



# Durham • Freeport • Pownal

Providing our students with a world-class education that will challenge minds, engage creativity, develop self-discipline, and advance inherent strengths.

(207) 865-0928 • [www.rsu5.org](http://www.rsu5.org)

PRESORTED STANDARD  
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Freeport, ME  
Permit No. 14



## Dear Citizens,

This report on the state of our schools is based on the *RSU5 Strategic Framework*, created in 2010 as the result of nine months of joint effort between the community, district educators, and the Board of Directors. The Framework contains our mission and vision along with a set of performance indicators to gauge our success. These indicators are by no means perfect, and no single measurement or test should ever be used to judge the quality of RSU5 programs. These results are from various assessment methods, both qualitative and quantitative, and can help to give the community, the administration, the teachers and students a sense of how RSU5 is proceeding toward our mission, vision and goals. We will repeat and refine this process for years to come and seek to perfect our set of indicators over time.

This year's report contains information about the academic performance of RSU5 students, their aspirations and post-secondary plans, and our use of resources. Its purpose is to keep the community informed about our schools' performance and to help frame vital discussions about what you want for your schools.

*Nelson Larkins*, Chair, RSU5 Board of Directors  
*Shannon L. Welsh*, RSU5 Superintendent of Schools



## District Vision and Mission Statement

### OUR MISSION:

To provide our students with a world-class education that will challenge minds, engage creativity, develop self-discipline, and advance inherent strengths.

### OUR VISION:

Our schools provide a safe, engaging environment that fosters a passion for life-long learning.

Our educators are mentors dedicated to providing our students with the knowledge and skills that will help them adapt to our changing world.

Our community supports the concept that each individual – be they student, educator, parent, or community member – bears responsibility for the success of our mission.

All stakeholders understand that financial responsibility is a facet of each decision that is made and tirelessly seek the resources to support our mission and vision.

## RSU5 Roles for a Quality Education

There are many pivotal roles required to provide quality education for the students in our district.

- **Students'** engagement and full participation are fundamental to learning and for fulfilling their personal aspirations.
- **Parents** provide direct involvement and support in learning, and are critical to the success of our children.
- **Educators** bring commitment and innovation to the crucial process of finding new ways to meet the learning needs of our students.
- **Board members** provide leadership that upholds the Vision and Mission of RSU5, dedication to the school/community collaborations, and communication that is fundamental to continuous improvement.
- **Community members** support adequate funding for the programs, learning opportunities, physical buildings, and the professional development requirements of our system.

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# RSU5's Academic Performance

## New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)

The NECAP (New England Common Assessment Program) is used by Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, "to meet *No Child Left Behind Act* requirements for testing Reading and Mathematics once each year from grade 3 through grade 8. The NECAP is designed to assess learning from the prior year (teaching year) at the beginning of the next school year (testing year). Therefore, grades 2-7 Reading and Mathematics are assessed at the beginning of grades 3-8." In this report, "2012" refers to the test that was given in the Fall of 2011 (school year 2012). These charts show the performance of RSU5 students against the state average and the region in grades 3, 5, and 8. It is normal for scores to fluctuate year to year

so an average of the last three years is used for comparison. This year there is also a chart showing the progression of the same group of students (this year's 7th graders) through grades 4, 5 and 6.

The region includes seven area school districts: Brunswick, Cape Elizabeth, Falmouth, MSAD15 (Gray-New Gloucester), MSAD51 (Cumberland and N. Yarmouth), MSAD75 (Bowdoin, Bowdoinham, Harpswell and Topsham), and Yarmouth. This comparison group was chosen to include five of the state's top scoring districts, so it sets a very high competitive bar, with RSU5 starting in the middle of the pack. The chart on the right uses the most recent test results to illustrate this - showing the range of performance (% proficient or above) across the state and where the comparison districts and RSU5 schools fall in that range.

proficient or above) across the state and where the comparison districts and RSU5 schools fall in that range.

### NECAP summary:

It is easy to misconstrue or over-interpret the results; they must be combined with other data points for an informed picture. Over the last three years, RSU5 students continued to out-perform state averages, landing in the top third of the state in Reading, Math and Writing. In the region, RSU5 is just below the mean average for the comparison group. These results show that our elementary and middle schools are good, and also show substantial room for growth for both higher and lower performing students. Steps already begun to achieve this growth include a major curriculum revision to introduce *Reading and Writing workshops* through Teachers College, job-embedded professional development through Literacy and Math strategists at the K-8 level, and a new RTI (Response to Intervention) program to ensure that every student gets the right assistance quickly when learning difficulties occur.

