

OUUSD
Oxbow Unified Union School District



2023-24 Annual Report



Bradford | Newbury | *Vermont*

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Welcome from the Superintendent

I count myself lucky to have the opportunity to serve the students, staff, and community of Bradford Elementary School, Newbury Elementary School, River Bend Career and Technical Center, and Oxbow High School. Since the formation of the current iteration of schools, we have worked to both maximize efficiencies within the system and to build strong relationships amongst the various entities.

Our principals meet weekly to share their insights and concerns, and our leadership team meets monthly to collaborate on issues of common interest. The supervisory union supports all student services across the schools, with school-based or direct-support special education professionals including teachers, psychologists, speech and language specialists, and occupational therapists. These professionals are available to all students who need them, from Pre-K through high school and beyond. It is a partnership that continues to evolve and grow as the needs of the students in our communities continue to evolve and grow.

It is often said that “the only constant is change.” We are ever mindful of this as we seek to provide the very best support and service that we can for

the students, staff, and families we serve. We know full well that it is rarely, if ever, the same child with the same needs who walks through the door each time. We adapt so that we might serve, and we will continue to do so as this still-young union of schools continues to find its way.

Everyone who is part of our schools is proud to be a part of this evolving network of support while embracing the journey as each entity – be it a child, teacher, family, school, or community – seeks to grow and improve. None of us believes that perfection will be the end, but we do want to always strive to be better. We hope we never see “good” as “good enough.”

Our OUUSD family is amazing and our schools do a great many things for a great many people. Perhaps most importantly, they transform opportunities for growth and connection into real and applicable lessons in life.



Sincerely,

Randy Gawel

RANDY GAWEL, SUPERINTENDENT
ORANGE EAST SUPERVISORY UNION



“It is often said that ‘the only constant is change.’ We are ever mindful of this as we seek to provide the very best support and service that we can for the students, staff, and families we serve.”

School Board Update

The school year started with a board retreat in early August, where we established an agenda schedule to align with our strategic plan. In September, the board heard from all schools regarding communication and public relations. We focused on what was working and what needed improvement. In October, the administration reported to the board about student development. Testing data was highlighted, with the focus on learning loss during COVID, and gains being made to recover from those losses. Specifically, how the use of ESSER funds was essential in helping students make up some of the COVID loss. Some positions created during that time are in this budget because the need is still there.

“Education is experiencing a national shortage of educators at all levels of the system. We hope that the work we have done will help maintain and grow the great educational staff we have in our district.”

In November, we returned our focus to community engagement. All schools reported on events they have scheduled throughout the year and ways to increase community involvement. All the schools talked about how important it was to have publicity for various events, and work is being done to get more information out to the newspapers.

The information that was covered in our board meetings highlighted all of the great work being done in the schools. It also highlighted the areas that require more work. From December through April, our main focus was budget creation. In May, we will hear from the building principals regarding teacher/staff retention and support. We look forward to these presentations, to provide us with a better understanding of staffing in the district. All of the information in the presentations are available in the OUUSD 2023-2024 meetings folder by using the provided QR code.

The 2024-2025 budget has proven to be very challenging. We were fortunate to benefit from the new equalized pupil calculation. The updated calculation provides a more accurate cost/funding weight calculation for students in rural communities, students eligible for free and reduced lunch, and students that are English language learners. The new

calculation had a positive impact, but we had to take into account the 16% increase in health insurance, salary increases for teachers and staff, capital improvements needed in all buildings, and inflation.

The cost of health care insurance is out of the board's control. In 2023, we negotiated a three-year contract with teachers and staff. The focus of negotiations was on teacher/staff retention and attracting new teachers and staff to our schools. Education is experiencing a national shortage of educators at all levels of the system. We hope that the work we have done will help maintain and grow the great educational staff we have in our district. Our buildings all need work, and much of it is going to

need our attention sooner, rather than later. We have included some immediate-need projects to be funded through the school budgets, but the hard reality is there are too many large projects that need to be done. We are currently working on a bond that

will be presented to the community later this year.

The final hurdles in budget creation are the property yields that are set by the state and each town's Common Level of Appraisal (CLA). The drop in the CLA for both Bradford and Newbury has caused the most damage. The lower CLA means that the tax rate increases. Both towns are looking at tax increases in the double digits. The board leaned heavily on our finance committee to work through all the options, and the board met twice to review and adjust. We made the decision to apply \$200,000 in surplus to the budget and utilize \$100,000 of the capital improvement fund to reduce the tax burden.

The board recognizes the pressure this puts on taxpayers. We want you to know we've worked diligently to put together a responsible budget that supports students, teachers, staff and provides for building maintenance, all the while trying to minimize the tax impact. We ask that you come to the annual meeting and work with us to support the education our community's children deserve. Thank you.

OUUSD SCHOOL BOARD

Danielle Corti
Angela Colbeth
Carol Cottrell

Maegan Ballou
Tim Ross
Leanne Hatch



Oxbow Unified Union School District Board

NAME	POSITION	TOWN	TERM
Maegan Ballou	Member	Bradford	2021-2024
Angela Colbeth	Vice-Chair	Bradford	2023-2026
Danielle Corti	Chair	Newbury	2022-2025
Carol Cottrell	Member	Newbury	2021-2024
Timothy Ross	Member	Newbury	2023-2026
Leanne Hatch	Member	Bradford	2022-2025

Timeline of Board Activities for 2023-24

- September** — Gathered feedback from school staff on communication and public relations
- October** — Had discussions with school administrators on student development, post-Covid, and how ESSER funds supported progress
- November** — Focused on community engagement and events across the schools
- December — April** — Worked on FY 2025 budget, exploring options to meet district needs while minimizing expense to taxpayers
- May** — Will hear school presentations on retention of teachers and staff and explore ways to support this across the district



Scan the QR code with your mobile camera to view the minutes from school board meetings.



Scan the QR code with your mobile camera to view school board news and data on student achievement.

Bradford Elementary School

It's been a busy and exciting year here at BES! We continue to make good strides in academic subject areas, as well as in social/emotional learning and growth. Teaching weekly character strength lessons and using responsive classroom techniques, from how students are greeted each morning to how we promote positive behaviors, has impacted a positive uptick in both student behavior and learning. Our blend of creative and performing arts, technology and outdoor education expands the thinking of students and exposes them to practical ways their in-class learning can be applied. Older students have access at recess to open art studio, open library and intramural sports that foster socialization, creativity and imagination.



We've seen steady improvement in students' math scores and abilities. Since the 2022/23 school year, we've made good progress towards bringing all students up to grade level standards. All of our teachers have now been trained in our schoolwide math curriculum (Illustrative Mathematics) and all are taking, or have taken, a 2-year training with All Learner's Network, which includes on-site coaching and consultation in math instruction.

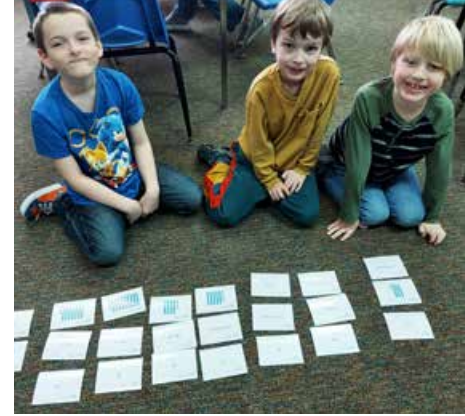
Our primary focus this year has been on reading and literacy. According to numerous studies over the past ten years, millions of American children get to fourth grade without learning to read proficiently. Students who fail to reach this critical milestone often falter in the later grades and risk falling further behind in other subjects. We've invested in literacy programs, professional development, and library services to assure our BES students have exposure to rich vocabulary and access to robust literacy instruction so that our students aren't part of the national statistic. In our school building this looks like a balanced literacy approach from Kindergarten to 6th grade that includes up to 90 minutes a day of spelling, phonics, reading, and writing. We're already seeing a significant increase in proficiency in English Language Arts since the 2022-23 school year.



