



BREWSTER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

30 FARM TO MARKET ROAD, BREWSTER, NY 10509-9956

TELEPHONE 845-279-8000 FAX 845-279-6921

WWW.BREWSTERSCHOOLS.ORG



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Updated: June 5, 2020

Budget Vote Process

Q1: When is the budget vote and trustee election?

UPDATE A1: The budget vote and trustee election will be conducted by absentee ballots due no later than 5:00PM on June 9, 2020 in accordance with Executive Order 202.26. Ballots must be received by the District Clerk by 5:00PM. Ballots received after this time, even if postmarked by June 9th, cannot be counted.

Q2: How will I receive an absentee ballot?

UPDATE A2: All "qualified" voters will be mailed an absentee ballot with a prepaid postage return envelope. It is anticipated that all absentee ballots will be delivered on/about Saturday, June 6th, but may vary from household to household depending on the processing of the U.S. Postal Service. Because of a delay in the processing of the ballots by NTS Data Services, LLC, it is recommended that residents hand-deliver their ballots. Please refer to Q8 below.

NEW Q2a: Will bulk mail or first-class mail be used to deliver absentee ballots to qualified voters?

A2a: The U.S. Postal Service recommended that election officials use first-class mail when mailing election materials (including absentee ballots) to voters.

Q3: What is a "qualified voter"?

A3: A "qualified voter" is a U.S. Citizen, at least 18 years old by June 9, 2020, a School District resident for 30 days immediately preceding the vote, and one who is not otherwise prohibited from voting under the provisions of Section 5-106 of the Election Law.

Q4: Will I receive an absentee ballot if I am not a "qualified voter"?

A4: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there will be no personal voter registration held at school district offices prior to the June 9, 2020 vote. Once you register with the Board of Elections you are permanently registered in that county unless you move. Name, address or party enrollment changes may be made by submitting a new registration application.

To check if you are registered with the Board of Elections please search this link: <https://vip.ntsteamed.com/>

If you are not registered, you can register with the County Board of Elections by mail or remotely through the [New York State Department of Motor Vehicles website](#). It is suggested that qualified persons (not already registered) register in a timely manner in order to allow plenty of time for a ballot to be mailed and returned to the district clerk.

Q5: When can I expect to receive an absentee ballot in the mail?

UPDATE A5: It is anticipated that all absentee ballots will be delivered on/about Saturday, June 6th, but may vary from household to household depending on the processing of the U.S. Postal Service. Because of a delay in the processing of the ballots by NTS Data Services, LLC, it is recommended that residents hand-deliver their ballots. Please refer to Q8 below.

Q6: If I do not receive an Absentee Ballot, how can I check my registration status?

UPDATE A6: Please refer to Q4 above.



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Q7: If my absentee ballot is postmarked before June 9, 2020 but not delivered by the postal service and not received by 5:00PM on June 9, 2020, will my vote be counted?

UPDATE A7: No, according to Executive Order 202.26, all absentee ballots must be received by 5:00pm on June 9, 2020 in order to be counted. Because of a delay in the processing of the ballots by NTS Data Services, LLC, it is recommended that residents hand-deliver their ballots. Please refer to Q8 below.

Q8: Can I hand-deliver my absentee ballot to the District?

UPDATE A8: Yes, but please enclose your absentee ballot and be certain to **sign** the return oath envelope provided to you. The Drop Box will be available on

- Saturday, June 6th from 8:00AM to 12:00PM
- Sunday, June 7th from 8:00AM to 12:00PM
- Monday, June 8th from 6:00AM to 9:00PM
- Tuesday, June 9th from 6:00AM to 5:00PM

[The Drop Box is located to the right of the main entrance to the District Office](#) located at 30 Farm To Market Road. Please follow social distancing guidelines and wear a mask when utilizing the Drop Box.

Q9: How can the District be assured that a resident does not vote more than once?

UPDATE A9: The name, address and signature on each oath envelope is compared to and recorded on the voter registration lists provided to NTS Data Services by the Putnam County Board of Elections and the Brewster Central School District's personal voter list.

NEW Q10: How was NTS Data Services, LLC chosen as the third party provider of absentee ballots? Was it subject to a competitive bidding process?

A10: The Putnam County Board of Elections utilizes NTS Data Services, LLC, so the database of qualified voters was already available to them for processing. Because of this, several Putnam County school districts also utilized NTS Data Services, LLC, including Brewster, Mahopac, and Carmel, with Carmel experiencing no negative effects from the supply chain shortage. (Their absentee ballots were delivered on Friday.) This service was not subject to a competitive bidding process because it was a shared service available through BOCES and required by the Governor's Executive Order.