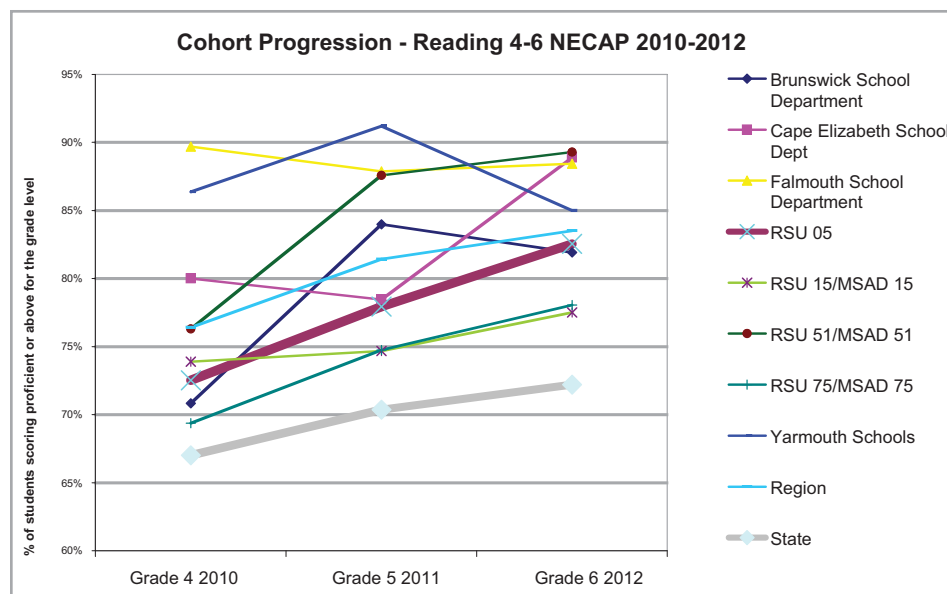
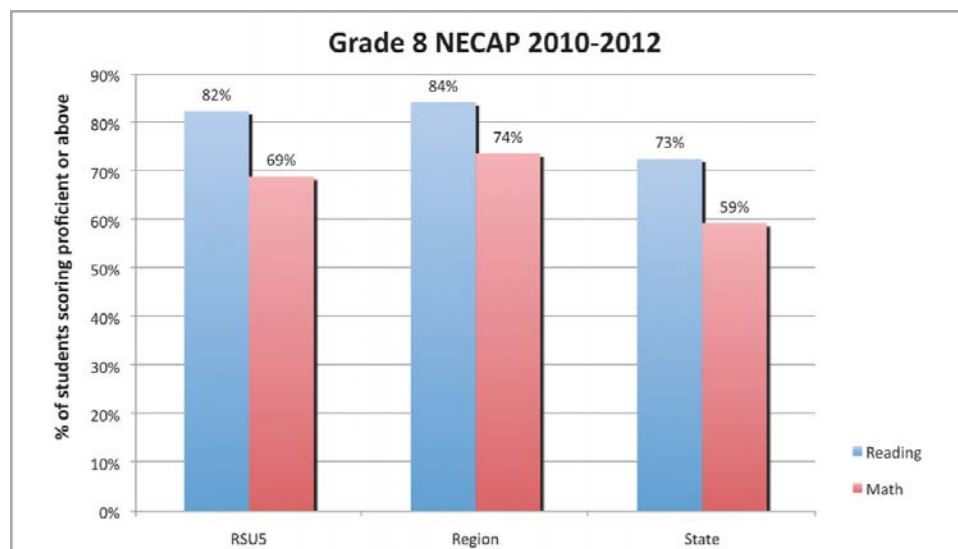
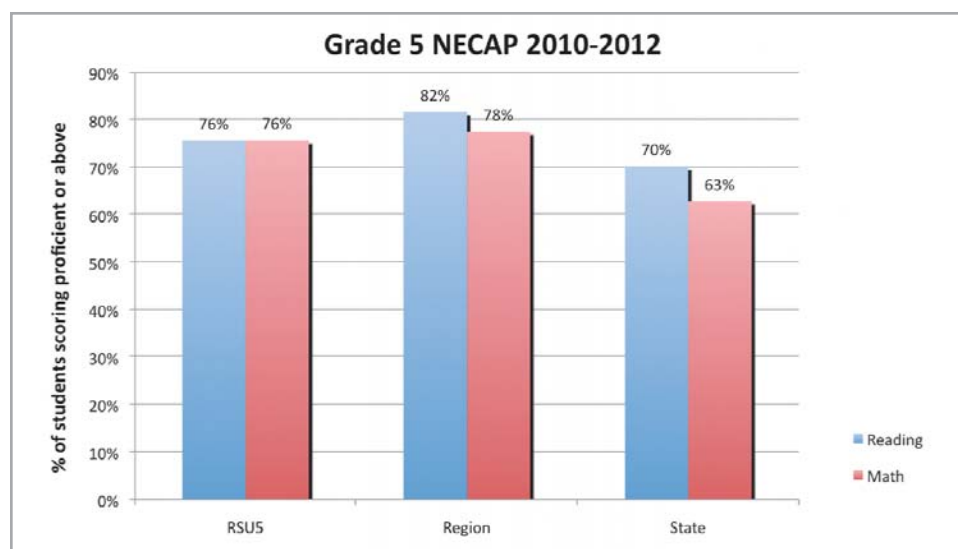
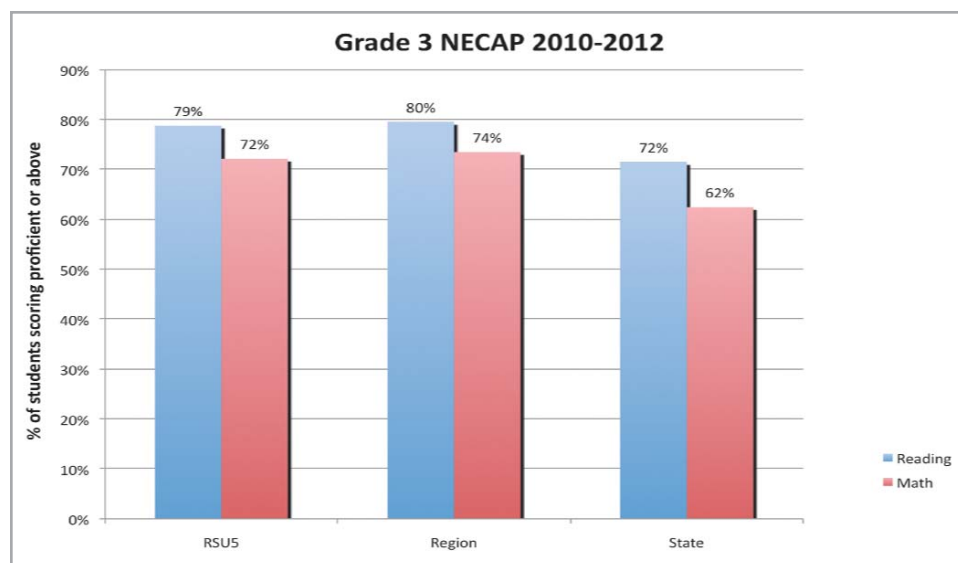
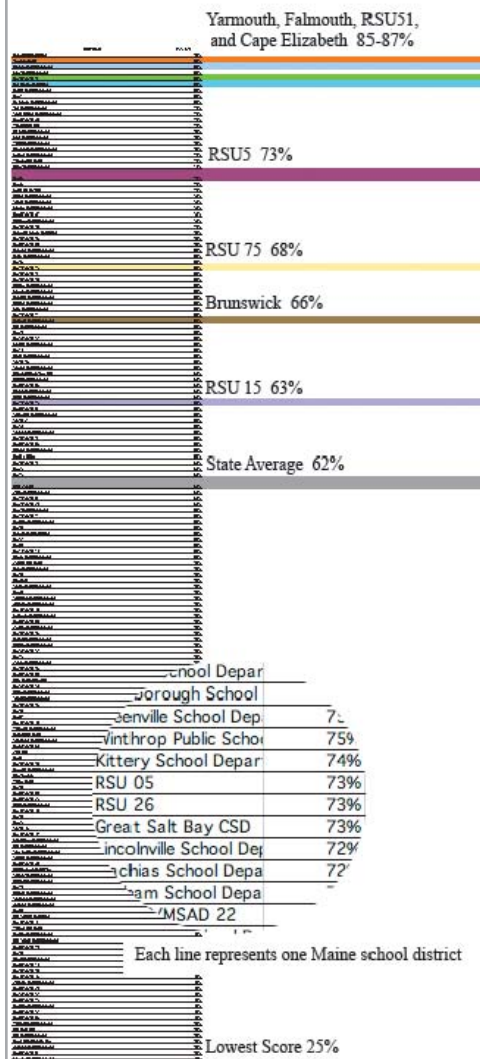
For more detailed information, please visit the RSU5 Strategic Communications website: [www.rsu5.org/strategicplanning](http://www.rsu5.org/strategicplanning).

### Comparison Set

**Brunswick, Cape Elizabeth, Falmouth, MSAD15 (Gray-New Gloucester), MSAD51 (Cumberland/No. Yarmouth), MSAD75 (Bowdoin, Bowdoinham, Harpswell and Topsham), Yarmouth**

### NECAP 2013 Math (Grades 3-8 Combined)

This snapshot shows 178 Maine school districts, (all that reported NECAP scores) from the lowest to the highest, arranged by the percentage of students scoring "proficient" or above on the most recent test, taken in Fall 2012.



## No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

As a part of our required reporting under the NCLB law, we post the district report cards on our web site, and provide substantial information about our federal programs. RSU5 received about \$135,000 this year in federal Title 1A funding, the bulk of which was expended on teachers and paraprofessionals who assisted children with reading in the lower grades. At the RSU5 web site, you can navigate to the No Child Left Behind page (under "Curriculum"). This page has copies of our federal application for funds, which describes the work and the planned expenditures. Parents and community members are welcome to participate in the planning of these activities.

# Maine High School Assessment (MHSA)

All 11th grade high school students in Maine take the MHSA in the spring. The MHSA uses the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) to measure student proficiency in Critical Reading, Mathematics, Writing, and Science.

We are reporting the 3-year cumulative average (2010-2012). At Freeport High School these scores fluctuate from 4-10 percentage points year to year.

