total budget | \$123,683,883 |
| Budget increase | 1.78% |
| Total tax levy | \$43,666,029 |
| State levy limit | 1.95% |

provide them college and career readiness. They have access to a vast array of athletic, fine arts and extracurricular activities. Our students are shining examples of the impact of the rigor, programs and opportunities that are found within our district.

To allow this great work to continue, we need your support. Your vote of yes preserves needed positions, and will prevent us from losing valued programs in their entirety. Thank you for your continued care for our students and schools.

With Patriot Pride,



Tonia Thompson Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



**School Board
Election & Budget Vote
June 9, 2020**

EDUCATE EMPOWER CHALLENGE

2020-2021 Proposed Budget

The laws pertaining to budget votes require that budgets presented to residents be divided into three sections: Administrative, Program and Capital components. Although presented in three components for information purposes, the vote cast will be on the total budget.

| Three-Part Budget | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------|
| | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | Difference | % of Total |
| Administrative Component | \$13,128,408 | \$13,271,320 | \$142,912 | 10.73% |
| Program Component | \$91,771,775 | \$92,629,268 | \$857,493 | 74.89% |
| Capital Component | \$16,620,316 | \$17,783,295 | \$1,162,979 | 14.38% |
| TOTAL BUDGET: | \$121,520,499 | \$123,683,883 | \$2,163,384 | |

Administrative - This component contains the fiscal resources intended to provide the necessary support for district functions. This category includes all expenses for the Board of Education, superintendent, business office, auditor, tax collection, fiscal agent, legal services, personnel office, records management, public information, central printing and mailing, property and casualty insurance, BOCES administrative share, and supervision of instruction.



| Administrative Component | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|--|
| Name of Account | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | Difference | |
| Board of Education | \$38,600 | \$42,250 | \$3,650 | |
| Central Administration | \$283,028 | \$293,097 | \$10,069 | |
| Finance | \$400,294 | \$410,788 | \$10,494 | |
| Legal Services | \$125,000 | \$125,000 | \$0 | |
| Personnel | \$475,728 | \$458,876 | (\$16,852) | |
| Public Information | \$357,534 | \$385,573 | \$28,039 | |
| Other Central & Financial Services | \$2,258,325 | \$2,341,926 | \$83,601 | |
| Other Special Items | \$1,460,774 | \$1,466,042 | \$ 5,268 | |
| Curriculum Development & Supervision | \$1,482,737 | \$1,221,544 | (\$261,193) | |
| Supervision - Regular School | \$3,189,379 | \$3,308,269 | \$118,890 | |
| Research, Evaluation & Planning | \$9,960 | \$25,000 | \$15,040 | |
| Employee Benefits | \$3,047,049 | \$3,192,955 | \$145,906 | |
| Total Administrative Budget | \$13,128,408 | \$13,271,320 | \$142,912 | |

Program - This component contains fiscal resources intended to provide every student with educational experiences and opportunities to foster the full development of his or her potential. This budget category includes all instructional personnel and programs: regular school, special education, library, media, instructional technology, guidance, student health services, school psychologists, music, co-curricula activities, athletics, staff development and in-district and out-of-district pupil transportation. The District and First Student have agreed to a Five (5) year contract extension (2021-2026), to be renewed annually upon agreement between the District and First Student and will not exceed the Transportation CPI rate.



| Program Component | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Name of Account | 2019-2020 | 2020-21 | Difference |
| Instruction | \$63,954,769 | \$64,430,207 | \$475,438 |
| Other District Transportation | \$108,304 | \$109,662 | \$1,358 |
| Contract Transportation | \$3,445,520 | \$3,513,622 | \$68,102 |
| Employee Benefits | \$24,263,182 | \$24,575,777 | \$312,595 |
| Total Program Budget | \$91,771,775 | \$92,629,268 | \$857,493 |

Capital - This component contains the fiscal resources intended to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students, staff and the community. This budget category includes all personnel, equipment, supplies and materials for the operation and maintenance of district facilities. Any judgments and claims, refunds of real property taxes, and all payments of principal and interest on short- and long-term obligations are included in this category. It also includes \$100,000 in the capital fund to build a vestibule at Horace Mann Elementary School.



