BCSD BOARD of EDUCATION Quarterly UPDATE

February 2025

To contact the BOE, you can email us at: bcsdboe@beaconk12.org

Welcome to the First Edition of the BOE Quarterly!

This is a quarterly newsletter from the Beacon Board of Education, where we'll share highlights from our meetings, work from our various committees, advocacy efforts, and more.

Our work as a board is guided by our three main responsibilities:

- Setting policy
- Overseeing the budget, and
- Supervising the superintendent

To help guide this work and reaffirm our shared priorities, we regularly revisit our Board Goals.

This focus on the whole school environment – from academic excellence and a culture of care to fiscal responsibility and community engagement – keeps our work focused on student outcomes and is an essential part of our decision-making for students, staff, and families in the district.

Interested in Becoming a School Board Member?

Board members play an important role in the school community. If you're interested in running for the school board, it's important to understand the roles and responsibilities of a board member. This includes creating a shared vision for our students' education, supporting a healthy school district culture, and helping to create a budget that supports our students and staff. Learn more about running for the Beacon School Board or browse this orientation from the New York State School Boards Association.

Ready to run for the school board? Get a candidate packet by contacting District Clerk Vickie Jackson at 845-838-6900 ext. 2010 or by email at jackson.v@beaconk12.org.

Committee Highlights

A lot of our work is done through the BOE Committees and District Committees. Facilities planning, policy, advocacy, and other specific areas get more time and attention during these separate meetings. Each committee has at least one representative from the BOE.

In **Facilities** news, we're grateful to the community for supporting our most recent Capital Project! Our facilities team is in the early stages of planning for this work, which will begin in the summer of 2026. In the meantime, we're enjoying the finished work from our last Capital Project, including new playground equipment at several of our elementary schools and a refinished track at the high school.

As many of you know, our **Policy Committee** implemented a new cell phone policy in the fall. The policy has been a success, but it will likely need to be updated if the Governor's "Distraction-Free Schools" proposal makes it into the final state budget. We'll keep the community informed of any changes due to this proposal. Read more about Gov. Hochul's distraction-free learning proposal.

Advocacy Notes

Last year, many districts received less funding than expected. In response, our district and many others focused on advocacy for Foundation Aid funding.

What is Foundation Aid?

Foundation Aid is the majority of funding that school districts receive from New York State. In Beacon, it makes up nearly 40% of our district's budget. We saw many problems with the way Foundation Aid is calculated, using a decade-old formula and outdated census data. We wrote to, called, and met with our elected representatives to educate them about the issue. Superintendent Landahl also provided testimony on the impact of state aid on the district's budget at a Foundation Aid Forum for Hudson Valley school districts. This testimony was included in a statewide report on Foundation Aid funding, conducted last year by the Rockefeller Institute.

Advocacy efforts across the state paid off in this year's budget — the district received a 2% increase, allowing us to continue supporting programming and initiatives that are essential to providing our students with a quality education.

We're happy with this year's budget, but the fight is not over. Going forward, we're pushing for a truly universal pre-k that is fully funded by the state, and an overhaul of our civil service system to help ease hiring for high-demand positions.

Recent Board Meetings

Every year, as part of our budget planning process, we invite our building and department leadership to present updates to the board. This helps us understand how the budget directly impacts programming and student outcomes.

You can view all of the board meeting videos at www.youtube.com/@BCSDBOE/streams and principal presentations at

Beacon High School | Glenham Elementary | Sargent Elementary
Rombout Middle School | JV Forrestal Elementary | South Ave. Elementary