## MHSA Summary:

Over the last three years, Freeport High School students performed above state averages, and did well regionally in reading and writing, less well in math and science. The challenges are well understood. Each grade span and department of the RSU has an initiative in place to improve in these areas. Middle school Math/Algebra courses are being redesigned to implement the new, more rigorous *Common Core State Standards*. There will be a

new 7/8th grade *district-wide writing assessment* piloted this spring in concert with the *writing workshops* implementation. High school departments are redesigning courses to target the higher order *career and college readiness* skills in the common core, and to implement the state's new requirement for a *proficiency-based diploma by 2018*. This means the new standards-based system will need to be in place for 9th grade by the fall of 2014, with new courses, new kinds of assistance and intervention for students to meet the higher standards, and a visible increase in the variety of learning strategies and activities. This process has already begun. The staff and leadership are in place to make significant, recognizable and very positive changes in the school experience. Their greatest need is *time*, in the form of *professional learning days*, and *professional development*.

## Northwest Evaluation Association Test (NWEA)

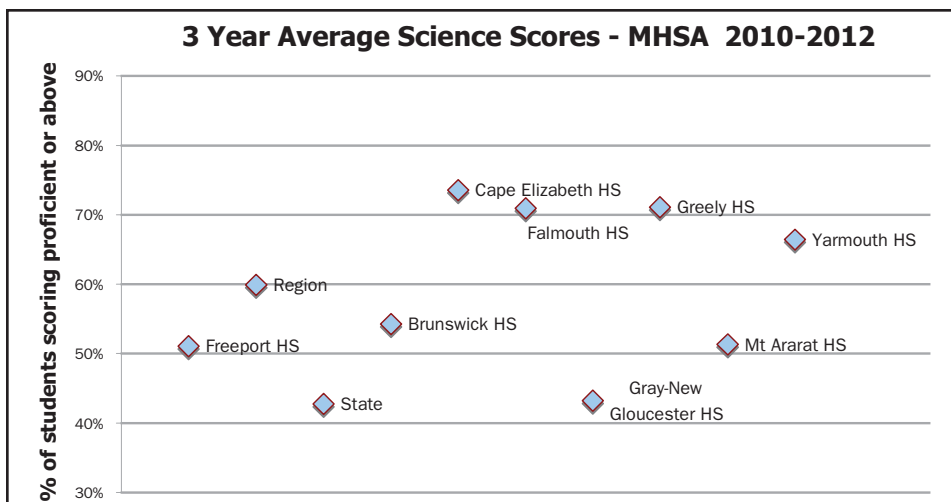
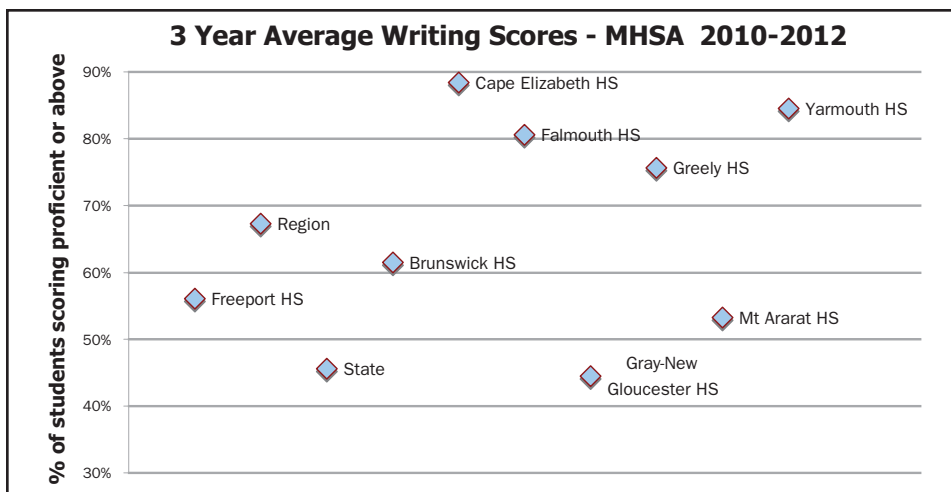
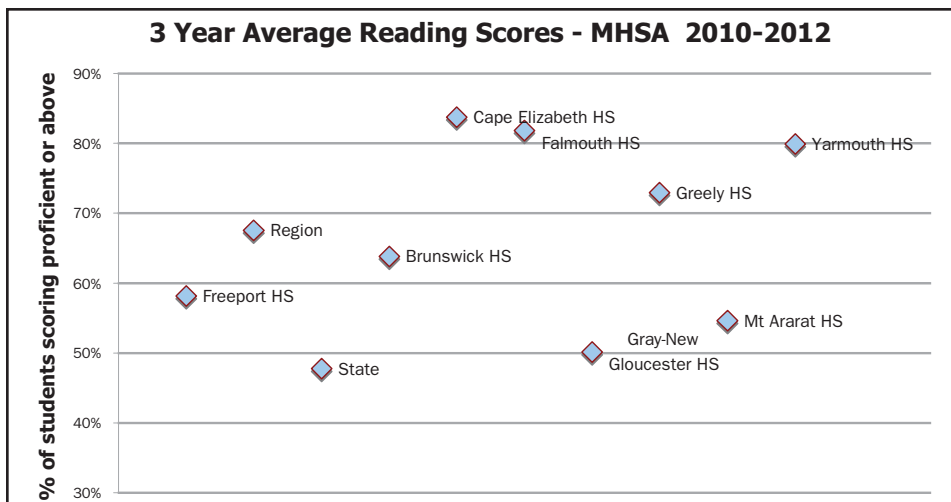
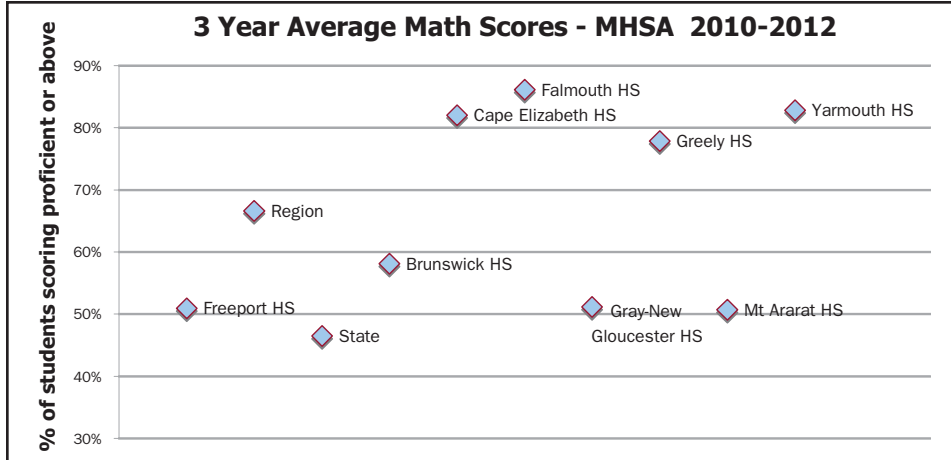
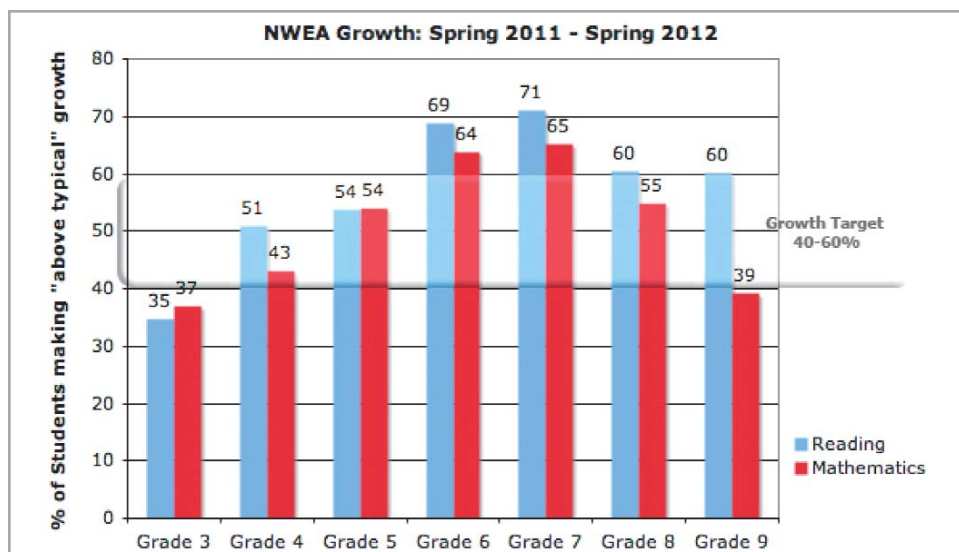
The NWEA tests are computer-based assessments of Reading and Mathematics. These tests adjust to the student. When a student answers a question correctly, the program offers a slightly more challenging question or problem; when a student answers incorrectly, the program reduces the level of difficulty. Over 1,200 school districts across the country use NWEA assessments to inform instruction.