| Capital Component | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Name of Account | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | Difference |
| Operation of Plant | \$5,421,012 | \$4,959,216 | (\$461,796) |
| Maintenance of Plant | \$1,994,841 | \$1,889,803 | (\$105,038) |
| Security | \$0 | \$354,313 | \$354,313 |
| Special Items | \$42,000 | \$30,000 | (\$12,000) |
| Employee Benefits | \$1,934,456 | \$2,021,220 | \$86,764 |
| Interfund Transfer to Capital Fund | \$100,000 | \$100,000 | \$0 |
| Debt Service | \$7,128,007 | \$8,428,743 | \$1,300,736 |
| Total Capital Budget | \$16,620,316 | \$17,783,295 | \$1,162,979 |

BCSD Budget

Frequent Questions & Answers

Q What am I voting on?

A Residents are voting on a proposed \$123,683,883 budget for the 2020-2021 school year. The budget represents an increase of 1.78% from the 2019-2020 school year. If adopted there would be a tax levy increase of 1.95%. Residents are also voting to fill two seats on the Binghamton City School District Board of Education.

Q Where does the money come from to support the budget?

A Tax Levy 35%
State Aid 59%
Other revenue 4%
Use of reserves <1%

Q Was State aid reduced since the Governor first released the Executive Proposal?

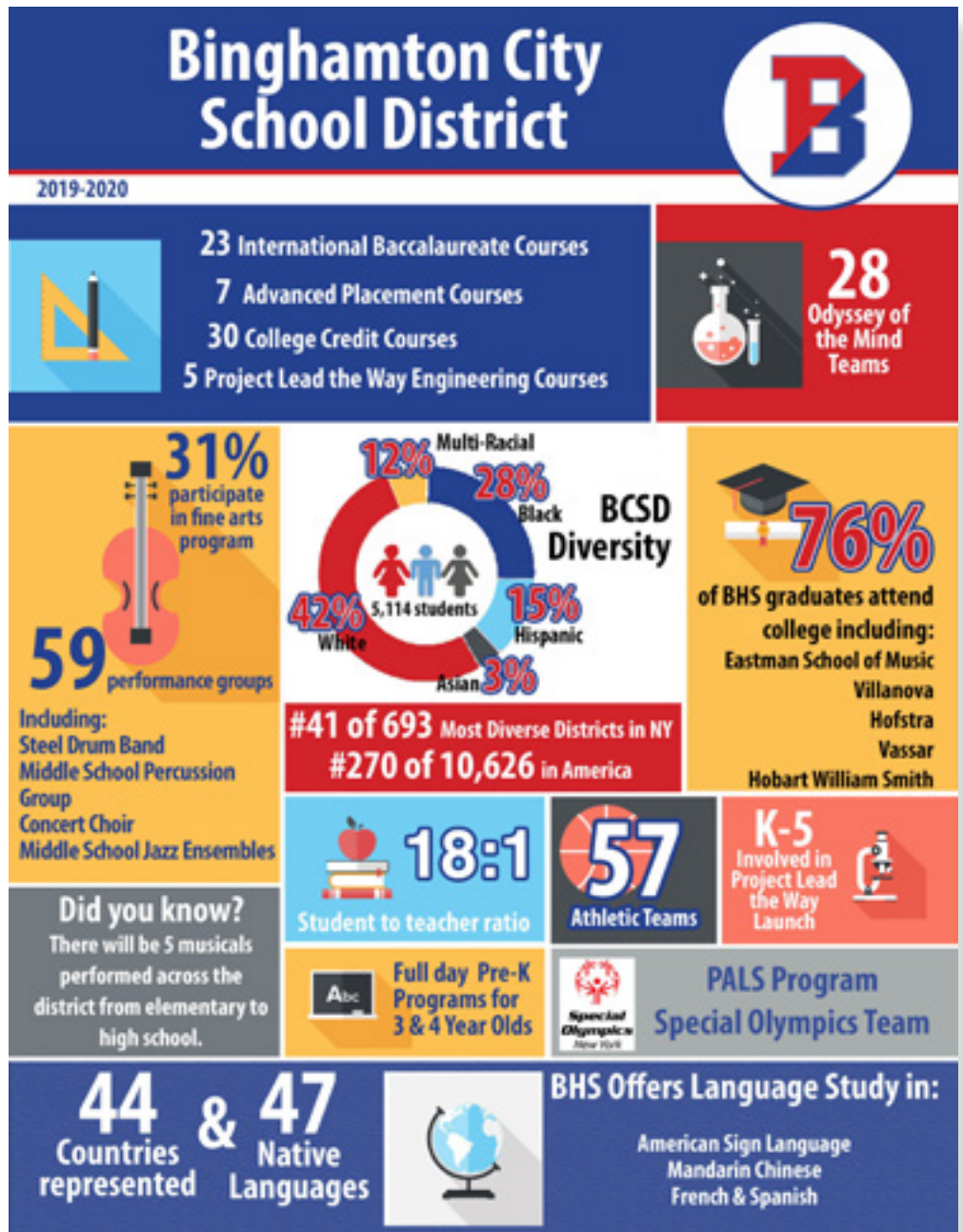
A Yes, we received approximately \$1.6 million less than the original budget proposed earlier this year.

