



# FY2026 ANNUAL REPORT & BUDGET OVERVIEW

BUDGET  
✓OTE

Tues March 4, 2025

Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury,  
Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham  
& Weybridge



Read the full  
FY26 Budget Book:  
[acsdv.org/district-link/fy26budget](https://acsdv.org/district-link/fy26budget)



## ACSD At a Glance

- ~1750 students in PK-12
- Our students are 94% white, 2.6% black, 2.3 Asian, <1% other
- Languages spoken at home: English, Spanish, Chinese, Burmese, French, Malagasy, Arabic, Portuguese, Bulgarian, Vietnamese, German + Russian
- 41% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch
- ~450 full and part time staff
- District-wide coordinated curriculum: PK-5th follow IB Primary Years Program; 6-10th follow IB Middle Years Program; 11&12th grad flexible pathways include Career Center, IB Diploma Program + early college
- We own + operate 9 school buildings, 1 alt. program building, 1 district office + manage ~150 acres of land



## District Highlights

- 2024 VT Middle School Principal of the Year ~ Michaela Wisell
- 2024 SHAPE Middle School PE Teacher of the Year ~ Justin Martelle
- UVM Outstanding Teachers of the Year: Liza Raymond (Elementary) & Steve Colangeli (Secondary)
- Barbara Whittemore Staff of the Year ~ Preston Bergeron, custodian
- New ACSD Teacher Mentor program
- First US public school district to seek joint International Baccalaureate & NEASC accreditation.
- Class 2024: 44% were candidates for the full IB Diploma (17) or IB certificates (26); 28 completed Dual Enrollment/Early College; 58% 4 year colleges, 16% 2 year colleges or trade schools, 3% apprenticeship/military; 20% employment, 2% Gap year.
- 2024 D2 State Champions: Varsity Girls Nordic, Varsity Boys Tennis & Varsity Boys Baseball
- Special Olympics Gold ~ MUMS Unified Soccer Team





## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

The FY 26 budget before you represents a strong focus on academic achievement in mathematics and literacy, a deepened commitment to equity, and an approach to learning that invites inquiry, creativity, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and student contribution and passion.

Several new investments in the FY 26 budget signal new directions for our schools and our students. ACSD's new wellness policy highlights the connection between how we care for ourselves and how we achieve and maintain our mental health. For FY 26, two additional health educators are added to strengthen our proactive approach to mental health education.

Just over a million dollars of this year's budget is devoted to assisting students to make accelerated progress in mathematics and literacy in grades K-8 through the addition of instructional specialist positions. These instructional specialists will work alongside our classroom teachers to amplify our use of high-impact instructional strategies during students' first instruction. The ACSD Board's strategic plan calls for at least 80% of ACSD students to meet grade-level expectations in mathematics and literacy. Principals have requested resources to begin our trajectory toward meeting this goal and we are excited to accelerate our work in these important areas.

For Middlebury Union High School, this budget includes a Flexible Pathways Team dedicated to diversifying students' pathways toward graduation. In addition to our IB curriculum, IB Diploma Program, and career and technical programming offered through the Patricia A Hannaford Career Center, students will gain greater access to dual enrollment and early college opportunities, and new avenues for blended/virtual learning and work-based learning placements through the efforts of this new team. These investments align with the strategic plan targets of increasing 4-year graduation rates to at least 90%.

This budget also dedicates resources to eliminate bias-based harm and strengthen informed and safe school community cultures for all students and staff. I'm confident these resources will continue to help us unite as a diverse group of learners across seven strong communities and nine impactful schools.

New investments generally require streamlining in other places to achieve affordability. Our class sizes across all K-5 schools will rise to an average of 15 and we have significantly reduced non-personnel expenses to continue to invest in our licensed and unlicensed staff. In a tough budget year with increased costs for salary and benefits and the return of the state's per-pupil spending threshold, we are proud to present a budget that retains 98% of our direct support personnel, moves the Board's strategic initiatives forward, and provides anticipated tax relief for each ACSD member community.

Thank you for such a warm welcome as I've begun to get to know the people, priorities and communities within ACSD. I look forward to continuing to learn from many more of you as we approach this work together in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy K Baker, EdD, Superintendent of Schools



### The FY26 Proposed Budget:

#### 1. Prioritizes student experience & success based on data and Strategic Plan direction

- School budgets & equity supports reflect performance + data-based strategies for student success
- Attention to diversity and practices to deepen inclusion + community
- Human-centered approach to student response + preventing + responding to identity based harm
- Attention to strengthening diverse pathways to graduation

#### 2. Provides Financial Transparency and Sustainability

- 7 Restructured Funding Blocks increase transparency + prioritize equity
- "Zero based" budget strategy used to correct inequities & provide equitable student opportunities
- Uniform policy implementation for equitable class size + staffing
- Strategic reinvestment of some cost savings toward Strategic Plan goals
- Lowers taxes in every ACSD town







# OPERATIONS & FINANCE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

In the ninth budget of the unified Addison Central School District, we have turned over a new leaf for the first time in nearly a decade. Guided by the FY24 ACSD Strategic Plan and under the leadership of Superintendent Baker, this budget aims to identify and address inequities in our District by reinvesting resources in new and innovative ways. Within a complex fiscal landscape where fiscal sustainability mandated tight constraints on new spending, innovation required the reimagining and reinvestment of existing status-quo resources. In that sense, this budget was a balancing act. The empowered vision of the Board and Administration was counterbalanced by the obligation to be good financial stewards for our constituent taxpayers and steadied by the ongoing hard work of our Faculty and Staff.

