

BARRE

UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT



ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

VOTING DAY

WHEN

Tuesday, March 1, 2022
7:00 AM to 7:00 PM

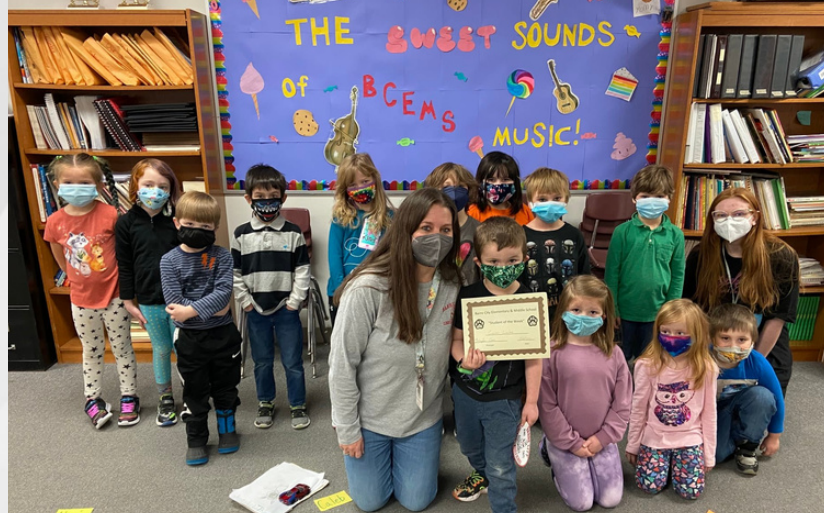
WHERE

Barre Municipal Auditorium &
Barre Town Middle & Elementary School

REGISTER: There is no deadline to register to vote. You can register ahead of time or at the polls on March 1.

VOTE BY MAIL: Voting by mail is a great option. You can request a ballot to be mailed to you through the City & Town Clerk or the My Voter Page online at mvp.vermont.gov.

On average, 23%
of Barre voters
participate in the
March election.





FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Photo by Shannon Alexander

On behalf of all our faculty and staff, I would like to welcome you to the Barre Schools!

As I write to you with my first report as your superintendent, we have just begun the second half of a school year that has been unlike any we have ever experienced. The global pandemic has upended and disrupted our learning, our work, and our home lives in ways that no one could imagine two years ago! Yet, despite all of this, I can assure you that our schools are stepping up in a heroic way every day to provide the rock solid education the children of Barre have expected for generations.

You are about to read an Annual Report that will outline the celebrations and challenges our schools are experiencing now and will face in the years ahead. And there is so much to celebrate! I mentioned above that everyone in our community - our kids, our staff, our families - have been heroes during this pandemic, and I have been inspired every single day by the heroism I see! The heroes who have impacted my life and inspired me the most have given everything of themselves to help others, and this heroism clearly defines who we are in the BUUSD. From the school nurse spending her evenings and weekends reaching out to families to make sure they are OK to the neighbor who helps with child care so a parent can go to work, these are just two examples of the hundreds of selfless and heroic acts we witness daily.

But to be fully transparent, none of this has been easy, and the challenges we are facing are real. Unprecedented staffing shortages that are impacting schools nationwide are very much in play in Barre, and we will need to do everything possible to retain, support, and recruit the best available teachers to work with our kids. Having the skilled educators in place to support our students with the social-emotional struggles and very real learning loss that they have experienced these last two years is our top priority. Meeting these challenges will require the Barre community to rally for our schools in ways many of us have never been called on to do before. We will need people to openly get behind our principals and teachers, offer help where needed, volunteer in our schools if you can, and, yes, fully support and rally for our school budget. Never has such community-wide heroism been needed more than now.

What you will see in the report ahead is that our schools are a resource and asset that are worthy of our tax dollars. Our schools are places of learning that we can be truly proud of! The tables and charts in the following pages will tell a story of a fiscally responsible budget that will meet the needs of our students and support us as we come out of this pandemic. You will see that we will be looking at lower educational taxes this year as a result of our efforts.