Q Due to COVID-19, what are the "measurement periods" in the Enacted Budget Governor Cuomo has implemented and how might they affect schools?

A The Enacted Budget authorizes the state to review its revenue and expenses on an ongoing basis so it can determine its financial state. The year will be divided into four measurement periods: April 1 to April 30, May 1 to June 30, July 1 to December 31, and January 1 to March 31. If the state's revenues within these "look back periods" are less than 99 percent of the projected revenue, or its expenditures are more than 101 percent of projections, the state Division of Budget can reduce aid for schools and local governments. According to language in the budget, school districts that have their aid reduced may be repaid at a later date.

Q Why are we voting through absentee ballot this year?

A Due to COVID-19, Governor Cuomo directed all NYS school districts to hold school board elections and budget vote by mail only with an envelope with postage provided for return of the ballot.



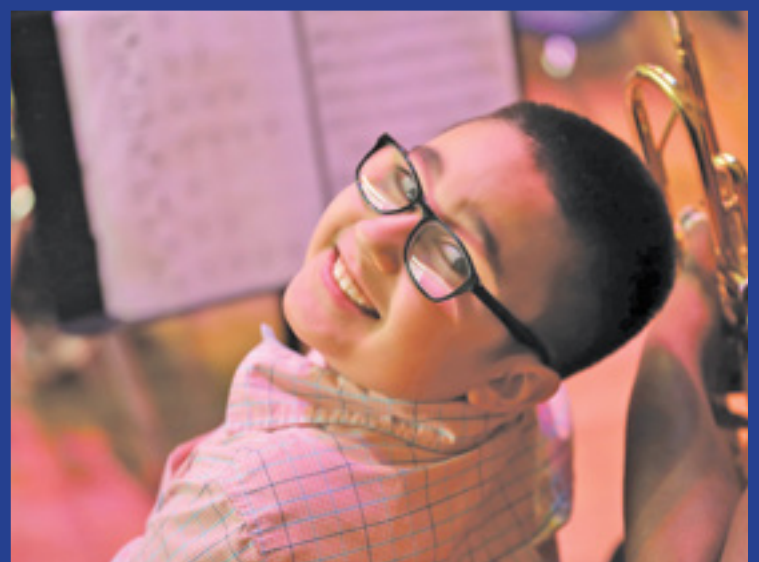
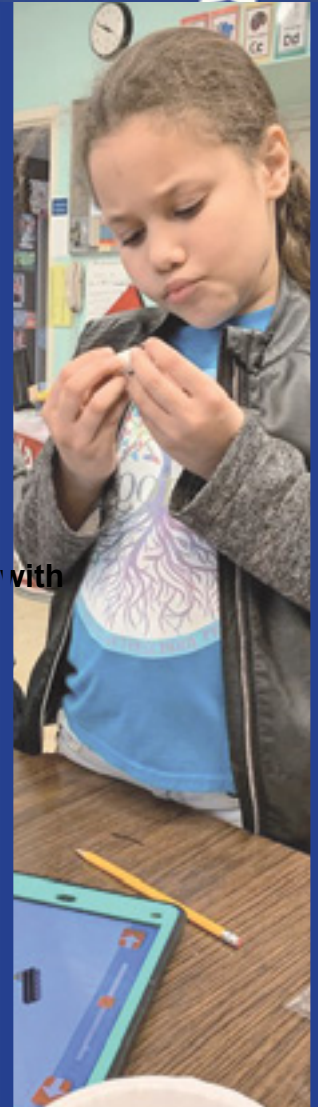
BCSD Board Goals

