

School budget up but levy drops

Written by Deb Egenberger

Friday, 07 September 2012 14:05 -

BRADY SCHOOL BUDGET			
The following is the proposed 2012-13 Brady Public Schools budget, district property valuation and proposed tax levy as compared to last year. The school board will vote on the budget following a public hearing during the regular monthly meeting on Sept. 10.			
	2012-13	2011-12	Difference
Valuation.....	\$163,628,278	\$177,442,274	-8.36%
Operating Budget.....	\$2,623,026	\$2,468,588	6.26%
General Fund Levy.....	\$1.0417	\$1.0604	-1.75%
Bond Fund Levy.....	\$0.1526	\$0.1708	-9.89%
QCPI Fund Levy.....	\$0.0257	\$0.0270	-4.81%
Total Levy.....	\$1.2200	\$1.2582	-3.08%

Valuation keeps tax bills up

There's no sense asking for more tax money than necessary, the Brady school superintendent says.

Because the school district's valuation went up another 3%, Brady superintendent Bill Porter was able to drop levies on both the bond fund and the qualified capital purpose undertaking fund.

That means while the operating budget goes up 6.26% for the 2012-13 school year, the overall tax levy for local property owners will go down almost 2%.

But what looks like a break on paper won't mean reduced cost to taxpayers.

The valuation increase will take care of any savings that a lower levy might bring.

Despite the combined levy going down, the district's property tax revenue will go up \$68,000.

Brady will also benefit from higher state aid, namely a boost in poverty allowance from \$17,000 last year to \$48,000 this year.

The money, Porter said, helps the district increase teacher salaries as well as adding a paraprofessional.

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REVENUES	
Property taxes More than \$1.8 million in property taxes are expected to be collected in the month of the school year's start, according to the district's fiscal officer. The district's fiscal officer says that the district's income from property taxes is expected to be about \$1.8 million.	Identical to the 2011-12 school year, the year-over increase of 1.5% is a result of a 1.5% increase in the district's assessed value. The district's fiscal officer says that the district's income from property taxes is expected to be about \$1.8 million.
State aid The state district will receive \$20.2 million in state aid this school year.	Identical to the 2011-12 school year, the year-over increase of 1.5% is a result of a 1.5% increase in the district's assessed value. The district's fiscal officer says that the district's income from property taxes is expected to be about \$1.8 million.

EXPENSES	
Salaries & Benefits The largest expense item for the school district is salaries and benefits, which is expected to be about \$10.5 million. The district's fiscal officer says that the district's salaries and benefits are expected to be about \$10.5 million.	Identical to the 2011-12 school year, the year-over increase of 1.5% is a result of a 1.5% increase in the district's assessed value. The district's fiscal officer says that the district's income from property taxes is expected to be about \$1.8 million.
Purchases A number of items that fall under the category of purchases are expected to be about \$1.5 million. The district's fiscal officer says that the district's purchases are expected to be about \$1.5 million.	Identical to the 2011-12 school year, the year-over increase of 1.5% is a result of a 1.5% increase in the district's assessed value. The district's fiscal officer says that the district's income from property taxes is expected to be about \$1.8 million.
Transportation The district has budgeted \$1.5 million for transportation expenses.	Identical to the 2011-12 school year, the year-over increase of 1.5% is a result of a 1.5% increase in the district's assessed value. The district's fiscal officer says that the district's income from property taxes is expected to be about \$1.8 million.

One chunk of money the Brady school won't see this year—and neither will any other district—is the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds received the past two years.

Porter said the district spent ARRA funds on tangible items such as one-to-one computers so it won't hurt the budget as much as districts that used the stimulus money on salaries.

Porter said there are no frills in this year's budget.

"We're just trying to hold our ground on everything," he said. "We've been through some tough times and people don't want any tax raises. The cost of living is bad enough."

Changes may be coming to the state aid formula, he said, that could have big impacts on small district's like Brady.

"As long as our enrollment stays up, I think we'll be OK," he said.