Our educators continue to work with a coach on implementing writing through Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL is a framework designed to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all types of learners, based on scientific insights into how humans learn. Most of our teachers have now taken *The Writing Revolution: A Guide to Advancing Thinking Through Writing in All Subjects and Grades*, which helps students write with structure, clarity and coherence; boosts reading comprehension; improves organizational and study skills; enhances speaking abilities; develops analytical capabilities.

Mindful that the "free and reduced lunch" forms we collected this fall show more families living in, or slipping into, poverty, we continue to promote our school library. Students from marginalized populations, like poverty, require more resources to meet grade-level expectations than their non-marginalized peers. Investments in libraries and librarians means better language and literacy development, and that can help overcome the negative effect of poverty, especially in rural





“Students who need warm winter clothing or ‘backpack’ food over the weekend have been helped by our community businesses.”

locations. We offer vigorous library services and are planning a grant-funded library renovation over the summer to create more usable learning space and a location for community meetings.

Each child is a unique individual with strengths, challenges, and dreams. It’s our responsibility and privilege to ensure they have every opportunity to learn and grow while they’re with us. We partner with other schools, community organizations and local business to expose students to educational opportunities and support growth. By working in partnership, we create an environment that nurtures every student’s potential. I appreciate the support of local businesses that have given time, money and resources to our students. Students who need warm winter clothing or “backpack” food over the weekend have been helped by our community businesses. Many of these small businesses also support our performing arts events like RockFest. Not to mention Bradford Youth Sports and Bradford Recreation offer activities for our students on school grounds. Thank you! We couldn’t do what we do without you!

Your elementary school is a vibrant and happy community of learners who come to school each day ready to interact with teachers and friends and to learn about and explore the world around them. It is a pleasure to serve this community as its principal, and I am grateful for your ongoing support and participation in the education of our community’s children.



Marla Ianello

MARLA IANELLO, PRINCIPAL
BRADFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Bradford Elementary Enrollment Figures

GRADE LEVEL	2023-24 ENROLLMENT	2024-25 PROJECTED
Pre-K	41	41
Kindergarten	26	26
First	38	25
Second	30	38
Third	22	30
Fourth	28	22
Fifth	31	28
Sixth	27	31
Total	243	241

We’re seeing a positive uptick in our student learning and behaviors thanks to some new approaches in the classroom.



weekly character strength lessons



responsive classroom techniques such as our morning greeting



blending creativity, technology and outdoor learning

Newbury Elementary School



Newbury Elementary School continues to offer unique and innovative learning experiences that support a high quality education to our students. Over the last three years we have focused on making our school a place where everyone wants to work, learn and grow. As a school community Newbury is committed to creating learning and leadership opportunities for everyone – students and staff alike.



Solid instructional practices remain a top priority at NES. In these post-pandemic years, social emotional instruction continues to be a high priority for our students. Our social emotional learning team works in conjunction with our general

education and unified arts teachers to implement self regulation, self confidence and character-building education throughout the school day. In our second

year of the Positivity Project, we have seen our students begin to internalize and put into practice skills gained from this program. Having students with a strong sense of self and good character is important to their academic success.

In order to enhance math instruction, teachers participated in training on our math program, Illustrative Mathematics (IM). Learning how to best utilize the program has helped to engage students in meaningful math instruction. Having all teachers trained in IM and completing the All Learners Network has provided much needed consistency in math instruction. With consistency comes progress!

To address concerns around The Science of Reading, our staff has committed to implementing the Heggerty Bridge to Reading program which

“We are very thankful for the wonderful outdoor classroom which has inspired us to do many exciting things: create art, write and draw about nature by a campfire, and explore the natural world.”

addresses the importance of phonics and phonemic awareness instruction. In addition, nine staff members participated in a graduate level course on The Science of Reading for the primary grades. By participating in this coursework, teachers adjusted their practices to address how the brain best receives information when a child learns how to read. Having solid, research-based knowledge of how to teach children to read is key to improving their success as readers.

Last year, we implemented a daily 30-minute data-driven flex time to address what each student needs, whether that be intervention or enrichment. We are seeing positive results in both math and literacy due to the implementation of this programming, well planned instruction and consistent staffing. Having a well-trained, consistent staff has enabled us to continue many important educational initiatives this year.

Understanding the importance of reengaging all members of our community, Newbury has made an effort to invite community members into the school for special events. It was so nice to welcome over one hundred guests to our Thanksgiving meal. Starting in the fall we began hosting monthly Community Coffees, where we discuss topics like our continuous improvement plan, budget issues or facilities. We have found these gatherings to be very beneficial in helping community members to understand the work that we do to support students' academic and social emotional development. We look forward to hosting more of these gatherings in the future.

We understand that not all learning happens inside the building. We continue to seek out alternative learning experiences to those found in the traditional classroom setting. We are very thankful for the wonderful outdoor classroom which has inspired us to do many exciting things: create art, write and draw about nature by a campfire, and explore the natural world. By taking learning outdoors, those that struggle succeed.

Newbury Elementary Enrollment Figures

GRADE LEVEL	2023-24 ENROLLMENT	2024-25 PROJECTED
Pre-K	14	16
Kindergarten	17	12
First	9	17
Second	12	9
Third	6	12
Fourth	17	6
Fifth	13	17
Sixth	14	13
Total	102	102

Over the last year, we as a staff have taken it upon ourselves to become a more collaborative and cohesive team. By learning how we each communicate, make decisions, give and receive feedback and see the outside world, we have grown to understand how we can best support each other and our students. We wish to take what we have learned and use it to make learning experiences meaningful, engaging and informative for everyone.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our staff. Being an educator in the 21st century is not easy. Collectively, our staff has over 254 years of experience in education. A third of our staff have been in education for at least 20 years! We are excited to teach, coach, support and grow with the children of Newbury into the next year and beyond.



Loretta Cruz

LORETTA CRUZ, PRINCIPAL
NEWBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Oxbow High School

Greetings, Oxbow community! It is our pleasure to report on the past year at Oxbow Union and our shared vision for moving forward. We have focused our efforts this year on building more opportunities for student-centered learning to increase a sense of relevance, ownership, and engagement. Oxbow students range in age from roughly 12 years old in 7th grade to 18 in 12th – a span that includes a lot of maturity and growing world-awareness! Our grade-level core teams meet daily to support students in their development as independent scholars, while our departmental teams meet bi-weekly to learn from each other and engage in professional development, planning a cohesive subject-area curriculum.

The pandemic, as destructive and interruptive as it was, taught us many lessons. When students feel a sense of belonging to their school and community, their engagement in learning and social-emotional wellness significantly increases. We have implemented multiple social groups, facilitated by professionals within our building. We shifted our schedule to allow time during the school day for clubs to meet, and we've worked to strengthen the relationship with surrounding agencies to ensure we meet our students' needs. Combined with our many athletic teams, extra-curricular activities, and student support services, we make sure that each of our students finds their place here, and that each gets the attention and support they need to succeed.

The majority of Oxbow students perform near, at, or above the national median in testing for English and Math, and this year, we have designed and implemented a systemic educational support process to continue to improve results.