The School Budget seeks to help realize the District Goals

- All students will have the necessary skills and self-direction to enter college or start a career.
- All students will graduate.
- The Binghamton City School District will embrace diversity in all of its forms.
- The Binghamton City School District will provide safe and structure environments that ensure students' academic, social and emotional well-being.
- All stakeholders will consistently communicate, collaborate and engage with each other.

2020-2021 Key Budget Guidelines

- Maintain student opportunities and programs
- Think long-term planning and use of reserves
- Propose a fiscally sound budget with a responsible tax levy



School Board Candidates

Tim Ames



Hello, my name is Tim Ames and I am a candidate for the Binghamton City School District Board of Education. I am a lifelong resident of Binghamton and my wife Gabriele and I are proud graduates of Binghamton High School's Class of 2000. I am a Direct Support Professional for New York State, a career that gives me tremendous insight into the challenges and needs facing our community's youth. We're raising our two young children, Chloe and Cian, in the district because of our deep pride and great appreciation for the quality education they will receive in the Binghamton schools.

The Binghamton City School District has a long history of providing stellar academic programs that address the needs of all students. Our strength is in our diversity – in people and in programs. From the rigorous International Baccalaureate program to the Rod Serling School of Fine Arts, to career and technical pathways, the district's diverse curriculum helps ensure that every student is on a path to graduation, a successful career and a meaningful life. As a school board member, I will push to preserve and enhance the curriculum, the expansive arts programs and the wide range of extra-curricular activities.

But a high-quality curriculum and program offerings can't succeed without a high-quality teaching staff. Fortunately, Binghamton is fortunate to have an excellent team. And during the current COVID-19 pandemic, Binghamton's teachers have stepped up in remarkable ways to provide remote instruction and stability to students. As a member of the school board, I will work to attract and keep the exceptional and diverse teaching staff our students deserve.

The current pandemic will have serious consequences to the school budget. With so much yet unknown regarding school re-opening, new protocols and unfunded mandates, all schools will face fiscal challenges. I will work hard to ensure that Binghamton schools gets its fair share of state aid, and presents a well-reasoned, fiscally responsible spending plan that puts students first.

Now more than ever, our children need a stable, supportive and engaging learning environment. Whether that environment is in the classroom or at home through remote learning, attendance is critical to their success and well-being. As a board member,

Ames cont'd

I will place a strong focus on student attendance and family engagement. By nature, children want to learn. It's our job to ensure that school is a positive environment, a place where every child wants to be because they feel valued, inspired and safe.

I will *listen*. I will listen to your concerns as parents, as teachers, administrators, staff and community members. By listening, we understand each other, we foster new ideas and we come to consensus. I will approach every issue with an open mind and the objectivity necessary to build synergy among stakeholders.

I will ensure transparency. Only by working together with the community in an open, honest environment can we make strides towards maintaining and building upon Binghamton City School District's successes and addressing its challenges.

I will represent *all* of you. As a board of education member, I will represent the entire community, not just families with school-aged children. A strong and successful school district lifts the entire community, and I am committed to a culture of high expectations, lifting Binghamton to never-before reached levels of excellence, and working with and supporting our highly talented, experienced and skilled administrative leadership in reaching our district's goals.