Each test is tailored to the individual student; therefore, it is possible to measure individual student growth on these assessments. NWEAs provide students with targets for performance. Schools with 40%-60% of students meeting/exceeding growth targets are achieving typical growth for the school as a whole. The graph below shows the percent of students that showed above-typical growth.

## NWEA summary:

It is important to understand that these data do *not* represent the

percentage of students who are proficient, but rather the percentage of students – regardless of proficiency – who are improving knowledge and skills in Reading and Mathematics at an *above-typical* rate. About 25% of students score at the proficient level but do not show above-typical growth from the prior year. RSU5 is committed to challenging all students to achieve their potential, including those that are already high performing. This additional potential for learning is being addressed in several ways, including adoption of *Reading and Writing workshops* (which encourage students to advance individually) and a redesign of the Gifted and Talented program, with additional professional development for teachers to refine their strategies for differentiating lessons. In addition to the Math program improvements described above, the change to a *standards-based system* will also support acceleration and challenge for higher performing students.



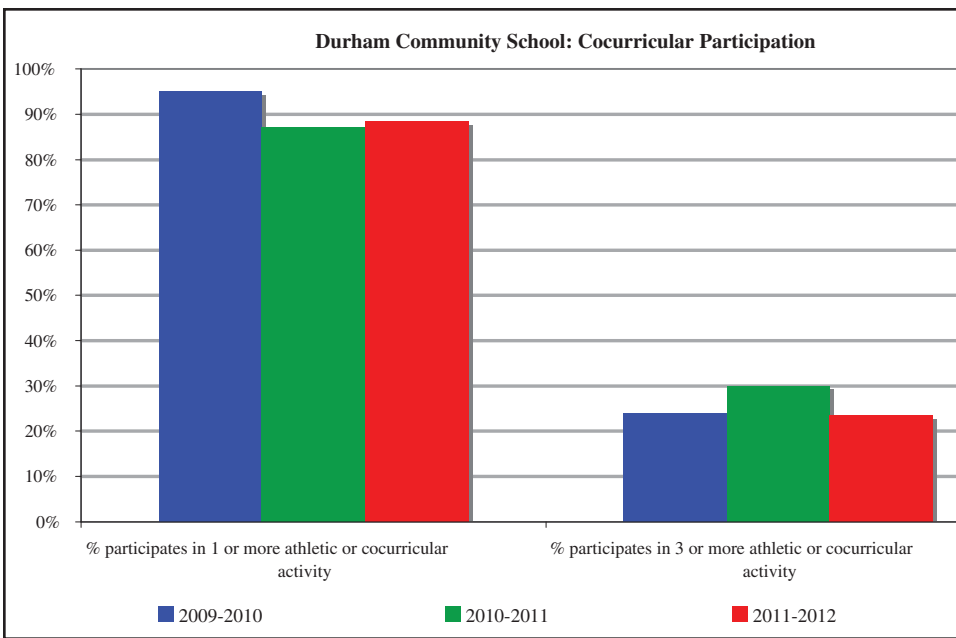
## Fountas & Pinnel Reading Assessment (F&P)

During the 2011-2012 year, a new Reading assessment was given to all K-8 students. It takes about twenty minutes and provides detailed diagnostic data that helps teachers fine-tune their assistance to growing readers. It also will provide a snapshot to help us understand the impacts of our literacy initiatives. The "F&P" is given in the fall and spring, and also as needed mid year. Spring to spring scores will be reported for the first time after this year's



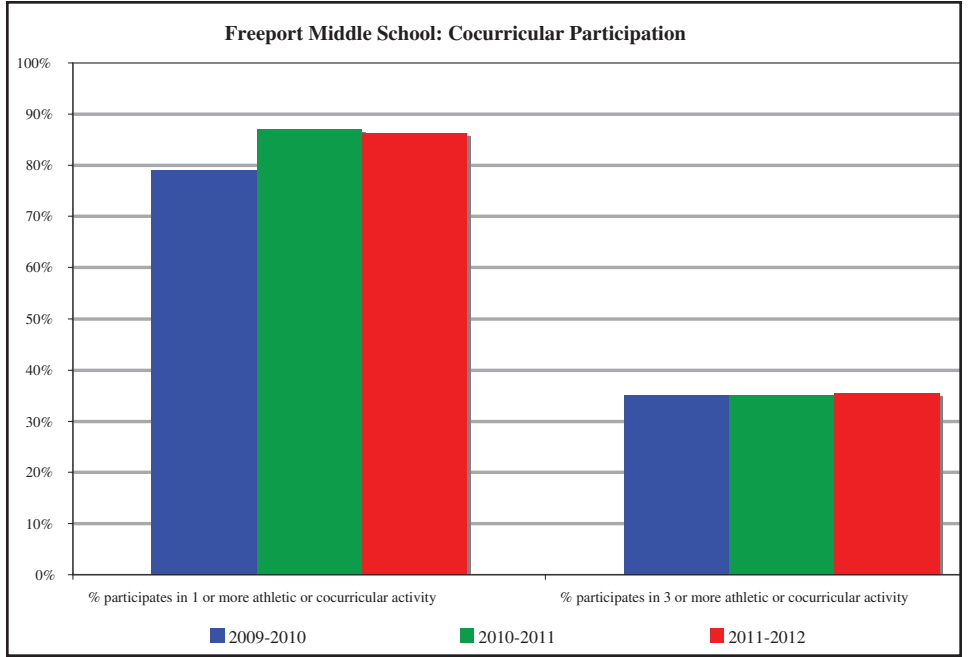
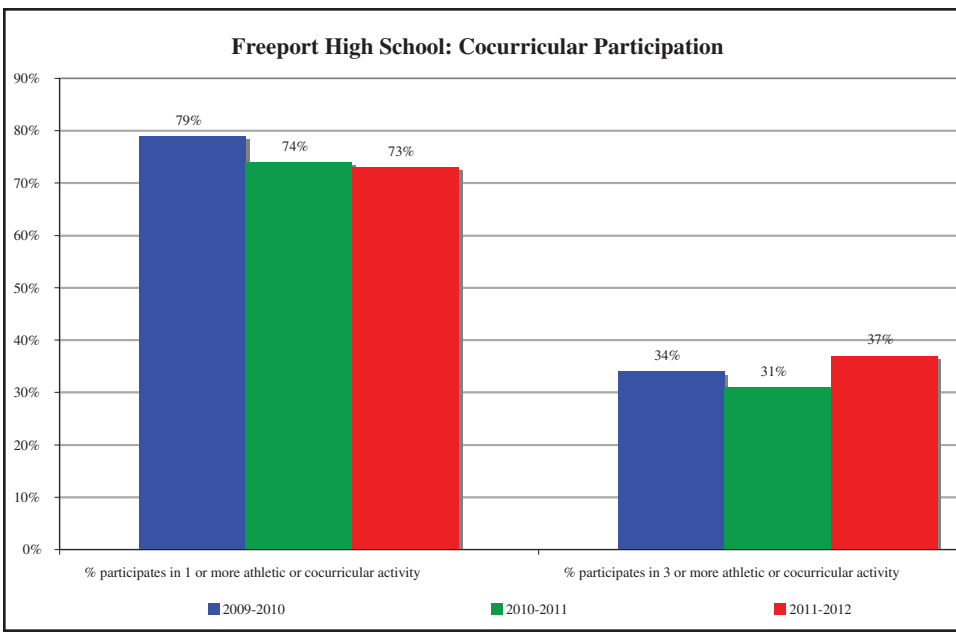
assessment in May. For more information about this assessment, please see the RSU5 web site under "Curriculum."





