

BUUSD Student Survey – September/October 2019

Executive Summary

The Board of School Directors for the Barre Unified Union School District took a survey of Students in September and October of 2019 for the purpose of hearing their thoughts and opinions about how, where, and how much the Board spends (or should be spending) on providing them with educational materials and services.

The Board took a similar survey of parents and taxpayers within the district, the results of which are now with the Board.

The Student survey was made available to all students via email to their families, Facebook, social media, and on the district's website. Notification of the survey was provided via email to students' families, Facebook, social media, on the district's website, and through communications sent home from school.

As of October 11, the closing date of the survey, 120 students had registered their thoughts and opinions on a wide range of issues (reviewed below). Board members will use this information, along with information gleaned from the parent/taxpayer survey, to inform their planning and decision-making as they begin their work as a unified board representing the students of Barre City and Barre Town.

Survey Results: *Note: Because some questions allowed for more than one answer, not all percentages for each question will add up to 100%*

Demographic Questions:

1. A majority of respondents (91%) indicated they are students at Spaulding High School. A smaller number (7%) indicated they attend Barre Town School and (4%) Barre City School. 27% indicated they attend or have taken classes at CVCC.
2. Of all respondents, a majority (75%) have lived in Barre for more than 6 years, with the greatest percent of respondents (36%) indicating they have lived here for between 16 - 20 (which, given their age, makes sense). Newcomers (0-5 years) represented about 17% of survey takers.
3. A significant majority of respondents (85%) reported that their family owns their own home, with 12% indicating they are renters.
4. When asked where they most commonly get their information about what's going on in the schools, students indicated the following sources (listed in order of most commonly to least commonly):

- a. From their teachers (67%)
- b. From conversations with friends (56%)
- c. From the District's website (29%)
- d. Via social media (21%)
- e. From Facebook (12.5%)
- f. From the Barre/Montpelier Times Argus (10%)
- g. From "Other" (not defined) (9%)
- h. From the radio (5%)
- i. From the Washington World (4%)
- j. From VT Digger (4%)
- k. From attending Board meetings (1.5%)
- l. Students who indicated they 'Never' get information (4%)

Spending Questions:

Students were asked to rate the importance of specific initiatives or programs to the mission of the Barre schools by indicating whether the initiative or program is *Essential*, *Important*, *'Good to Have'*, or *Not Essential*. Respondents were also given the option of selecting 'No Opinion' on the question.

Areas of Spending / % of Taxpayers who feel the expenditures are:

Technology:

Essential to the mission	21%
Important to the mission	43%
Good to have	21%
Not Essential to the mission	4%
No Opinion	14%

After School Programs

Essential	30%
Important'	35%
Good	18%
Not Essential	4%
No Opinion	16%

Enrichment Programs (e.g. Robotics, etc.)

Essential	23%
Important	35%
Good	24%
Not Essential	6%
No Opinion	15%

Drug and Alcohol Education

Essential	28%
Important	26%
Good	26%
Not Essential	9%
No Opinion	13%

Bullying and Harassment Education

Essential	40%
Important	30%
Good	14%
Not Essential	11%
No Opinion	9%

Sexual Orientation Education

Essential	31%
Important	19%
Good	21%
Not Essential	20%
No Opinion	12%

Financial Literacy

Essential	48%
Important	38%
Good	12%
Not Essential	4%
No Opinion	5%

Advanced Placement Classes (e.g. English, Biology, Calculus)

Essential	43%
Important	28%
Good	19%
Not Essential	3%
No Opinion	8%

Athletic Teams

Essential	42%
Important	35%
Good	14%
Not Essential	4%
No Opinion	8%

The Arts (e.g. band, drama, dance)

Essential	37%
Important	33%
Good	15%
Not Essential	7%
No Opinion	11%

Summer School

Essential	11%
Important	33%
Good	29%
Not Essential	16%
No Opinion	13%

Alternative Education Programs

Essential	26%
Important	28%
Good	22%
Not Essential	5%
No Opinion	22%

Adult Ed Programs

Essential	13%
Important	30%
Good	25%
Not Essential	13%
No Opinion	23%

Remedial Programs

Essential	8%
Important	25%

Good	24%
Not Essential	6%
No Opinion	38%

Overall Satisfaction with Spending Question:

Students were asked to rate the Board’s overall spending on a scale of 1 – 5, with 1 being “too low” and 5 being “two high.” The survey altered the question to a Zero to 100 scale. When all of the responses were tallied, the Board received an average rating of “37” – indicting that on average, students feel the Board is not spending quite enough on the schools .

Personal Questions:

The remainder of the survey asked Taxpayers to share their thoughts and opinions with the Board via a number of personal questions. The responses to those questions were voluminous and will be available in a separate document shortly. The questions students were invited to answer were:

1. How can we improve how we communicate with you?
2. What are our greatest opportunities as a Unified School District?
3. What final remarks would you like to share with us as we begin our work governing the Barre schools?