I ask for your vote in the upcoming Binghamton City School District Board of Education election. ■

David Hawley



My name is Dave Hawley. When I completed my fifth term on the Binghamton Board of Education in 2017, I had no expectation of returning. However, we are now facing unprecedented challenges as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and I think my 22 years of experience on the board will be vital in navigating our new reality.

I have been very impressed with the way our administration, faculty and staff have dealt with the challenges caused by this crisis. But the days, months and years ahead will be equally challenging, if not more so, and the district will need strong school board leadership to address

Hawley cont'd

instructional delivery, staff and student safety and fiscal stability.

I have overseen many budgets in my time on the board and have been a strong advocate for more equitable distribution of state aid. I served on the NY State Association of Small City School Districts Litigation Steering Committee during the lawsuit against NY State for inadequate funding for high need school districts. As we move forward in the aftermath of the pandemic, ensuring adequate funding for Binghamton schools will be more critical than ever before.

I am passionate about the Binghamton School District and have invested a lot of time and energy in trying to ensure that all our children have their best chance to succeed. In addition to the 22 years I served on the Board, my wife Carol and I were involved in many other student-related activities, such as the Post-Prom Party, High School Booster Club, and the Thanksgiving Day dinner, in some cases for many years after our children graduated. We continue to be Odyssey of the Mind Judges at both the regional and state levels. I have served on the Broome-Tioga BOCES Board of Trustees since 2012, and am currently the vice-president.

I am a graduate of Maine-Endwell High School and SUNY Binghamton. I was employed by the Social Security Administration for 32 years prior to my retirement. I am also retired from the U.S. Army, with a combined 28 years of active duty and National Guard Service, including a tour in Vietnam. I was a member of the Broome-Tioga School Board Association Legislative Committee, the New York State School Board Association's State Legislative Network and have served as our area representative to the Federal Relations Network.

My wife and I love being part of the Binghamton community, and we've lived in the same house on the Southside since 1977. We are very involved in our church and community, through such organizations as the Preservation Association of the Southern Tier (PAST), where I served two years as president, the Southside Neighborhood Assembly, and Southern Tier Celebrates. Our two grown children are graduates of the Binghamton City Schools, and we have three grandchildren.

I am confident that my passionate commitment to Binghamton schools, my extensive experience and my understanding of school district funding,

School Board Candidates

Hawley cont'd

equitable distribution and legislative policy can help see our district through the unknown challenges ahead. I hope you will support my candidacy. ■

Sean Massey



Schools should be fair and inclusive learning environments, accessible and committed to the success of all our youth. Schools should be places that encourage learning beyond formulaic

standardized tests; instead encouraging creativity and critical thinking, helping our youth learn empathy and compassion, promoting social justice, and prioritizing student-centered and experiential learning. Schools should not only prepare students to be successful in their lives and careers, but also to acquire the skills they need to build a better and more just world for themselves and their children.

As an educator myself, I know that teaching, although sometimes a challenging occupation, can be one of the most rewarding jobs in the world. I also know that teachers, especially those in K-12, are often undervalued and underpaid. I believe teachers need to be properly compensated like the professionals they are, and our schools need the resources and infrastructure that reflect their importance to our communities.

Those are a few of the reasons I'm running for school board.

My family and I live on Binghamton's west side. We moved here in 2004 for my job at Binghamton University, where I teach in the Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program. I'm a long-time member of New York State United Teachers and the current President of the Binghamton Chapter of United University Professions (the union representing faculty and professional staff of SUNY). I also served on Binghamton City Council for 4 years, where I helped provide oversight for the City's (then) approximately \$90 million budget and worked with my colleagues to move the city's general fund balance from less than \$2 million to \$8 million when I left office. I understand the challenges of meeting the needs of our students

Massey cont'd

while remaining sensitive to the burden placed on taxpayers.

While on city council, I led the effort to pass the Binghamton Human Rights Law and establish the Binghamton Human Rights Commission, which together strengthened protections for Binghamton residents. Over my career, I've worked in both the private and public sectors, starting as a computer analyst at the insurance company TIAA-CREF, then leaving to complete my BA in Psychology at Hunter College and my PhD in Social Psychology at the City University of New York.