The heart of student-centered learning is the student portfolio, a student-curated collection of assignments, projects, and reflections on self, school

work, and experiences beyond school that will travel with them as they progress toward graduation. What skills and interests bring them a sense of satisfaction and achievement? What academic activities resonate best or support their personal goals? The portfolio is dynamic and helps students make connections between what they are learning and what they want to do in life. We're pleased to announce that Oxbow has been selected as VSAC's Aspirations program partner to build our school's capacity to graduate all students with a plan for their future education and career.

There is a lot more to graduating than just having enough credits. All of our juniors and seniors participate in planning for and getting a jumpstart on their future. A great majority of our students take advantage of flexible pathways to graduation, including early college (6 students), dual enrollment (34 students took 83 courses!), online learning and independent study, and work-based learning placements. Social Seminar students participate in a six-week career exploration and research unit. All complete job shadows and write a formal research paper on a career of their choice.

Student-centered learning in earlier grades comes in the form of flexibility in class assignments and electives such as art, music, River Bend, foreign language, and physical education. Oxbow made great strides this year in implementing the ESSER-funded STREAM lab, vastly broadening options to build technical skills and implement project-based learning. Our general education classes have been booking the classroom kitchen like crazy – food is a great way to consider other cultures, apply math, and learn about nutrition!

Oxbow prepares students for the greater world by inviting the community in! We've enlisted many guest speakers from local farmers to authors who have sailed the world. Of course, one great way we interact with the community is through our robust athletics and



“When students feel a sense of belonging to their school and community, their engagement in learning and social-emotional wellness significantly increases.”



activities programs. Band and chorus performed Winter and Spring concerts, and our theater department performed two profoundly well-attended shows, including matinees for the elementary schools, and the Oxbow PTO stepped in to support ticket and bake sales for evening events. By the end of this year, nearly three-fifths of our students will have participated in an extra-curricular activities. The Oxbow community fills our bleachers and auditorium to see student athletes and performers in action! We hope to see many of you at our Celebration of Learning on April 18.

We also get students out into the world! NHS raised roughly \$8,000 through participation in the CHaD annual Hero Race, and they routinely assist Bradford Parks and Rec. They also hosted Oxbow's Evening of Elegance, raising \$2,000 for humanitarian efforts in Gaza. For our annual Community Day, the entire school will pitch in around town: on trails, in eldercare facilities, and in our public buildings. Oxbow musicians attended four festivals this past year and brought joy to senior citizens via a traveling chorus. Oxbow sportsmanship was well represented across the state. Our student athletes attended 145 away games and events, a feat of transportation organization by A.D. Heidi Wright. Of course, there were field trips: our students conducted river health studies, hiked many mountains, and visited businesses as well as historic and government institutions. We'll be getting out and about for a third J-term this June. For a valley school, Oxbow has a great relationship with our hilltops!

Student ownership is best represented by our active student council, which planned Homecoming, Winter Carnival, multiple spirit weeks, and many events that contribute to Oxbow's quality of life.

On the bricks and mortar front, there's no way to get around it: the building that shelters Oxbow and River Bend is 50-years-old, as are many of its physical systems. We applied for and received grants totaling over \$800,000 to upgrade the HVAC system for

Oxbow H.S. Enrollment Figures

GRADE LEVEL	2022-23 ENROLLMENT	2023-24 ENROLLMENT
Seventh	47	40
Eighth	65	52
Ninth	88	90
Tenth	67	79
Eleventh	52	60
Twelfth	43	46
Total	366	368

much better efficiency, at no cost to our taxpayers. The majority of this work will take place this summer. A combination of grant and local funds supported upgrades to our food service, electrical, lighting, and security systems, and we managed a lot of asbestos mitigation with the use of ESSER funds. Alas, after healthcare benefits and personnel, one of the largest impacts on the coming year's budget is to keep our building functioning in its primary goal as a place of learning. In order to take advantage of the HVAC grant, we need to complete significant electrical work, and several big ticket items are simply too far past due to defer. Oxbow and River Bend will be so grateful.

In closing, we are grateful for the support we receive from so many community members: volunteers, local businesses, and professionals. It is a privilege to serve as administrators of your school and to interact with your children on a daily basis.



Ken Cadow
KEN CADOW
CO-PRINCIPAL



Ashley Youngheim
ASHLEY YOUNGHEIM
CO-PRINCIPAL



Sarah Wellman
SARAH WELLMAN
SOCIAL EMOTIONAL
LEARNING COORDINATOR

River Bend Career and Technical Center



Hello from River Bend! As I write this we are cruising through the school year and some great stuff has been happening! River Bend's enrollment is up, we have a low staff turnover rate, and students are engaging in more college courses. Although River Bend's bottom line on the budget seems to have increased more than normal, we are receiving more funding outside of local funding sources, which means the local tax rate will be affected to a much lesser degree.

When I first started working here almost 11 years ago, River Bend was happy to get 100 applicants during recruitment. This year, we have already seen 145 applications! Woo Hoo! About half of River Bend's Programs will be oversubscribed. There are many reasons for this turn around and it all starts with good people. First off, River Bend's School Counseling Coordinator, Katherine Chobanian, does a great job organizing visits with the other school counselors in our region. Bob Jones has done an exceptional job

spearheading the Outreach and Marketing Team. Local businesses and the chamber have been very supportive in building partnerships and bridging school to work initiatives. Parents and the greater community have sent good vibes and words of support. Other partners in the trenches with us — Blue Mountain Union, Woodsville High School, Oxbow High School, Rivendell Academy, Thetford Academy, the Vermont A.O.E. and the OESU Central office — act as partners always striving to do what's best for students. Lastly, River Bend has an amazing staff!

Statistically, River Bend has the lowest staff turnover rate in the district. We're hoping to keep the turnover rate low as that bodes well for student

Some points of pride at River Bend Career and Technical Center this year



We've seen nearly a 50% increase in student applications over the last 10 years



Teacher surveys indicate our staff feel that River Bend is a family-friendly environment



River Bend has the lowest staff turnover rate in the district



“Not only has the number of students enrolled increased, but the caliber of students enrolling with higher academics has also increased.

In four of our programs, students have the option of enrolling in Dual Enrollment and receiving their first semester of college for free!”

learning and the proof is River Bend’s formalized test scores are increasing. Teacher surveys have indicated that the staff feels like River Bend is a family friendly school work environment. Really folks, if education can not be a family friendly work environment, where can you go? There are those of us that believe the biggest hurdle we face in education is students coming from stressed out homes where parents and caregivers do not work in family-friendly environments. Schools should be setting an example for these businesses. Folks should not have to choose between their families and their jobs.

Not only has the number of students enrolled increased, but the caliber of students enrolling with higher academics has also increased. In four of River Bend’s programs — Cyber Security, 21st Century Media and Design, Teacher Education and Health Science — students have the option of enrolling in Dual Enrollment and receiving their first semester of college for free! Talk about a money saver! The Cosmetology Program has been redesigned and approved by the state to act as a college-level cosmetology school, and students can go straight from the program and sit for their state exam. If they pass, they can go right to employment! This saves students tens of thousands of dollars. Additionally, students that don’t currently have Dual Enrollment in their program have access to CTE exclusive online Dual Enrollment courses at Community College of Vermont - also free! River Bend is currently looking to add more Dual Enrollment opportunities for our students.

River Bend’s entire staff FTE count is being cut by a .5 FTE for next year. The bottom line of River Bend’s budget shows an increase of \$229,606.07.