I want you to know that I genuinely thank you for your support of our schools and our students! I am honored to be your superintendent, and I thank you for taking the time to consider that getting fully behind our schools is an investment in the future of Barre.

Respectfully and with gratitude,

Chris Hennessey
BUUSD Superintendent

“The heroes who have impacted my life and inspired me the most have given everything of themselves to help others, and this heroism clearly defines who we are in the BUUSD.”

OUR PRIORITIES

OUR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

One of our biggest concerns is how the pandemic has taken away so many opportunities for our "kids to be kids." We've all been through so much in the last two years, and most of us are out of practice being in a community. Our kids have lost a lot! The pandemic will come to an end eventually, but our children will need lots of help relearning how to take care of themselves and others. Access to the best counselors, social workers, and interventionists will be essential in making that happen.

TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH OUR MISSION

The mission of the BUUSD is "to build a community of curious learners that **empowers student voice and exploration** through education, character development, and perseverance so our students can take on the world's greatest challenges." We have been able to keep our schools open despite some of the highest Covid cases in Vermont, but too many of our students have missed countless hours of in-person learning this year. Building a community of curious and engaged learners post-pandemic has been and will continue to be a top priority, and we will need to put resources into attracting the best teachers, interventionists, special educators and support staff to join our team to make this happen.

HIGH QUALITY & FULLY STAFFED SCHOOLS

Staffing shortages are a problem in most industries, and schools have been hit particularly hard this past year. Our top priority is to support our teachers and fully staff all of our schools! We will also need to recruit new teachers to join our ranks while competing with districts in our region and across Vermont who face the same challenges. To support our students' social-emotional and academic well-being, we will need a full staff of talented professionals in our schools.

HERO HIGHLIGHTS



SAM FULLER CLASS OF 2010

*The Barre School System has played a big role in my career and personal path as an adult. I moved to Barre right before my freshman year of high school and was immediately taken in as part of the community. Spaulding High School allowed me the opportunity to continue my athletic career at the college level which eventually led me to do volunteer work in Africa. Now years later I am the founder of the **Sound Of A Smile** Program, a program designed to rebuild schools, tutor kids, participate in community projects and improve the educational environment of a small area in South Africa known as Kurland Village. The friends and connections I made at Spaulding High School play key roles in our program. My high school friends, now business owners in Barre, all support my program and we work together to try and improve the world around us. Huge thanks to the Barre community. We're just getting started!*

ALAYNA MARTEL, BSN, RN CLASS OF 2011

As I reflect on my experience of being a student in the Barre School System to now, a nursing professional, I am thankful for the opportunity Barre's education community provided me. My journey of becoming a Registered Nurse started at Central Vermont Career Center. The center provided me with the motivation to follow my dreams and invest in continuing my education. The real-world experience I gained through the program allowed me to prepare for college and understand the commitment that was required to achieve such a dream. To this day, I keep in touch with educators that positively influenced my life.



THANK YOU SCHOOL NURSES!

We know there have been many heroes in our school community these last two years, but we have to acknowledge our school nurse team for special recognition. Being a school nurse in a normal year is an incredibly challenging job, but the pandemic has made it even harder. Our school nurse team of **Jen Lyon (Class of '02), Kathy Gardner, Nicole Ladd (Class of '04), Mary Newton, Abbie Savoie (Class of '18), and Kathy Matthews (Class of '71)** has gone far above and beyond the requirements of their jobs. They have taken care of our community and made sure our families have the most accurate information possible on a daily basis. All of Barre is thankful and grateful for their work!