Our son is now a senior at Binghamton High School where he's benefited from BHS' amazing faculty and performing arts programs. His experiences in the Binghamton City School District have given him a rich education and instilled in him the confidence and skills he'll need when he starts college this fall.

The next few years will be challenging. Careful, thoughtful, and science-informed leadership will be necessary to keep our children and our communities safe during the current health crisis. It will be critical to improve lines of communication among district and school leadership, public health officials, our families, our students, and the larger community.

We have great schools in Binghamton and that working together we can weather this crisis and make them even better. I would appreciate your vote on June 9th. ■

John Solak



I'm John "from Binghamton" Solak. After working at IBM and ATT. I found myself a Shareholder, Consumer and Municipal Government activist. In the shareholder realm, my efforts have resulted in millions being returned to investors. My

extended family has had a long history of service with Binghamton Schools. My Aunt Florence was a proud member of the BOE. Cousin Richard Sinicki was of the hardest working Binghamton Educators ever. My Aunt Kathryn Macko served as a School Nurse for decades. I have for many years and encompassing 4 different Superintendent personally attended many Board meetings. My positions favor maximizing local control and keeping Billionaire Technocrats and their Enterprises out of Public Education and allowing more privacy to students. Unfortunately, many of these mega data-gathering Companies now know more about our students, than even some parents do. I will stand against any attempt to radicalize our Schools to serve narrow, extreme and purely Political Interests. Students, Parents, Employees and Taxpayers will find me a reliable, staunch and reasoned ally, especially when the going gets tough. ■



Voters are voting for TWO candidates.

From the candidates: edited for format only.



Binghamton City School District
 164 Hawley Street, P.O. Box 2126
 Binghamton, NY 13902-2126

Non-Profit
 Organization
 U.S. Postage
 Paid
 Binghamton, NY
 Permit No. 36

Board of Education

Joseph Gasior, President
 Brian Whalen, Vice President
 Penelope Harper
 Korin L. Kirk
 Liz Rosenberg
 Steve Seepersaud

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Tonia Thompson

Writing-Editing-Layout-Design

Broome-Tioga BOCES
 Office of Communications & Development



District website: www.binghamtonschools.org **Email:** info@binghamtonschools.org

Public Hearing:
May 26, 2020 at 7 p.m. via Zoom Webinar
 Join by URL: <https://E2CCB-GST.zoom.us/j/92124097959>
 Join by phone: 1-646-876-9923 or 1-888-788-0099 (Toll Free)
 Webinar ID: 921 2409 7959

Vote: June 9, 2020
All voting will be done by Absentee Ballot.

Absentee Ballots

An Absentee Ballot will be mailed by the District to all **registered voters**, with a postage paid return envelope. *The District Clerk of the Binghamton City School District must receive Absentee Ballots no later than 5 p.m. on June 9, 2020 (the date of the vote) in order to be canvassed.*

Definition of Qualified Voter:

A qualified voter must be a citizen of the United States, 18 years old and a resident of the city school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

Any person qualified to vote, who is currently registered for any general election pursuant to Election Law §352, will be entitled to vote without further registration pursuant to Educ. Law §2606.

To Register:

The last day for qualified voters to register is May 26, 2020. To register, mail a completed voter registration form to the Broome County Board of Elections Office, 60 Hawley St., Binghamton, NY 13901, or register electronically through the DMV (<https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application>)

Voting by Absentee Ballot

In this election, you may vote for TWO board members.
 To vote for a candidate whose name is printed on the ballot, make an X or a check (✓) mark in the square next to the name of the candidate(s) for whom you are voting.

The 2020-2021 budget is also on the ballot.

To vote on the budget, make an X or a check (✓) mark in the square next to your selection.

After you have made your selections, fold and insert the ballot into the **postage paid return envelope provided**. Fill out the information on the front of the envelope, sign the statement on the back and place it in the mail.

You can also deliver it to 164 Hawley Street, Binghamton, NY and put it in the drop box.