## Cocurricular Participation

Cocurricular activities include school-sponsored clubs (e.g., drama or debate) and school-sponsored athletics. Cocurricular activities take place before school, after school, or during school when classes are not in session. This number is important because there is a strong correlation between involvement in these activities and academic success. Totals will fluctuate year to year as programs change to support student interest and demand.



## Students Transferring to Other Schools

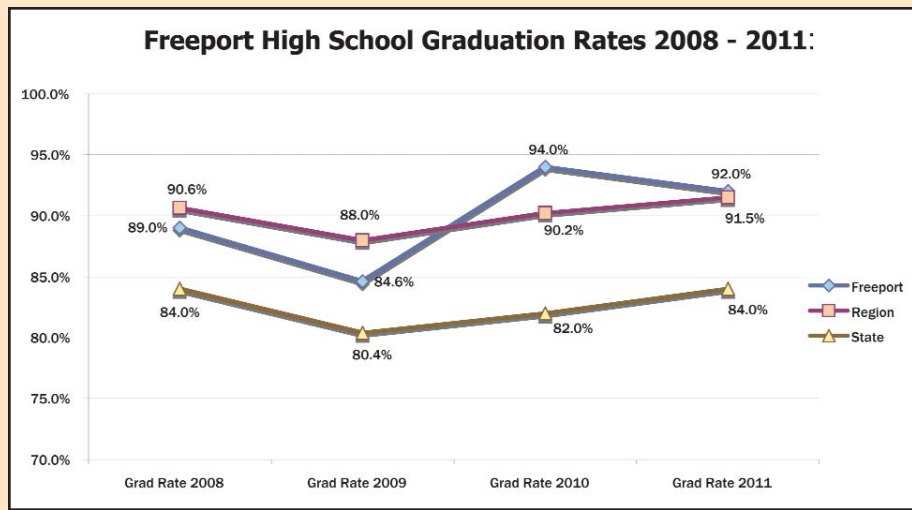
The number of students transferring to other schools from our public schools has generally remained steady since before the formation of the RSU. This chart shows the number of students transferring to private schools (Religious, Non-Religious, In-State, Out of State, Charter School). These figures do not include all schools in the RSU, and are dependant on self-reporting for accuracy.

Transfers to private, parochial, or charter schools:	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
2006-2007	2	0	0	5	1	2	0
2007-2008	3	0	0	5	7	1	0
2008-2009	7	0	1	3	1	0	0
2009-2010	4	2	1	1	2	1	0
2010-2011	1	1	0	2	2	3	0
2011-2012	5	0	0	3	5	1	0
2012-2013	5	3	2	2	3	2	1
Average before RSU	4.0	0.0	0.3	4.3	3.0	1.0	0.0
Average after RSU	3.8	1.5	0.8	2.0	3.0	1.8	0.3