This is almost all due to staff raises and increases in benefits costs. However, the good news is that we are receiving more help from state funding, and it looks like this extra state funding will continue, so the local tuition is only going up \$79,679.54 (or 3%). I fully support my staff getting a good raise as they are doing a great job! River Bend also needs to stay somewhat competitive as both Hartford Technical Center and St. Johnsbury Academy have much higher pay scales than River Bend. I’m hoping with these pay increases and friendly work environment, the next time a position opens up at those tech centers, we do not lose people (something that has happened in the past).

Summer Tech Camp is on the schedule, and I look forward to all the area middle schools coming to River Bend for a week this summer!



Brian Emerson

BRIAN EMERSON, DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL
RIVER BEND CAREER & TECHNICAL CENTER

River Bend Enrollment Figures

GRADE LEVEL	2022-23 ENROLLMENT	2023-24 ENROLLMENT
Eleventh	100	113
Twelfth	75	79
Total	175	192

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Report

by **Nicole Bell**, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

I am pleased to provide this update on the district's many efforts to enhance our curriculum, instruction and professional development. With the English language arts and mathematics curricula now board approved, our next focus is science. Our instructional coach has participated in the NGSX Science Training through VT Rural Education Collaborative to support teachers with classroom science instruction.

Across the district we are implementing instruction aligned with our literacy curriculum, which focuses on foundational skills at the elementary school level. Elementary schools are focused on reading instruction and are implementing Heggerty Bridge to Reading. Many teachers have participated in book studies and courses based on *Shifting the Balance*, *Six Ways to Bring the Science of Reading to the Balanced Literacy Classroom*. Others have read the sequel about upper elementary classroom levels. This book has inspired many conversations about reading instruction and shifts in practice that are proving to be effective.

We continued our contract with an educational consultant specializing in Universal Design for reading and writing. She helps teachers plan lessons that increase engagement and meet the needs of all learners. We also continued our contract with All Learner's Network for support in math instruction, and we partnered with Great Schools Partnership to give teachers coaching and support for implementing student-led portfolios and aligning this work to graduation proficiencies.

Assessing Our Students' Progress

Vermont Comprehensive Assessment Program is the new state assessment. Now that we're in our second year, implementation is going much more smoothly. Each school has designated school assessment coordinators, and a district coordinator provides additional support with the portal, regulations, and troubleshooting. Both Newbury and Oxbow were selected for NAEP testing this year. NAEP testing occurs at the fourth and eighth grade levels for math and reading. NAEP stands for National Assessment of Educational Progress and has been referred to as the Nation's Report Card.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act

This act serves students experiencing transitional housing related to specific life situations. Services are coordinated at the supervisory union level and each school has a designated point of contact for homeless education. Currently there are 14 students within OUUSD schools experiencing transitional housing.

Instructional Coaching and Mentoring

Our instructional coach has been working with teachers to support instruction in the classroom as well as through our OESU mentoring program. To date, 41 OUUSD teachers have been supported through the OESU instructional coaching model. We will enhance our mentoring program with training through the VT-NEA.



Strategic Use of the American Rescue Plan ESSER Funds

- Bradford Elementary hired additional interventionists to support student learning. They are also remodeling their library to improve its functionality, and purchased new educational materials, supplies and program kits with the funds.
- Newbury Elementary has accomplished a range of facilities projects including new windows, a new boiler, and upgrades to the HVAC system and controls. Newbury also built an outdoor classroom and purchased educational materials and professional development and training for teachers.
- Oxbow High School used funds to create and a STEM lab with high quality laser cutters and printers. Other purchases include new lobby furniture to create spaces for students to work and interact, a new scissor lift, and educational materials and professional development and training for teachers.
- All three schools have used their funds for long-term substitutes and support staff in their buildings.
- Under Consolidated Federal Programs, all three schools use their title funds to pay salaries for academic interventionists and behavioral support staff.

Student Services Report

by Alison Kidder, OESU Director of Student Services

Orange East Supervisory Union and the Oxbow Unified Union School District Student Services Team provides specialized instruction and related services/therapies to students with disabilities who are eligible for an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

In addition to providing a range of services, we also collaborate with community agencies to support positive outcomes for students and families, including but not limited to: Upper Valley Services, Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Clara Martin Center, Little Rivers Behavioral Health, Vermont I-Team, Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and several other important contracted specialists. In addition, OESU/OUUSD contracts with several Vermont Agency of Education approved independent schools to meet the IEP placement needs of students who require a higher level of therapeutic educational services and support.

We strive to improve and broaden our educational systems to better meet the needs of the students and families of Bradford, Newbury, and choice towns. Each year the Agency of Education mails a parent-

engagement survey to families with children on an IEP as of Dec. 1. It comes out in early June and we encourage you to provide your feedback on how we engage you in the IEP development process.

Lastly, the OESU Student Services Administrative team will be transitioning its leadership late Spring 2024. Our current director, Alison Kidder, will be moving on to new endeavors while Sabrina Brown will assume the directorship July 1, 2024. Sabrina joins the OESU team with many years of experience and recently earned her Doctorate in Education from Plymouth State University. Welcome, Sabrina!

In closing, we would like to recognize the phenomenal staff at our schools. Every day they strive to provide the best instruction and support to our students. We are fortunate to work with skilled administrators, highly trained teachers, and support staff who strive to model civic engagement and lifelong learning at the highest levels.

Services Provided Through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

- ✓ Occupational Therapy
- ✓ Physical Therapy
- ✓ Speech-Language Therapy
- ✓ Counseling
- ✓ Specialized Transportation
- ✓ Specialized instruction in reading, math, writing, social skills, executive functioning, behavior, and life skills

Current Staffing and Student Numbers for 2023-24



Students with IEPs

62	27	84
BES	NES	OHS



Support Staff Serving IEP Support Needs

10	6	11
BES	NES	OHS



Special Educators

4	2	6
BES	NES	OHS

Social Emotional Learning Report

by Cate Beaton, Director of Social-Emotional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) refers to how we learn and apply the tools necessary to understand and manage emotions, achieve positive goals, show empathy for others, maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. It is integrated into almost everything we do, from learning at school to athletic activities to out-of-school activities that include jobs for our young adults. As a community, we hold the responsibility to promote students' overall well-being, academic success, and positive social behavior. It involves collaboration between schools, families, and communities to support the healthy development of children and adolescents.

Our rural nature presents unique opportunities and challenges. In thinking of how to assess and teach SEL there are several factors to consider: (1) the availability of resources to meet the needs identified through screening, (2) the capacity and felt competence of our educators, (3) the culture and the values of the communities we serve, and (4) the need for evidence-based approaches to give our kids the very best.

Our rural communities have limited access to mental health support, and this has only grown in need since the COVID-19 pandemic. This requires us to think about prevention more than treatment in meeting the needs of our youth and calls upon us to think about how we, as a community, support the success of youth. Our approach at OESU is grounded in the growing body of research around resilience theory and positive psychology.

Resiliency theory refers to the ability to adapt successfully from adversity. Resilience helps us to

recover from the difficulties we have experienced. It argues that it is not the nature of adversity but how we deal with it that matters most. The American Psychological Association identifies several factors that contribute to how well people adapt to adversities: (1) how individuals view and engage with the world, (2) the availability and quality of social resources, and (3) specific coping strategies. These are things we can focus on, in collaboration with others, to help our youth achieve their fullest potential.

Positive psychology is the scientific study of the strengths that enable us to thrive; it encourages mental health awareness through the pursuit of well-being, happiness, mindfulness, forgiveness, and an overall stronger psyche. Seligman's research through the UPenn Positive Psychology Center found that using Positive Psychology with youth can help prevent depression and anxiety by focusing on three pillars. First, positive experiences allow us to understand positive emotions and our level of contentment with the past, how happy we are in the present, and our hopes for the future. Second, positive individual traits focus on understanding our character strengths, such as compassion, self-control, and capacity for love. Third, positive institutions focus on building connections to give our youth more chances to experience their strengths and cultivate resilience.

