

# Spotlight

NEWS FROM THE BURLINGTON SCHOOLS



Volume 4 No. 12

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## Greetings all,

As you know, the budget vote is just around the corner. I ask for your help. This year's budget is quite complex and all of us need to educate parents and neighbors as to what is in it. In Burlington, we successfully educate a diverse population of students. From Advanced Placement classes to foundational skills, we are successful in having our students go on to post-secondary education, win academic awards, and develop into productive citizens. Each year, we must pass a budget that encompasses the needs of our students and the values of our community.

This year, the District is requesting a **7.4%** budget tax increase for the coming year in order to maintain school programs, increase staffing due to a rise in school enrollments, and cover cost shifts from reduced federal grants. Alongside this request is our increasing enrollment in Burlington, unlike the rest of VT.

The **7.4%** breaks down to 2.9% for salary and benefit increases including supporting paraeducators and custodians having living wages; 2.9% cost shifts from federal grants for classroom teachers/staff members; 1.2% to account for a 3% enrollment increase, focused particularly on support for large K-2 classes and other needed costs; 0.4% for increased technology access and instructional resources, especially for our almost 50% of students who are low-income. The majority of funding to increase technology access is actually being supported by new grants from the Nellie Mae and Tarrant Foundations, with limited matching funds projected from the District.

In addition to this request, nearly **3%** in funding for retirement costs that taxpayers already pay to the City is being moved to the school side of the budget. While these are not new expenses, the shift increases the total dollar figure of the school budget for next year.

**Overall, the cost per student is 8.35% less than that of the average school in the State.** The needs of our students and our classrooms are very real. Should we not pass a budget, we will need to RIF millions of dollars worth of staffing at all levels, effecting class sizes, services, and programs. The Board will have a chance to go out with a new budget, but the RIFs come first, due to contract timing. Please help to let people know what is in the budget itself and please feel free to ask me questions. View more information on our budget site: <https://sites.google.com/a/bsdvt.org/burlington-school-district-budget-fy/>.

I wish each of you a healthy and restful Feb. break. *Jeanné*

## Teacher Feature

### Rebecca Haslam (Champlain)

The students were as enthusiastic about everything in their math lesson as they were to have indoor recess. Ms. Haslam commented that the kids in Burlington benefit from being in a diverse classroom, and that every day students work on developing respect and valuing their similarities and differences...

[http://www.bsdvt.org/News/TeacherStories/champlain\\_haslam\\_glaser.pdf](http://www.bsdvt.org/News/TeacherStories/champlain_haslam_glaser.pdf)



### Peter McCarthy (IAA)

Mr. McCarthy particularly enjoys teaching kids the concept of probability.

But it's the little 'aha' moment at the end of each day, when you "realize that you are actually making a difference in a child's life" that really makes the job worthwhile to Mr. McCarthy...

[http://www.bsdvt.org/News/TeacherStories/iaa\\_mccarthy\\_gothelf.pdf](http://www.bsdvt.org/News/TeacherStories/iaa_mccarthy_gothelf.pdf)



## Voting Information / Annual Report Now Available

The polls are now open—VOTE EARLY! As of today, a Burlington voter can go into City hall and vote during regular business hours. Special hours offered on March 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9 a.m. to noon and on March 5<sup>th</sup> until 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting Day is March 6th from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. To view the BSD 2010-2011 Annual Report, [click here](#).

**Absentee ballots:** deadline to request ballot mailed to you is March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:30 p.m.— Call the City Clerk's Office at 865-7000.

### **Where to vote on Town Meeting Day:**

Ward 1: Mater Christi, 100 Mansfield Ave.

Ward 2: IAA, 6 Archibald St.

Ward 3: SA, 123 North St.

Ward 4: St. Mark's Youth Center, 1271 North Ave.

Ward 5: Burlington Electric Department, 585 Pine St.

Ward 6: EMS Gym, S. Union & King St.

Ward 7: Miller Center, 130 Gosse Court

### **To register to vote in Burlington:**

**Deadline:** February 29<sup>th</sup> – City Clerk's Office open until 5 p.m.

### **More information on the City website:**

<http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CT/Elections/Information/>



CIGNA Dental

## Do You Know How to Get a Dental Card?

For eligible employees, our dental carrier is CIGNA. Your dentist will need the employee's ss#, date of birth and the group number CN001 3217048 to reference our plan. Employees **DO NOT AUTOMATICALLY** receive cards for dental coverage.