# High School Graduation Rate

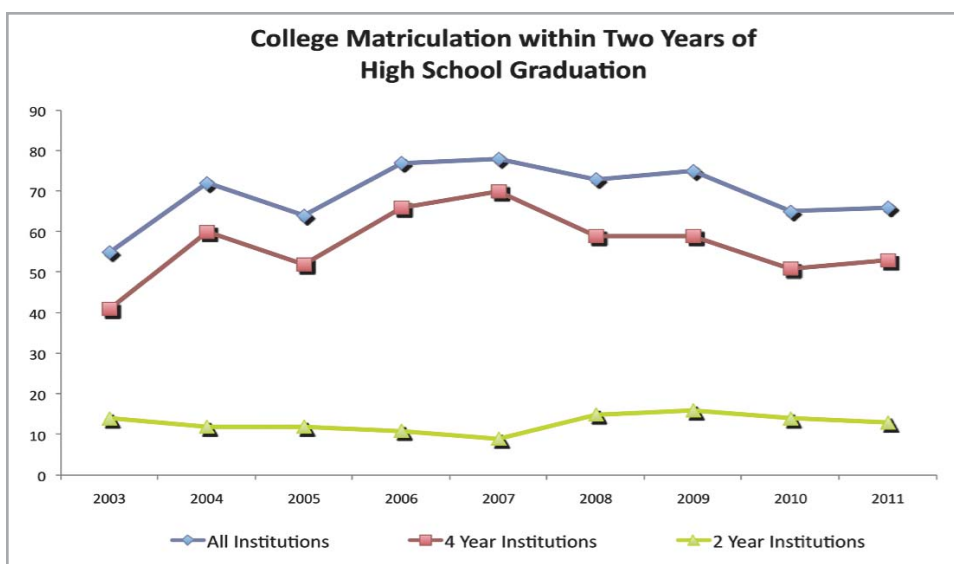
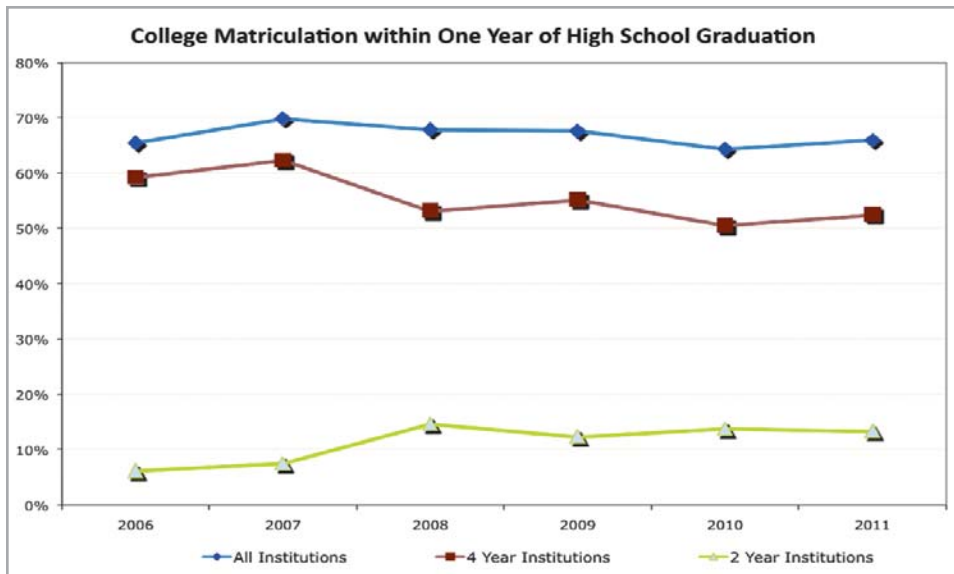
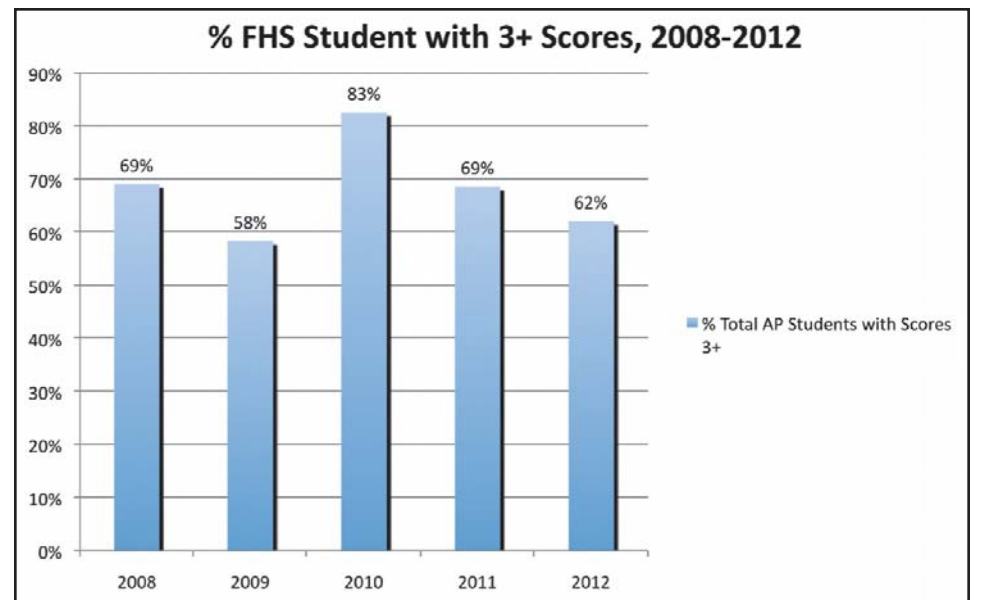
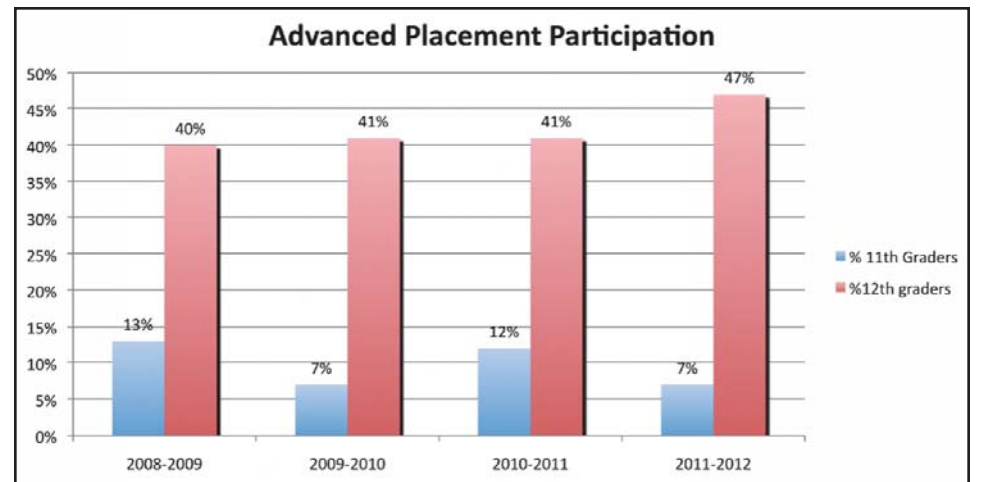


This calculation is now provided by the state based on the following question: "...of the students who enter 9th grade in a given year (the "cohort") what percentage of them received a diploma in four years or less? The formula accounts for students who transfer in [or] out...over four years."



# Advanced Placement Participation (AP)

The College Board certifies AP courses; the exams are administered in the spring. AP courses often earn students college credits and therefore can reduce the cost of a college education. They also demonstrate to colleges the students' willingness to challenge themselves. At Freeport High School, 11th and 12th graders are eligible to take AP courses.



# College Matriculation

The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) is a national database that tracks postsecondary matriculation, retention, and graduation. The NSC uses student name, date of birth, and high school to identify the percentage of students enrolled in college, those who persist, and those who graduate. 92% of higher education institutions participate in the NSC.

# Work and College Readiness Standards

With the help of members of the business community, teachers, and consultant Heidi McGinley, these standards have been drafted and will become core components in the RSU5 K-12 curriculum. They are simple statements of skills identified as crucial for post-secondary success, including college, technical programs, or employment. There will be about a dozen statements in all at each of the four grade spans, K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-Diploma. They will be seen in grade books, report cards, etc. and will function as *key standards* in a standards-based system. Examples:

- A3. ... Meet deadlines and complete tasks to expected levels.
- A4. Set... goals and apply strategies to meet them.
- B1. Produce clear and coherent writing ... appropriate to the task, purpose, audience, and discipline.
- B2. Present information... so listeners can follow the line of reasoning...
- C1. Identify patterns and connections in information, situations, and across disciplines.
- C2. Construct support and seek evidence to defend arguments, explanations, and lines of reasoning.

These skills have always been taught and encouraged, but will now be emphasized in a new way as they become a part of a structure to improve the specificity of feedback and support given to students. The Work and College Readiness indicators are being piloted this year, and baseline data will be collected in 2013-2014. By 2015, this report should include the percentages of students in RSU5 that are meeting these standards.

For more information, please see Joe Makley, RSU5 Curriculum Director, makleyj@rsu.org.