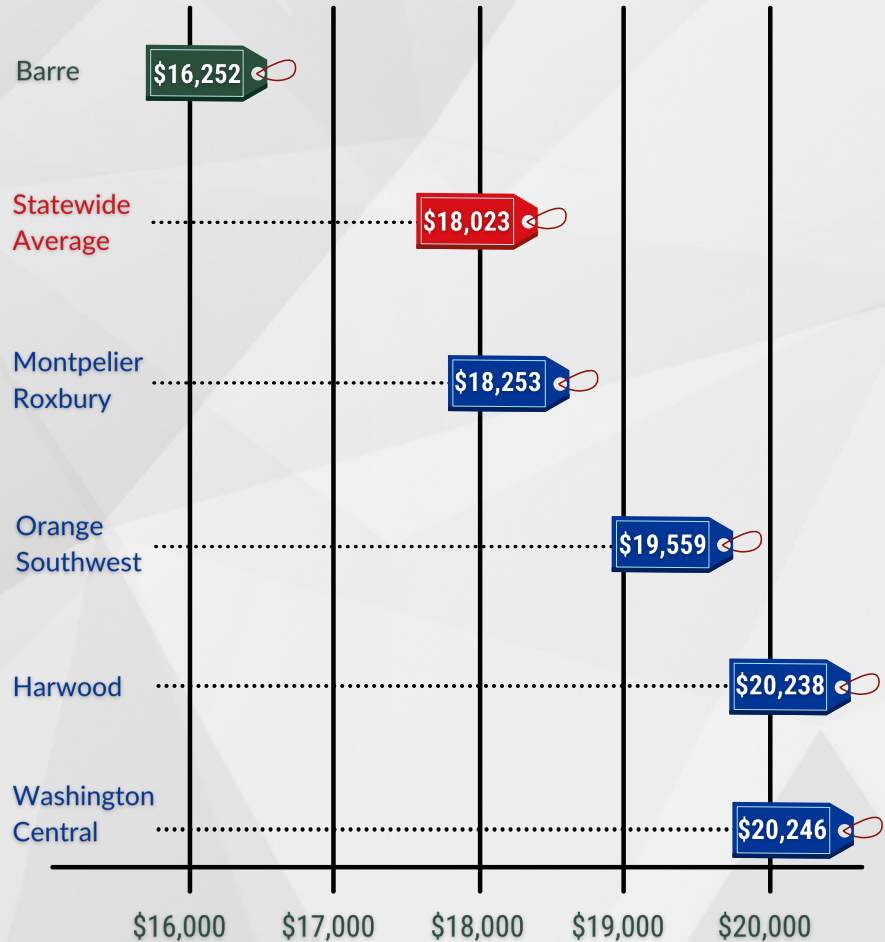
THE FY23 BUDGET

On January 13, the Barre Unified Union School District Board approved a budget of \$53,254,319 for fiscal year 2023. This represents an increase of **1.95%** over the current year's spending plan. Approval of this budget by voters would give us the resources we need to address our children's social emotional well-being, how they will learn coming out of the pandemic, and keep and attract high-quality staff for our schools.

Please take a look to the right at how our student spending compares to our neighbors. Our budget is clearly a step in the right direction toward addressing the imbalance you see in student spending in our region. →



SPENDING PER EQUALIZED PUPIL BY DISTRICT



HOW WOULD THIS PROPOSED BUDGET AFFECT YOU?



If your household makes **less than \$136,900**

Household Income	FY 2022 Taxes Current Year	FY 2023 Taxes Proposed Budget	Annual Difference
\$50,000	\$1,100	\$1,050	-\$50
\$60,000	\$1,320	\$1,260	-\$60
\$70,000	\$1,540	\$1,470	-\$70
\$80,000	\$1,760	\$1,680	-\$80
\$90,000	\$1,980	\$1,890	-\$90
\$100,000	\$2,200	\$2,100	-\$100
\$110,000	\$2,420	\$2,310	-\$110



If your household makes **more than \$136,900**

Property Value	FY 2022 Taxes Current Year		FY 2023 Taxes Proposed Budget		Annual Difference	
\$100,000	\$1,426	\$1,228	\$1,357	\$1,210	-\$69	-\$18
\$150,000	\$2,139	\$1,842	\$2,036	\$1,815	-\$103	-\$27
\$200,000	\$2,852	\$2,456	\$2,714	\$2,420	-\$138	-\$36
\$250,000	\$3,565	\$3,070	\$3,393	\$3,025	-\$172	-\$45
\$300,000	\$4,278	\$3,684	\$4,071	\$3,630	-\$207	-\$54
\$350,000	\$4,991	\$4,298	\$4,750	\$4,235	-\$241	-\$63
\$400,000	\$5,704	\$4,912	\$5,428	\$4,840	-\$276	-\$72

The figures listed in these charts represent VT educational taxes.