NEW Q11: May district employees and school buses be used to collect absentee ballots from community members who may not have transportation to the Drop Box and/or may be medically fragile and homebound?

A11: No, the NYS Education Commissioner has ruled in previous cases that using school district resources to transport voters to polling places on the day of the vote is improper, which is analogous to using school buses to retrieve ballots from voters. Please refer to Q12 below.

NEW Q12: May community groups or individual community members return absentee ballots on behalf of others who may not have transportation to the Drop Box and/or may be medically fragile and homebound?

A12: Yes, voter participation is encouraged by any means possible and we thank those who are assisting others. As long as the absentee ballot is sealed in the proper oath envelope, it does not matter who drops them off at the Drop Box.



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Trustee Election

Q1: How many candidates are running for the two vacant Board of Education Trustee seats?

A1: In accordance with Executive Order 202.26, the candidates will be listed on the ballot in alphabetical order:

- 1) Kerry Cunningham, 2) Glenn Niles, 3) Francine Santos

General Budget

Q1: How has the District contained costs during the extended closure?

A1: Many contracts have been re-negotiated or even cancelled, such as vehicle insurance, radio/walkie service, refuse removal, and certain tuition/tutoring, just to name a few. Many material and supply orders have been reduced or cancelled, such as diesel fuel, electricity, natural gas, office supplies, and instructional material supplies. However, since the District's main function is as a service provider, the majority of the District's costs are related to personnel. Cost avoidances pertaining to overtime and substitutes have led to the majority of the District's cost containment during the extended closure.

Q2: How are the proceeds from the sale of Garden Street Elementary School being used?

A2: After paying off a small amount of debt outstanding on the building, \$1.3M in net proceeds were placed in a Reserve Fund, as required by NYS Education Law. Each year, a portion of this balance is systematically drawn-down as a revenue to help support the school budget. \$450,000 of this balance is being used to support instructional programs and reduce the tax burden on the community in 2020-21. If a larger amount of the Reserve Fund is applied at once, it would create a "fiscal cliff" in the subsequent year after the reserve balance is exhausted.

Q3: How has the District reduced the Tax Levy to limit the tax burden on the community?

A3: It is anticipated that the District will realize a surplus of nearly \$3M FYE 2019-20 due to the Sale of Garden Street Elementary School and the cost avoidances associated with the extended closure. A combined Finance Committee & Budget Advisory Committee meeting was held to review the District's recently formulated [Fund Balance Plan](#), which recommends returning these funds to taxpayers. Through the implementation of this plan, the District is able to lower the Tax Levy increase from 2.5% down to 1.5% in the 2020-21 budget.

Q4: What happens if the State Aid promised does not materialize due to the State's financial troubles?

A4: Three new teacher positions are contemplated in next year's budget. However, these positions will not be filled until it is determined that State Aid is available to support them. This provides the District with the authority to add the needed positions to lower class sizes, while maintaining the discretion to forego them if State Aid does not materialize.

Q5: What happens if voters do not approve the 2020-21 budget?

A5: There is no provision in Executive Order 202.26 to allow school districts to hold a re-vote. If voters do not approve the 2020-21 budget on June 9th, the Board of Education must adopt a contingency budget pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. A contingency budget would require a decrease of \$1,145,165 from the Tax Levy and related budget expenditures. Under the Education Law, reductions may include equipment purchases and repairs, extra-curricular clubs, athletics, electives and advanced placement courses, and certain student supplies. After those options are exhausted, a contingency budget would result in staffing reductions which would lead to larger class sizes.



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Q6: How can I learn more about the 2020-21 school budget?

A6: Please visit our [Budget website](#) to view the slide decks of past presentations, as well as, the Budget Statement which includes an abundance of useful information to assist voters in making an informed decision.

NEW Q7: How does the use of BOCES shared services benefit the District?

A7: The use of BOCES shared services generates BOCES Aid for a portion of expenses on a sliding scale up to 67.8%, depending on the type of service. The expenses incurred in the current year generates the aid received in the subsequent year. For the past three completed years, the Districts BOCES expenses and revenues have been as follows:

Year	Expenditures (rounded)	Revenues (rounded)
2018-19	\$4,850,700	\$1,108,400
2017-18	\$4,666,700	\$1,364,100
2016-17	\$4,513,000	\$1,229,300

Please note that special education BOCES expenditures generate NYS Excess Cost Aid, which is not included in the BOCES Aid revenue shown above.

Please continue to check back on this document, which will be updated periodically up until the budget vote.