Check out this website to determine what services were performed, billed, etc. for all of your covered members. It is free, and you have to register but it is well worth the effort! There is a place to print out a "card" facsimile for dental coverage as well.

<https://my.cigna.com/corp/portal/app/member/public/guest>

Benefit Summary	
Deductibles	Limit
<b>Individual Calendar Year Deductible</b>	
Basic & Major Restorative, Orthodontic	\$25.00
<b>Family Calendar Year Deductible</b>	
Basic & Major Restorative, Orthodontic	\$75.00
<b>Maximums</b>	
<b>Individual Calendar Year Maximum</b>	
Diagnostic & Preventive, Basic & Major Restorative	\$750.00
<b>Individual Lifetime Maximum</b>	
Orthodontic	\$1,000.00
<b>Member's Coinsurance Percents</b>	
<b>Reimbursement:</b>	
Diagnostic & Preventive	0% *
Basic Restorative	20%
Major Restorative	40%
Orthodontic	40%

\* Fields that display zero as the Member's Coinsurance Percent indicate that CIGNA covers this service at 100%.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual IAA Silent Auction

Please join us on Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup> from 2-4 p.m. for this exciting event! Artists, businesses, and community members throughout Burlington have been showing their support for IAA by donating their work for the Auction. This is one of the IAA PTO's largest fundraisers and the money raised is used for items such as Flynn Theater tickets, community events for the school, and teacher grants. This year we hope to raise enough money to install a clay studio in the school for use by students and community members.

Included in this year's fundraiser are 18 pieces of art work donated by Bonnie Acker, local artist, activist, and community volunteer. Her work is extraordinary, ranges in media from oil to pen and ink, and is the highlight of the auction (sample pictured below). Donated items also include work from other local artists such as Katherine Montstream, Cartoon Laureate James Kolchalka, Jeneane Lunn, and Miranda Syp. There are also creative and one of a kind experiences such as a jam-making workshop with Hippo Flambe, a pizza-making party at Bite Me Pizza, vacation rentals, and gift certificates from many area businesses.



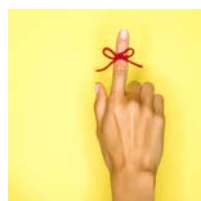
Original Oil on Linen 2010 (48w x 72h)  
"Lake Edge Spring"  
Value \$3,000; minimum bid \$1,000

This year we are excited to add an online bidding site for a small selection of the exciting items for bid at our auction. All bidding will close online at midnight the night before and will continue to be bid on by proxy at the live event for those who cannot attend.

Online bidding: <http://www.biddingforgood.com/iaa>

## Women's World History Haitian Dinner (TONIGHT!)

Burlington High School's Women's World History Class is sponsoring a dinner this evening from 6pm-8pm in the BHS Cafeteria. Guest speakers will be Wanda Hines, mayoral candidate, and Linda E. Jones, a local artist who has visited Haiti and will provide reflections on her time spent there. Cuisine will include Haitian, African, Bosnian, Asian and Italian foods. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased through members of the class, in Room C204, by emailing [tbuehner@bsdvt.org](mailto:tbuehner@bsdvt.org) or at the door. All guests will receive the Heat of Haiti.



## District Safety Reminder

Please be sure to wear your District ID badge in all schools and District buildings at all times. If you see a visitor or someone without a visitor's badge, be sure to help them to the main office to get signed in.

Thank you for taking part in this important piece of safety protocol for both students and staff.

## Tech Byte

### Common Sense Media



As a teacher and/or parent, do you find it challenging to decipher the quality of the media your students and children are consuming? Common Sense Media can assist you in making decisions about which movies, books, apps, websites, games and television shows are appropriate for students of different ages. Media is reviewed on the following criteria in an easy to comprehend format: Educational Value, Ease of Use, Violence, Sex, Language, Consumerism, Drinking, Drugs, & Smoking, and Privacy & Safety.

Use the Common Sense Media website to locate reviews <http://www.common sense media.org/reviews>, subscribe to their educator and/or parent guides (if/when you choose to register) or download their app <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/common-sense-media/id375331355?mt=8> so you can preview your students' and children's media on the go.

Common Sense Media is a national, non partisan organization "dedicated to improving the lives of kids and families by providing the trustworthy information, education, and independent voice they need to thrive in a world of media and technology."\*

\*<http://www.common sense media.org/about-us/our-mission>