Our current focus is strengthening the connections between positive institutions to build opportunities for students to have positive experiences. These opportunities directly support our youth in developing the resilience needed to meet adversity and make meaning of those experiences from a place of strength.

Initiatives to Build Opportunities for Positive Student Experiences

- Partnership with Clara Martin Center and Little Rivers Health Care to provide access to community-based mental and behavioral health services.
- Partnership with 302 Cares to support community programming for families
- Addition of an Engagement Specialist to coordinate and collaborate with area agencies.
- Implementation of Families and Schools Together programming
- Collaboration on the implementation of mental health first aid (adult, youth, and teen to teen).



Facilities Report

by Bob Ratel, OESU Director of Facilities

In 2023, the Vermont Agency of Education completed the first statewide facilities assessment for all of Vermont’s public school buildings. I accompanied the field representatives over the course of several months doing walk-thrus of all the buildings in the district, inside and out. From physical campuses to HVAC, plumbing and electrical infrastructures to playing fields, nothing was overlooked during the inspections. This assessment marks the beginning of a statewide program to support the management and improvement of all school facilities. By design, the assessment was intended to be the genesis of a long-term effort to address deficiencies in school buildings due to age and the Vermont General Assembly suspending state aid for school construction projects in 2007. The passing of Act 72 in 2021 was merely the start of the effort to realistically approach long-deferred maintenance and construction issues in Vermont schools.

From these assessments a Facility Condition Index (FCI) was established, with a law of averages benchmark of 50 percent expected. (Higher percentage numbers equals a greater need for replacements or upgrades). Statewide, an FCI of 71.4 percent was determined. The FCI for the OUUSD schools is 67.9 percent; better than the state average, but still leaving much to be done.

In January 2025, the School Construction Aid Task Force will present a daunting report to the Vermont Legislature showcasing the need for a plan to deal with \$6 billion in state construction needs over the next 10–20 year timeframe (or \$300 million a year for 20 years). Of that, \$228 million is deemed necessary for immediate health and safety needs. State assistance for these school construction costs are undoubtedly several years away at best. Repurposing existing buildings and consolidating schools toward a “newer and fewer” model is being discussed and will be part of the plan at the state level. In a February 2024 meeting, the taskforce recognized that many districts do not have the resources, either technical or financial,

“Nationwide, 45 percent of all public schools were built between 1950-1969. The median age of a public school in the U.S. is 61 years old. Vermont’s public schools are the second oldest in the nation.”

to engage in high-level master planning activities that include community stakeholders. Because the taskforce recommends that districts only be eligible for funding if they have completed a district-wide master planning exercise, their recommendation is for the Legislature to create a planning grant program, to last five years, so that districts can complete a master planning process and become eligible for future funding

As a reference, nationwide, 45 percent of all public schools were built between 1950–1969. The median age of a public school in the U.S. is 61 years old. Vermont’s public schools are the second oldest in the nation. With that in mind, I would offer that the progress that has been made in the OUUSD schools thanks to the proper allocation of ESSER funding has been impressive, and ongoing. New pellet boiler system and controls at Newbury, library renovation and expansion at Bradford, and ambitious indoor air quality HVAC upgrades at Oxbow are either complete or well on the way to being realized.

One of the obstacles in executing these projects has been vetting qualified contractors who have the capacity to do the work and will comply with the regulations pertaining to ESSER funding. We appreciate the principals and building operation supervisors for their diligence and patience as we worked through the painfully slow process of securing funding, procuring bids, recruiting contractors and moving forward with project approval. Special thanks to Nicole Bell, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment and John Barone, Assistant Superintendent, who oversee the Grants Management System and keep us in compliance with the many rules and regulations tied to this funding. Their assistance has been invaluable.

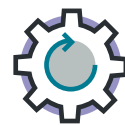
Recent Facilities Improvements Using American Rescue Plan ESSER Funds



New pellet boiler system and controls at Newbury



Library renovation and expansion at Bradford



Ambitious indoor air quality HVAC upgrades at Oxbow

OUUSD Budget FY 2025

Message from the Finance Committee

The OUUSD Finance Committee has met regularly throughout the year to review the district's finances and look ahead to the potential challenges of this budget season. Given what we've learned over the last few months, the state has created a funding challenge for schools that is unprecedented in recent memory, as evidenced by the difficulty many districts had with passing their budgets. There are things we can control locally with regard to school budgets and many things we can't; unfortunately, the things we can't control disproportionately impact our local budgets. And while it's clear we've made progress over the past year, there are issues and challenges that have carried over, along with new ones that, like with many boards across the state, caused some serious head-scratching and deliberation prior to bringing forth this budget.

It is a "perfect storm" of budget hits due to contractual staff raises, a 16.4% increase in health insurance costs from the statewide (not local) bargaining, inflationary cost increases, and the complications of housing market prices clashing with assessed property values (resulting in unfavorable Common Level of Appraisal — CLA — ratios). All of this contributed to thoughtfully focused, but sometimes difficult conversations. Property reappraisals are now scheduled for Bradford and Newbury, but the new numbers won't be available for at least several years, so the CLA issues will persist.

Adding to the funding issues is the conclusion of the ESSER (Elementary and Secondary Education Relief) funds that were provided by the federal government to support schools recovering from the pandemic. This funding has been well-used for several positions that support students' added social/emotional needs, educational materials, special programs, coaching/remedial support, professional development, and building upgrades related to HVAC and educational spaces. But with this funding ending in the 2024-2025 school year, some of the supports that were put into place continue to be of critical need in our schools and will need to be absorbed into the local budgets. Understanding that not all the items funded through these grants can continue, some previously grant-funded costs have been eliminated.

Furthermore, the funding for special education changed two years ago from a reimbursement model

– districts receiving funds directly based upon special education costs – to a block grant model by which a set amount is allocated to schools for special education. This approach saves the state millions of dollars but unfortunately increases the costs to local districts at a time when the factors listed earlier (healthcare and salary increases, ESSER grant funding disappearing, inflation impacting the costs of all goods and services) are all increasing the cost of educating our most educationally complex student population.

In addition, there have been fairly comprehensive reports issued on the condition of the district's buildings and their immediate, mid- and long-term needs. To address some of these needs, the board will be utilizing \$100,000 of the Capital Improvement Fund. This is, though, just a small part of the needs relating to our aging buildings. In fact, if all of the building needs were to be taken into account, there is an estimated \$5.5 million pricetag (2023 dollars) for improvements and upgrades. We know this is a substantial amount and that such an amount would likely require a bond-proposal to come before the voters in the near future. It should also be noted that these costs will not go down over time, and that the needs of aging facilities will not lessen with time. To use an old adage, "kicking the can down the road" is not a wise decision.

Finally, with the costs of staffing and maintaining the same number of school buildings for a local and statewide student population that has been steadily shrinking for decades — and no likely increase in student populations coming anytime soon— this committee strongly recommends that the OUUSD school board form a subcommittee to research, assess, and bring forth to the community potential educational restructuring plans to help address the per-pupil costs of the district in the future.