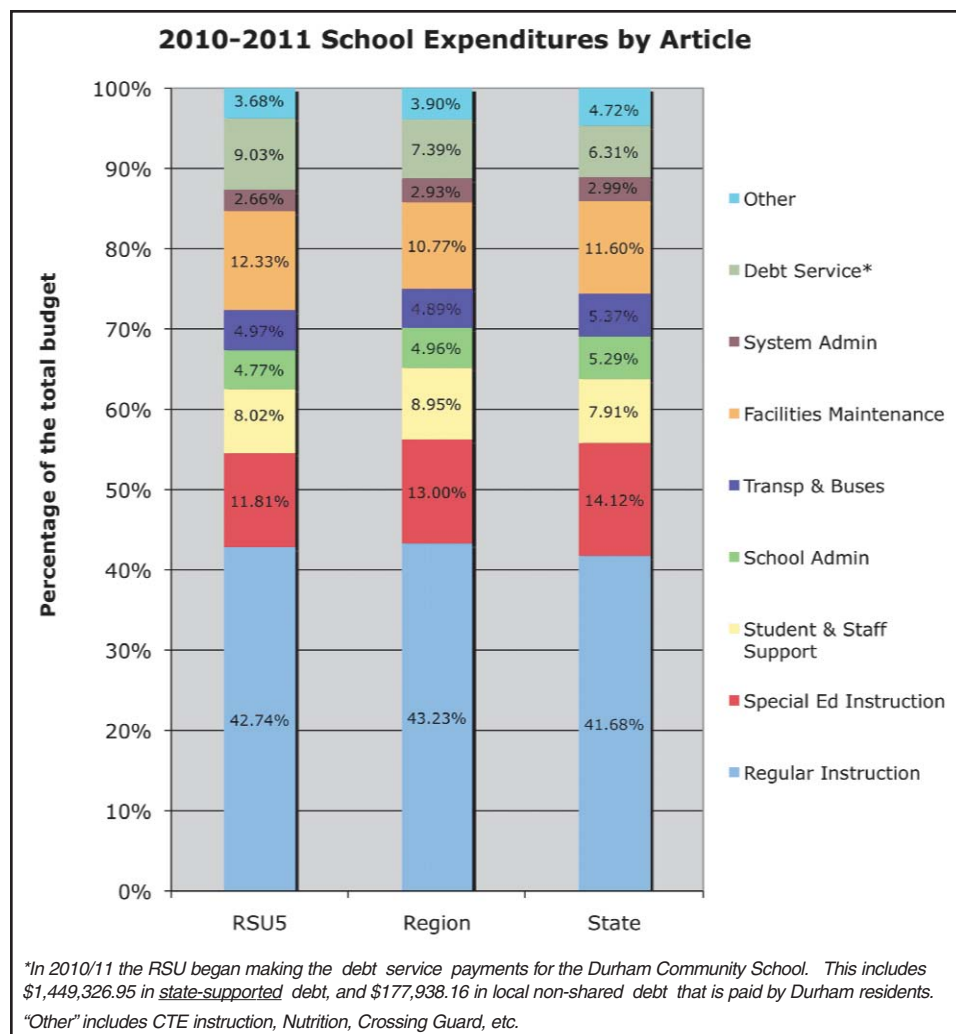
# RSU5's Financial Performance

The RSU5 Board of Directors endorses the notion that effective use of financial resources is vital to the development of a high performing school system. The Board also recognizes that financial resources are – and will continue to be – scarce and often less than optimally desired. Knowing this, all members of RSU5 need to be vigilant in ensuring that our resources are best spent in ways that will continue to promote our Mission and Vision.



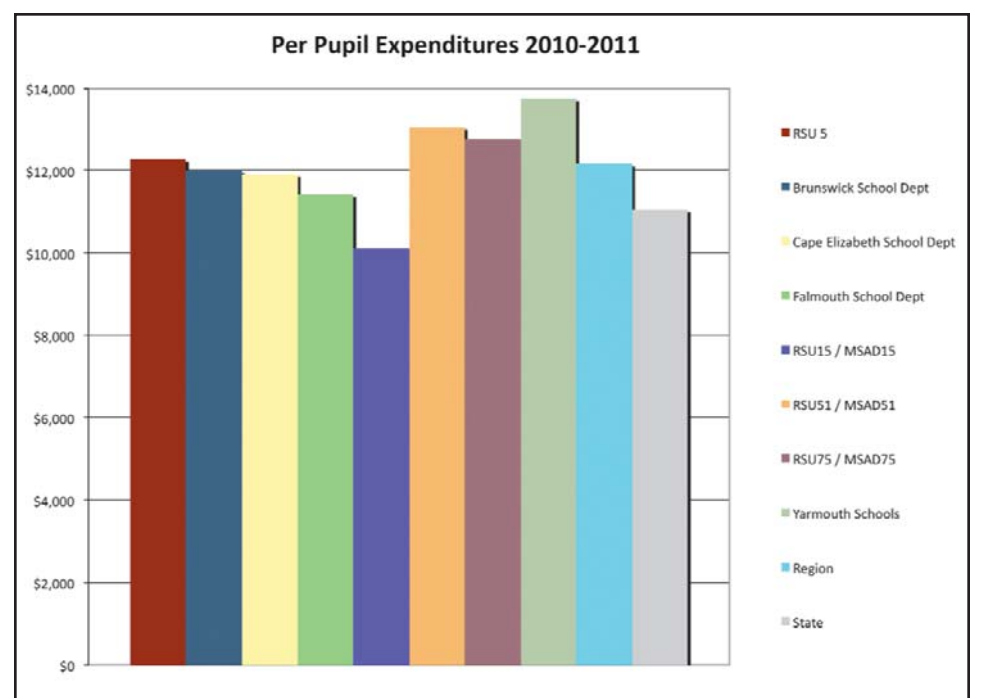
## Expenditures by Article

The RSU established comparative measures to demonstrate our financial focus on students and programming. This graph shows the percent of our total budget spent within each area of the budget as compared to the region and state. It is a comparison of *budget priorities*, rather than dollar amounts spent.



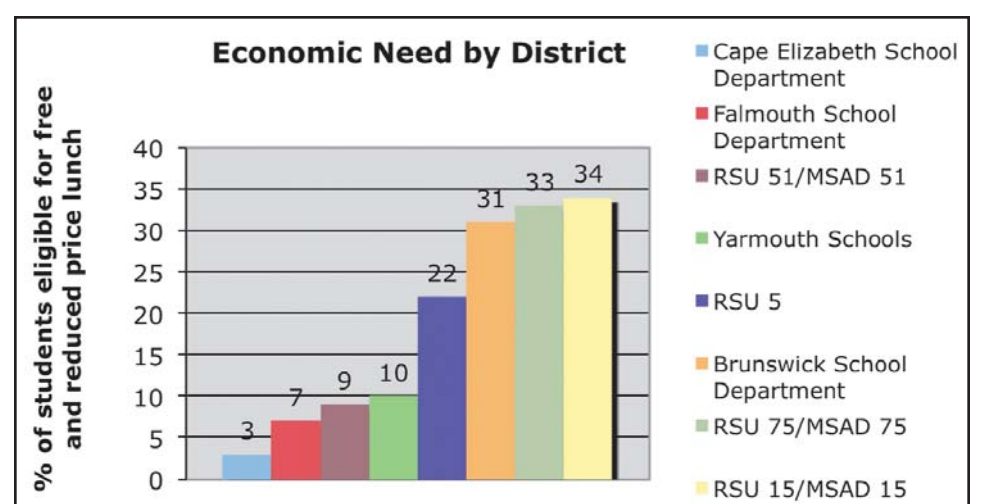
## Per Pupil Expenditures

Benchmarking and communicating our per pupil expenditures against state and regional school districts will help our community gauge our relative effectiveness and help us better plan for the future. This graph is based on data from 2010-2011. The figure for RSU5 reflects the addition in 2011 of \$1,449,326.95 in state-supported debt service on the Durham Community School.



