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	$183,826,278	$177,442,374	3.60%
Operating Budget	$2,633,038	$2,469,598	6.26%
General Fund Levy	$1.0417	$1.0404	0.12%
Bond Fund Levy	$0.1539	$0.1708	-9.89%
QCPU Fund Levy	$0.0297	$0.0370	-19.73%
Total Levy	$1.2252	$1.2481	-1.83%

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.

REVENUES

Property taxes

More than $1.91 million in property taxes paid by district landowners makes up the majority of the school's income in its general fund budget.

Porter said the district owes more than $6 million in the district's income from property taxes by roughly $61,000.

State aid

The Brady district will receive $630,705 in state aid this school year, an increase of more than $82,893 from last year. Porter said a large portion of the increase came from poverty funds the district had it previously requested in the state aid formula.

Federal programs

Taking into consideration all nutritional government mandated programs, including some which cover special education students, the Brady district will receive approximately $570,000 in federal funds for the 2012-13 school year. That is a minimal increase of $11,000.

Cash balance

Cash on hand is necessary for the school to cover its bills from one month to the next.

The district would like the cash balance to equal three months of bill payments but currently has about a month and a half at $300,000 in reserve.

EXPENSES

Salaries & Benefits

The largest expense item for the school district is wage-related costs including salaries and insurance benefits.

Salaries for certified staff increased 0.05%, overall and pay for support staff went up 3.2% for the coming year.

With an increase in administration salaries of 13.90%, the overall jump in wage-related costs increased 2.11%. That equals a $124,000 increase for a total cost of $1,000,822.

Transportation

The district has budgeted $60,000 in transportation costs for the daily bus routes, drivers and vehicle maintenance.

Porter said the district pays for bus drivers on field trip activities (transportation, which comes from a separate activities fund. Last year, bus driver fees alone totaled $11,000.

Utilities

With extreme temperatures and skyrocketing utility costs, budgeting for the electric bills becomes a guessing game.

A credit for natural gas keeps that monthly bill relatively steady but electric rates are expected to increase at least 2% or $50,000.

Purchases

A window project that has been in the works for a couple of years may or may not come to be during this school year. Porter said the district has changed some plans that have made its of bidding have already been tossed out.

The district needs to replace a bus but wasn't just chose a vehicle online so if enough money can be set back into the budget, a purchase of a new school bus could be in the works. That would cost between $60,000 and $80,000.

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.