As always, our goal is to provide the best learning environment we can in our schools while being fiscally responsible stewards of the community investment in education. We are deeply grateful for your ongoing support in this increasingly challenging, but most certainly worthwhile, endeavor.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

<i>Marvin Harrison</i>	<i>Danielle Corti</i>
<i>Marcey Carver</i>	<i>Tim Ross</i>
<i>Shawn Gonyaw</i>	<i>Kaitlin Sampson Murphy</i>

OUUSD Annual Meeting Warning

WARNING
OXBOW UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANNUAL MEETING
May 6, 2024

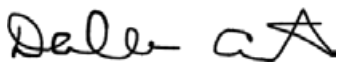
The legal voters of the Oxbow Unified Union School District (the "District"), comprising the legal voters, respectively, of the Towns of Bradford and Newbury, are hereby NOTIFIED AND WARNED to meet at the Oxbow High School in Bradford, VT on 6th day of May, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. to conduct the following business:

- ARTICLE 1: To elect a Moderator for a term of one (1) year.
- ARTICLE 2: To elect a Clerk for a term of one (1) year.
- ARTICLE 3: To elect a Treasurer for a term of one (1) year.
- ARTICLE 4: To hear and act upon the reports of the officers of said District for the past year.
- ARTICLE 5: To elect two school directors of said District (one (1) to represent the Town of Bradford for a three-year term to expire 2027 and one (1) to represent the Town of Newbury for a three-year term to expire 2027).
- ARTICLE 6: Shall the voters of the Oxbow Unified Union School District authorize the school board to expend twenty million, nine hundred thirty-six thousand, thirty-eight dollars (\$20,936,038), which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year?
- ARTICLE 7: Shall the voters authorize the School Board to borrow money in anticipation of tax receipts for the 2024-2025 school year?
- ARTICLE 8: To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

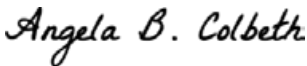
The legal voters of the Oxbow Unified Union School District are further notified that voter qualification and registration relative to said Annual Meeting shall be as provided in Section 706u of Title 16 and Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Prior to the annual meeting on May 6, 2024, the public information hearing will be held from 5:30pm-6:30pm.

Dated at Bradford in the County of Orange and State of Vermont this ___ 1 day of April, 2024.



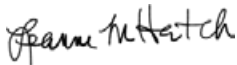
Danielle Corti



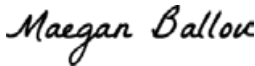
Angela Colbeth



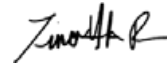
Carol Cottrell



Leanne Hatch

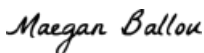


Maegan Ballou



Timothy Ross

Recorded on this date prior to posting, _____, April, 1 2024.



Clerk

OUUSD Proposed Budget: FY2025

Program	Bradford	Newbury	Oxbow	River Bend	OUUSD	Total FY 2025	Total FY 2024	FY 2025 \$ increase (decrease)	FY 2025 % increase (decrease)
Pre-K	\$149,150	\$62,144	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$211,294	\$228,140	(\$16,846)	(7.38%)
EEE	\$125,510	\$46,039	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$171,549	\$120,374	\$51,175	42.51%
Direct Instruction	\$2,291,302	\$1,262,612	\$2,986,526	\$0	\$0	\$6,540,440	\$5,505,966	\$1,034,474	18.79%
Vocational Ed	\$0	\$0	\$637,000	\$1,540,830	\$0	\$2,177,830	\$1,820,400	\$357,430	19.63%
Special Ed	\$766,665	\$383,961	\$825,074	\$0	\$0	\$1,975,701	\$1,839,380	\$136,320	7.41%
Other Instruction Programs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$92,686	\$0	\$92,686	\$88,813	\$3,873	4.36%
Student Activities	\$22,571	\$8,639	\$361,881	\$5,200	\$0	\$398,291	\$314,821	\$83,470	26.51%
Guidance & Social Emotional	\$359,979	\$141,355	\$392,512	\$127,506	\$0	\$1,021,352	\$1,015,208	\$6,144	0.61%
Curriculum	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$55,341	\$0	\$55,341	\$49,559	\$5,782	11.67%
Health	\$124,226	\$93,376	\$106,774	\$0	\$0	\$324,376	\$267,131	\$57,244	21.43%
Prof Development	\$38,350	\$32,674	\$35,950	\$30,000	\$0	\$136,974	\$117,500	\$19,474	16.57%
Library	\$115,400	\$6,600	\$155,998	\$0	\$0	\$277,997	\$246,817	\$31,181	12.63%
School Board and Treasurer	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$74,636	\$74,636	\$81,436	(\$6,800)	(8.35%)
OESU	\$272,189	\$109,547	\$391,390	\$89,180	\$0	\$862,306	\$477,905	\$384,401	80.43%
Principal	\$324,453	\$266,745	\$484,672	\$373,496	\$0	\$1,449,365	\$1,432,748	\$16,617	1.16%
Technology Services	\$147,626	\$97,139	\$233,559	\$68,065	\$0	\$546,388	\$494,932	\$51,456	10.40%
Facilities	\$466,474	\$453,389	\$1,538,091	\$315,000	\$0	\$2,772,954	\$2,416,766	\$356,188	14.74%
Transportation	\$107,927	\$82,951	\$358,418	\$7,000	\$0	\$556,296	\$533,696	\$22,600	4.23%
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$203,300	\$203,300	\$218,500	(\$15,200)	(6.96%)
Fund Transfers-GenFund Deficit	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,810	(\$9,810)	(100.00%)
Subtotal: General Fund	\$5,311,822	\$3,047,170	\$8,507,844	\$2,704,304	\$277,936	\$19,849,076	\$17,279,903	\$2,569,173	14.87%
Medicaid & CFP/Other Grants	\$520,000	\$135,000	\$310,000	\$121,962	\$0	\$1,086,962	\$1,116,412	(\$29,450)	(2.64%)
Budget Expense Total	\$5,831,822	\$3,182,170	\$8,817,844	\$2,826,266	\$277,936	\$20,936,038	\$18,396,315	\$2,539,723	13.81%
LESS OTHER REVENUES									
Tuition	\$0	\$0	\$705,000	\$2,494,632	\$0	\$3,199,632	\$2,861,275	\$338,357	11.83%
Transportation	\$30,000	\$50,000	\$135,000	\$0	\$0	\$215,000	\$235,000	(\$20,000)	(8.51%)
Surplus: General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	100.00%
Other	\$13,000	\$0	\$315,000	\$104,423	\$0	\$432,423	\$415,260	\$17,163	4.13%
Grants & Medicaid	\$520,000	\$135,000	\$310,000	\$227,211	\$0	\$1,192,211	\$1,282,166	(\$89,955)	(7.02%)
Budget Revenue Totals	\$563,000	\$185,000	\$1,465,000	\$2,826,266	\$0	\$5,239,266	\$4,893,701	\$345,565	7.06%
Estimated State Ed Spending FY2025	\$5,268,822	\$2,997,170	\$7,352,844	\$0	\$277,936	\$15,696,772	\$13,502,614	\$2,194,158	16.25%