## Student Need

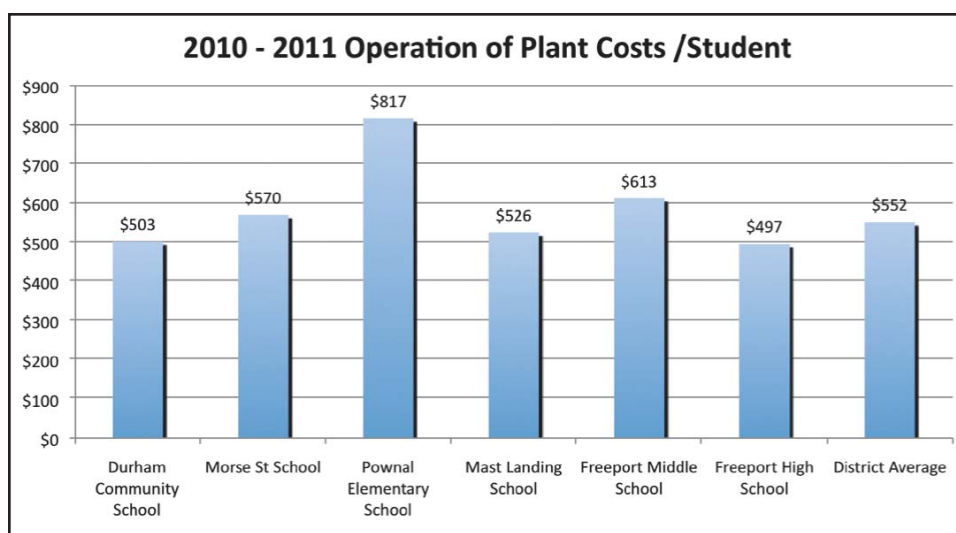
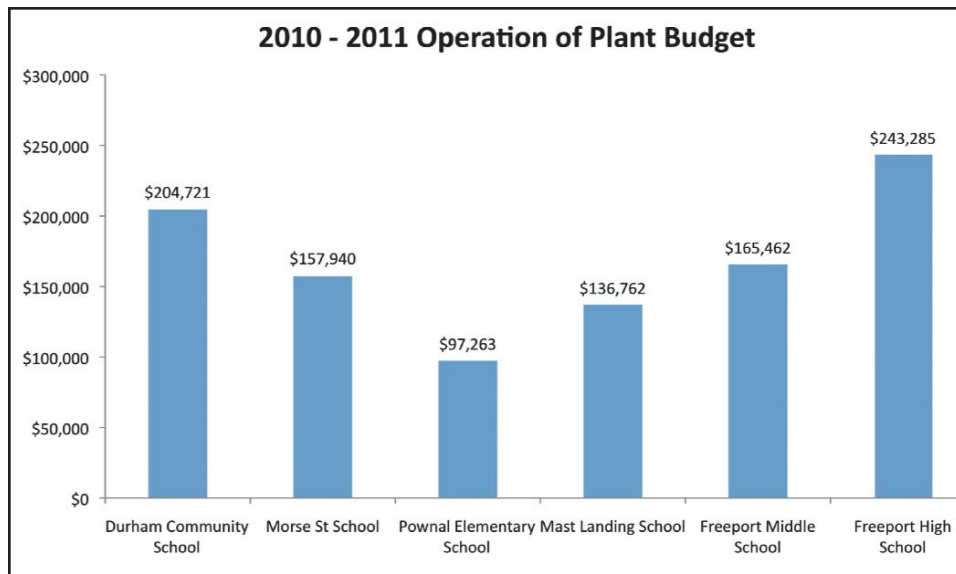
This chart represents the percentage of students who qualify for reduced price lunch based on income. While higher family incomes often correlate with higher academic performance, this is not inevitable. RSU5 is committed to joining a limited group of "good to great" districts in which all students can succeed at high levels. The professional culture in each building will ensure that evidence-based practices (the very best teaching practices) are used regularly and with fidelity, and every student is challenged and expected to succeed at high levels. This change is already underway, and will continue with the community's support. It requires above all *professional development*, in the form of time, access to demonstration classrooms and experts, and on-site coaching.





# Operation of Plant Costs and Efficiencies

The RSU strives to provide a safe and effective environment in which to achieve our mission. Proper maintenance and timely improvements are a high priority to ensure that learning is optimized in all our facilities. These graphs show the budget and cost per student of each of our buildings.



## 2012-2013 Operation of Plant: Energy Efficiencies and Building Improvements

RSU5 has committed to continue with a strong maintenance and energy management program to ensure our buildings are safe, efficient and well maintained. Over this past summer the Freeport Middle School underwent the conversion to natural gas, marking the final school building within RSU5 to make this conversion. By converting to natural gas at the middle school, we project to save \$46,583 this year alone. Since RSU5 began using natural gas our cost avoidance in heating (over oil) totals over \$228,000. As part of managing energy cost we were able to lock in at a decreased rate per therm of natural gas this year from \$1.00 per therm to \$.97 giving RSU5 an additional \$3,363 of savings.

Electrical service is also an area where we are realizing substantial savings. This past year RSU5 entered into an agreement with Maine Power Options to reduce the average cost of electrical energy from .0919 to .0575. The result of this rate agreement will be savings of over \$23,000 per year for the duration of the agreement. While making the conversion to natural gas at the middle school, we installed frequency drives on the circulator pumps in the heating system to further reduce our electrical energy consumption.

There were once again three major appliances replaced in kitchens in some of our schools. At the high school and Morse Street School we replaced the dishwashers and at Pownal Elementary School we replaced the large freezer. These units were all replaced with high efficiency models that will save electrical energy for years to come.

Beyond energy management, our maintenance department has

been busy making improvements to all of our schools. There was a major carpet replacement at Mast Landing School and Pownal Elementary using carpet that is fully rubber backed making these easier to clean and longer lasting than conventional carpet. In the Durham Community School and at the high school we installed cubicles in the Choices rooms for focused study areas for students. In Pownal, we installed a new phone to take the place of the aging intercom system. It is more efficient than the older system and gives teachers the ability to contact the office in the event of an emergency and to receive calls when needed. At Morse Street we paved the bus road, making this access road wider for student safety along with changing the older clock system to a new "atomic clock" management system. We installed a small roof at the middle school at the teacher's room exit to stop rain and snow from entering the building. This project improves the building envelope keeping the interior of the school dry and preventing serious future issues.

This past summer we repaired walls at the Central Office that were leaking rain and ground water into the building. These repairs are the start of other improvements planned for this older building. Over the past year we have done countless smaller repairs to our buildings and with the implementation of our work order reporting system are able to keep our buildings in good working order. As we continue to work hard at saving energy and make building improvements we know that with the help of our dedicated staff we will continue to provide excellent schools throughout RSU5.





## You're Invited!

### To Dine and Discuss

Please join the Board of Directors for a hot meal and conversation about the *State of the Schools* report, the 2013-2014 Proposed Budget and the Freeport High School Renovation Project.

Conversations will take place from 5:30-6:30 p.m. on the following dates:

**Wednesday, April 10, 2013** – Pownal Elementary School

**Wednesday, April 24, 2013** – Durham Community School

**Wednesday, May 1, 2013** – Freeport High School

*We would like to hear your thoughts on these important topics.*



## Budget FY2014

The Board believes we must make every effort to help our communities understand the Board's budget priorities and to hear your feedback. The budget process will formally begin on **Tuesday, March 26, 2013** as outlined below.

### March 26, 2013

Board Meeting for Budget Presentations, 6:30-9:30 p.m. – FHS Cafe

- The Budget will be presented to the Board and public for the first time

### March 27, 2013

Board Meeting for Budget Review with Public Comment, 6:30-9:30 p.m. – FHS Cafe

- Opportunity for Town Leadership and public to comment

### April 10, 2013

Board Meeting for Budget Review with Public Comment, 6:30 p.m. – Pownal Cafe

- Opportunity for Town Leadership and public to comment

### April 24, 2013

Board Meeting for Budget Review with Public Comment, 6:30 p.m. – Durham Cafe

- Opportunity for Town Leadership and public to comment

### May 1, 2013

Board Meeting for Budget Review with Public Comment, 6:30 p.m. – FHS Cafe

- Final opportunity for the public to comment
- Board will deliberate on the budget

### May 8, 2013

Board Meeting for Final Budget Adoption, Regular Meeting, 6:30 p.m. – FHS Cafe

- Board will take final action on the budget

### May 22, 2013

Annual Budget Meeting for public budget approval, 6:30 p.m. – FHS Gym

- Durham, Freeport and Pownal residents will vote on the budget Article by Article in a large "Town Meeting" style gathering

### June 11, 2013

Budget Validation Referendum in each town

- Citizens from Durham, Freeport, and Pownal go to their voting locations to vote on the budget by secret ballot

The Board encourages our citizens' involvement in this process. Please join us for these important meetings to learn more about our budget and the quality educational program we are working to provide. After each meeting, we will post the budget handouts at [rsu5.org/Budget1314](http://rsu5.org/Budget1314) so please log on to get more information and to follow our progress. We welcome your participation!