Barre City =

Barre Town =

Understanding The Ballot When You Vote

BALLOT

Shall the voters of the Barre Unified Union School District approve the school board to expend **\$53,254,319**, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$16,252 **per equalized pupil**. This projected spending per equalized pupil is **5.99% higher** than spending for the current year.

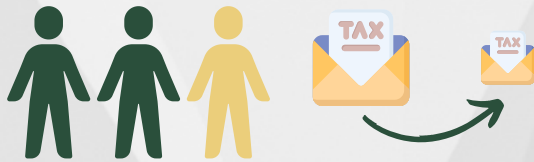
\$53,254,319 includes approximately \$6,000,000 of grant funding. This funding operates two elementary and middle schools, a high school, an alternative school, and a central office. This value provides economical and quality education for approximately 2,300 students.

Your educational taxes are **not** going up **5.99%**. 5.99% is the percentage increase in spending per student from FY 2022. Our expenses are only increasing by **1.95%**, but because of lower tax rates, educational taxes are actually going down.

When calculating spending per student, Vermont uses "equalized pupils" rather than an actual headcount. The formula gives less weight to pre-kindergarten pupils and extra weight to students in secondary schools, those from economically deprived backgrounds, and those whose first language is not English. The principle behind the weighting is that it costs more to educate students in certain categories.

HOW DOES INCOME SENSITIVITY WORK?

Income sensitivity is a form of tax assistance which allows homeowners to pay property taxes based on their income, rather than the value of their home.



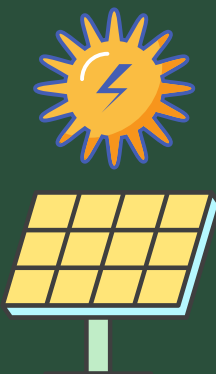
Approximately **66%** of Barre households make less than \$136,900 a year and meet eligibility requirements to qualify for a property tax credit. This allows them to pay their taxes based on their household income, instead of the value of their home.

Visit tax.vermont.gov/property/tax-credit or scan the QR code to the right for more information.



SCAN ME

BUUSD entered into a net metering agreement for two solar arrays which will save taxpayers approximately **\$46,000 per year** in electricity for 20 years. That's a total savings of **\$920,000!**



Visit buusd.org/budget or scan the QR code below for more information about this year's budget.



SCAN ME

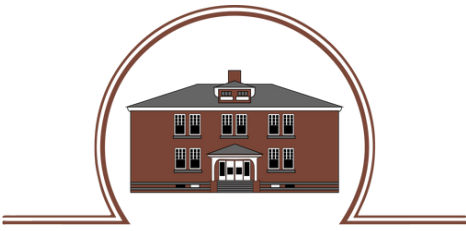
THE BOTTOM LINE

Given the unprecedented challenges our schools are facing now and in the future, we are proud to present a budget that is fiscally responsible and meets the needs of our students. Barre has historically had the lowest per-student spending in the region by far, and we are proud to begin addressing this gap in the best interests of the children of Barre. The bottom line is that our community will still be looking at lower educational taxes this year because of our efforts.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Graduating seniors have the option to buy their school-issued laptop at a discount as they leave the district. This ensures that all graduates have access to a device as they move on to college, the military, or the workforce. Last year, the district recouped \$920 through the buy-back program.





Barre Unified Union School District
120 Ayers St. Barre, VT 05641

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With special thanks to Shannon Alexander Photography, JVO Photography, Mark Ouimet, and Josh Allen.

A ROCK SOLID EDUCATION FOR A LIFETIME OF DISCOVERY



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