OUUSD Tax Worksheet: FY2025

	Adopted Budget 2023-2024	Proposed Budget 2024-2025		
Estimated Education Spending				
			\$ Increase	% Increase
School District Budgets	\$18,396,315	\$20,936,038	\$2,539,723	13.81%
LESS ANTICIPATED RECEIPTS (REVENUE)			Revenue Incr.	Percent Incr.
	\$4,793,701	\$5,039,266	\$145,565	3.04%
Estimated Surplus	\$100,000	\$200,000	EdSpending Incr.	Percent Incr.
Total Estimated Education Spending	\$13,502,614	\$15,696,772	\$2,194,158	16.25%
Tax Rate Estimates				
			EqPupil Incr.	Percent Incr.
Equalized Pupils Per Agency of Education	655.27	1,215.42	\$560	85.48%
Estimated Education Spending per Equalized Pupil	\$20,606	\$12,915	(\$7,691)	(37.33%)
<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; margin-left: 10px;"> <p>Excess Spending Calculation: Less net eligible construction costs per equalized pupil Less share of special ed costs excess of \$50,000 two years prior New teacher retirement adjustment</p> </div>				
Net Education Spending per Equalized Pupil for Excess	\$20,606	\$12,915		
Excess Spending Threshold	\$22,204	\$23,193		
Est. Excess Spending Penalty Above Threshold	\$0.00	\$0.00		
Total Estimated Education Spending Per Equalized Pupil	\$20,606	\$12,915		
Property Yield (was: State BASE Education Amount)				
Property Yield (was: State BASE Education Amount)	\$15,479	\$9,785		
Adjustment for Spending above State BASE	133.123%	131.985%		
State Base Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.00	\$1.00		
			FY2024 Rates Per Town	
Estimated Total Homestead Base Tax Rate, Equalized	\$1.3312	\$1.3198	Bradford	Newbury
CLA - Estimate Common Level of Appraisal FY21 Budget			78.65%	88.63%
Estimated Total Homestead Base Tax Rate, Equalized & CLA			\$1.6926	\$1.5020
			FY2025 Rates Per Town	
		CLA	69.72%	78.98%
		Tax Rate	\$1.8931	\$1.6711

Scan the QR code with your mobile camera to view an explanation of state tax estimate calculations.

Scan the QR code with your mobile camera to view detailed FY 2025 budget information.

OUUSD Three Prior Years Comparison

FORMAT AS PROVIDED BY AOE

PRELIMINARY: ESTIMATES ONLY

District: Oxbow UUSD		U091			Property dollar equivalent yield	Homestead tax rate per \$9,785 of spending per pupil
SU: Orange East		Orange County			9,785	1.00
					←--See bottom note	
					9,946	Income dollar equivalent yield per 2.0% of household income
Expenditures		FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	
1.	Adopted or warned union district budget (including special programs and full technical center expenditures)	\$17,182,860	\$17,561,635	\$18,396,315	\$20,936,038	
2.	plus Sum of separately warned articles passed at union district meeting	-	-	-	-	
3.	Adopted or warned union district budget plus articles	\$17,182,860	\$17,561,635	\$18,396,315	\$20,936,038	
4.	plus Obligation to a Regional Technical Center School District if any	-	-	-	-	
5.	plus Prior year deficit repayment of deficit	-	-	-	-	
6.	Total Union Expenditures	\$17,182,860	\$17,561,635	\$18,396,315	\$20,936,038	
7.	S.U. assessment (included in union budget) - informational data	-	-	-	-	
8.	Prior year deficit reduction (if included in union expenditure budget) - informational data	-	-	-	-	
Revenues						
9.	Union revenues (categorical grants, donations, tuitions, surplus, federal, etc.)	\$4,793,941	\$4,855,151	\$4,893,701	\$5,239,266	
10.	Total offsetting union revenues	\$4,793,941	\$4,855,151	\$4,893,701	\$5,239,266	
11.	Education Spending	\$12,388,919	\$12,706,484	\$13,502,614	\$15,696,772	
12.	Oxbow UUSD pupils	686.80	672.99	655.27	1,215.42	
13.	Education Spending per Pupil	\$18,038.61	\$18,880.64	\$20,606.18	\$12,914.69	
14.	minus Less net eligible construction costs (or P&I) per pupil	-	-	-	-	
15.	minus Less share of SpEd costs in excess of \$66,446 for an individual (per pupil)	\$12.37	-	\$17.17	-	
		based on \$60,000	based on \$60,000	based on \$66,206	based on \$66,446	
16.	minus Less amount of deficit if deficit is SOLELY attributable to tuitions paid to public schools for grades the district does not operate for new students who moved to the district after the budget was passed (per pupil)	-	-	-	-	
17.	minus Less SpEd costs if excess is solely attributable to new SpEd spending if district has 20 or fewer equalized pupils (per pupil)	\$340.71	-	-	-	
18.	minus Estimated costs of new students after census period (per pupil)	-	-	-	-	
19.	minus Total tuitions if tuitioning ALL K-12 unless electorate has approved tuitions greater than average announced tuition (per pupil)	-	-	-	-	
20.	minus Less planning costs for merger of small schools (per pupil)	-	-	-	-	
21.	minus Teacher retirement assessment for new members of Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System on or after July 1, 2015 (per pupil)	\$27.09	-	-	-	
22.	minus Costs incurred when sampling drinking water outlets, implementing lead remediation, or retesting.	-	-	-	-	
23.	Excess spending threshold	threshold = \$18789 \$18,789.00	threshold = \$19,997 \$19,997.00	threshold = \$22,204 \$22,204.00	threshold = \$23,193 \$23,193.00	
24.	plus Excess Spending per Pupil over threshold (if any)	suspended thru FY29	suspended thru FY29	suspended thru FY29	suspended thru FY29	
25.	Per pupil figure used for calculating District Equalized Tax Rate	\$18,039	\$18,881	\$20,606	\$12,914.69	
26.	Union spending adjustment (minimum of 100%)	159.394% based on yield \$11,317	141.810% based on yield \$13,314	133.434% based on \$15,443	131.985% based on \$9,785	
27.	Anticipated equalized union homestead tax rate to be prorated [\$12,914.69 ÷ (\$9,785 / \$1.00)]	\$1.5939 based on \$1.00	\$1.4181 based on \$1.00	\$1.3343 based on \$1.00	\$1.3198 based on \$1.00	
28.	2024 H.850 Tax rate "cent discount" FY25 - FY29	-	-	-	-	
29.	Cent discount adjusted anticipated district equalized homestead tax rate	-	-	-	\$1.3198	
Prorated homestead union tax rates for members of Oxbow UUSD						
		FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY22 Pe
T023	Bradford Id	1.5939	1.4181	1.3343	1.3198	100.00%
T136	Newbury	1.5939	1.4181	1.3343	1.3198	100.00%
30.	Anticipated income cap percent to be prorated from Oxbow UUSD [((\$12,914.69 + \$9,946) x 2.00%)]	2.62% based on 2.00%	2.37% based on 2.00%	2.35% based on 2.00%	2.60% based on 2.00%	
Prorated union income cap percentage for members of Oxbow UUSD						
		FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY23 Pe
T023	Bradford Id	2.62%	2.37%	2.35%	2.60%	100.00%
T136	Newbury	2.62%	2.37%	2.35%	2.60%	100.00%

- Using the revised February 27th, 2024 Education Fund Outlook FY25 forecast, the FY25 education fund need results in a property yield of \$9,785 for every \$1.00 of homestead tax per \$100 of equalized property value, an income yield of \$9,946 for a base income percent of 2.0%, and a non-residential tax rate of \$1.448. These figures use the estimated \$13,000,000 surplus from the Education Fund. **New and updated data will likely change the proposed property and income yields and perhaps the non-residential rate.**

- Final figures will be set by the Legislature during the legislative session and approved by the Governor.
- The base income percentage cap is 2.0%.

OUUSD 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

Annual Meeting • Oxbow Auditorium • May 9, 2023

Present: Board Members — Maegan Ballou, Angela Colbeth, Danielle Corti, Carol Cottrell, Leanne Hatch, Tim Ross. Administration — Randy Gawel, Linda Metcalf

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM by Danielle Corti, OUUSD Board Chair. The meeting was turned over to Jenna Ditchcos, Sarah McKelvey, and a student (Lizzy) for a presentation on the recent Spanish Exchange Trip. Each speaker expressed the value of travel and the value to the students and families in the community. They also expressed their thanks to the School Board and the community. This is the third iteration of this exchange.

ARTICLE I: Election of Moderator: Nomination by Carol Cottrell, seconded by Scott Labun for Arvid Johnson to serve as Moderator. A. Johnson was unanimously elected by voice vote to serve as Moderator.

ARTICLE II: Election of Clerk: Nomination by Danielle Corti for Maegan Ballou to serve as Clerk. M. Ballou was unanimously elected by voice vote to serve as Clerk

ARTICLE III: Election of Treasurer for a term of one year: Nomination by Danielle Corti for Lyn Fischer to serve as Treasurer. Lyn Fischer was unanimously elected by voice vote to serve as Treasurer for one year

ARTICLE IV: Motion by Marvin Harrison, seconded by Scott Labun to accept the reports of the officers of said District for the past year. Scott Labun noted that he was surprised there is no mention of academic achievements in the reports. On the Department of Education website, it was reported that the district's students had not yet met the standards (data from 2021). He asked that next year the report include something about academic achievement. Another request was that the School Board's report should appear first in the booklet, ahead of the Superintendent's report. Bud Haas: we revised Article III and Article IV in the past few years. Oxbow should be used to denote the High School. When it comes to talking about School Directors, they use the word Oxbow. We should change the name to Bradford/Newbury, so we're not talking about the high school. The report is very colorful and very short. Two years ago, the report had all kinds of information. We pay a lot more money now, but it is hard to find information. Two years ago in the minutes, Bradford had public preschool, and Newbury had private preschool. People in Newbury are paying for their child to go to preschool. (Correction from a member of the public: every preschool age child in the district is entitled to 10 free hours of preschool per week). Motion voted on and approved by voice vote.

ARTICLE V: Election of School Board Members. Nomination by Maegan Ballou for Angela Colbeth to serve as a Board member from Bradford for a three-year term to expire in 2026. Motion by Bob Wing that nominations cease and the Clerk cast one ballot. Motion was seconded, voted on, and passed unanimously by voice vote. Nomination by Emmy Hausman for Tim Ross to serve as School Board member from Newbury for a three-year term to expire in 2026. Nomination voted on and approved unanimously by voice vote.

ARTICLE VI: Shall the voters of the Oxbow Unified Union School District authorize the school board to expend eighteen million, three hundred ninety-six thousand, three hundred fifteen dollars (\$18,396,315), which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? Motion by Marvin Harrison, seconded by Tom Kidder to authorize the expenditure of \$18,396,315, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? The motion was voted on and was approved by voice vote.

ARTICLE VII: Shall the voters authorize the School Board to borrow money in anticipation of tax receipts for the 2023-2024 school year? Motion by Abigail Clogston, seconded by Tony Brainard to authorize the School Board to borrow money in anticipation of tax receipts for the 2023-2023 school year. Motion voted on and carried by voice vote.

ARTICLE VIII: Shall the voters of Oxbow Unified Union School District authorize three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) of the FY 22 surplus to be applied to the capital improvement fund? Motion by Marvin Harrison, seconded by Rick Hausman to authorize \$300,000 of the FY 22 surplus to be applied to the capital improvement fund. Bob Wing: How did we raise money that we didn't use? Linda Metcalf: We received funds from the state. Bob Wing: I would vote it down because it is taxed money

that we didn't need. Marvin Harrison: Asked Danielle Corti to explain what went into the budget committee's decision. D. Corti reported that when the financial report came in from Linda Metcalf, the budget committee decided not to apply all of the surplus to the budget, but to add some to the Capital Improvement fund. Needs have been identified, and that fund is designated to allow schools to move forward on some of those needs. ESSER funds were a large part of the surplus. The Budget Finance Committee met to decide how best to use those funds. We can now allow some of the buildings to plan to move forward to meet their needs. Each project has to come back to the Board for approval. Some examples of needs: Bradford Elementary: roofing, paving the parking lot. Oxbow High School: paving the parking lot, making the building handicap accessible. Newbury Elementary: a new boiler system, the roof, and stone work. There is a detailed list from the Facilities Director. Bill Deuel: Whoever is planning these projects doesn't have to come to the voters? D. Corti: This is not a blank check. The Capital Improvement Fund is used for capital improvement projects. Each project has to come to the Board. Those meetings are well publicized. Bill Deuel: Was there a public meeting to decide what to do with the \$300,000? D. Corti: we are now bringing it to you for a vote. Sarah McKelvey: We did meet last Thursday for an informational meeting. Bob Ratel, the facilities director, did a wonderful job explaining projects in a very transparent way as to what needs to be updated. A lot has to do with the structural integrity of the buildings. We have been very transparent. The meeting was recorded and is on the web. Pat Dwyer: How much is in the fund now? Linda Metcalf: \$130,000 before we add the \$300,000. Motion voted on and carried by voice vote

ARTICLE IX: Shall the voters of Oxbow Unified Union School District authorize one hundred ninety thousand dollars (\$190,000) of the FY 22 surplus to be applied to the Education Stabilization Reserve Fund? Motion by Marvin Harrison, seconded by Emmy Hausman to authorize one hundred ninety thousand dollars (\$190,000) of the FY 22 surplus to be applied to the Education Stabilization Reserve Fund. Danielle Corti: This fund is to prevent highs and lows and to be available for extraordinary expenses. We wouldn't have to go to the voters to ask them to fund that. We will be looking at positions funded by ESSER funds to determine whether the District needs to be adding them to the general budget. About \$396,000 would be in that fund with the addition of the \$190,000. Motion by Bud Haas, seconded by Bob Wing to amend the motion to authorize \$100,000. Emmy Hausman: What is your rationale for lowering the amount? Kevin Lawrence: What would happen to the rest of that money? D. Corti: We would have to decide that tonight. Jamie Rogers: Where did the \$190,000 come from? D. Corti: This was part of our funding from the previous year. We can't carry a balance forward. Scott Labun: What is the maximum you would like to have in the Stabilization Fund? D. Corti: maybe \$300,000-\$400,000. Marvin Harrison: The Finance Committee is really concerned about next year when ESSER Funds go away. We want to avoid a double digit increase next year. We will have a better idea next year when ESSER funds go away. D. Corti: We are trying to position ourselves going forward to manage our budget and get the services for our students. This is not a restricted fund. The Capital improvement fund is restricted to capital improvement. The amendment to change the amount applied to the Education Stabilization Reserve Fund to \$100,000 was voted on and was defeated by voice vote. Original motion: Dan Smith noted that we need more information about the two funds. He asked that the Board make sure the information is in the booklet. Scott Labun: It would be helpful to have little footnotes in the booklet where there are changes. Jared Pendac: Complimented the booklet and the information therein. The original motion to authorize \$190,000 to be added to the Education Stabilization Reserve Fund was voted on and approved by voice vote.

ARTICLE X: To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting. Scott Labun: asked about school choice within the district. Randy Gawel: The total number between the two elementary schools might be 8-10 students. The students request it, and schools make the determination. There is no set criteria. Bud Haas: Is there Board policy? Yes. B. Haas: The Informational meeting from last week is a holdover from Australian ballot. We should have people make the presentations at those meetings.

Motion by Scott Labun to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 PM. The motion was seconded, voted on, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted: Nancy Perkins, Minutes Clerk

*The minutes are in draft format and are unofficial until formally approved at a subsequent meeting. Minutes certified by OUUSD Clerk

mark your
calendar!

OUUSD ANNUAL MEETING
Monday, May 6, 2024
Oxbow High School



5:30 - 6:30 PM
Public Information Session



6:30 PM
Annual Meeting & Voting