In the FY25 Budget, we built a bridge between old and new. We connected Covid-era grant-funded investments to our “recovery-era” General Fund plan. We moved into two new collective bargaining Agreements with the ACEA on behalf of our Teachers and Education Support Personnel. And we welcomed a new leader tasked by the Board with setting the District on an ambitious path forward. That transitional phase set the stage for this year’s overhaul.

To begin FY26, we needed to clean out the house. Using a zero-basis budgeting approach, each dollar of the expense budget was moved out “onto the lawn”. Investments were then intentionally moved back in as they emerged within the FY26 plan, sometimes to a different area of the budget than where they had come from. The house analogy was a helpful way to describe the complex task of sorting, calibrating, and organizing investments in a new and logical design. This budget will introduce a Block System for reimagining our Cost Centers through an equity-budgeting framework. Additionally, we have used Price Tags to show cost equivalence across all expenditures to yield a more meaningful and transparent snapshot of how the District spends its dollars.

With the historic number of statewide budget defeats from last year in mind, we developed this plan to weather legislative uncertainty and ensure the greatest possible measure of tax relief to our voters. At this time, we have received a favorable yield estimate which generates a decrease in the District tax rate that will be passed along to members of all ACSD towns.

Respectfully submitted,  
Matthew Corrente

## Education Spending Projection

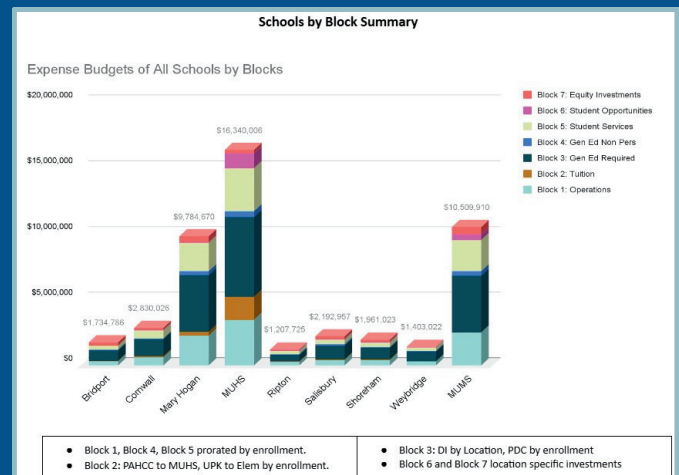
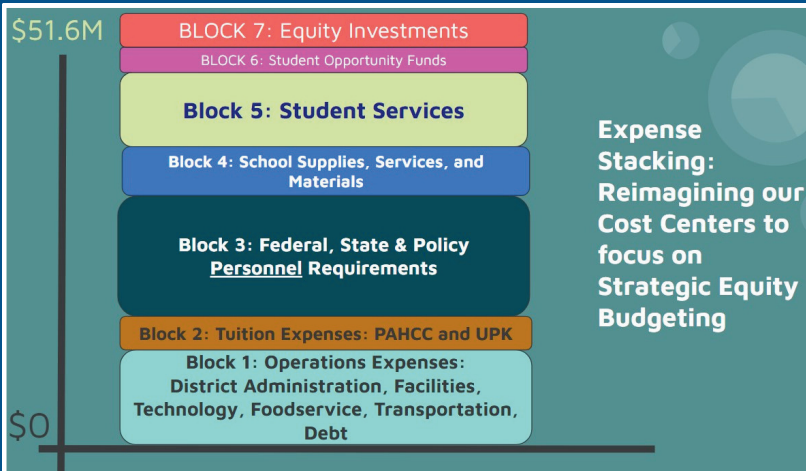
(amount to be raised by local taxes)

Total Expense (inc fund bal): \$ 51,719,284  
less offsetting revenue: \$ 10,346,674  
**Projected FY26 Ed Spending: \$ 41,372,610**  
FY25 Ed Spending: \$ 40,041,512  
Difference: \$ 1,331,098  
% Difference: 3.32 %

## Town Tax Rate Projection

Town	Projected Adjusted CLA*	Projected Adjusted EDTR	Projected Town Tax Rate	FY25 Town Tax Rate	Difference	Percent Change
Bridport	149.12%	\$ 1.63	\$ 1.09	\$ 2.12	\$ (1.03)	-49%
Cornwall	80.69%	\$ 1.63	\$ 2.02	\$ 2.12	\$ (0.10)	-5%
Middlebury	98.13%	\$ 1.63	\$ 1.66	\$ 1.95	\$ (0.29)	-15%
Ripton	85.12%	\$ 1.63	\$ 1.91	\$ 2.05	\$ (0.14)	-7%
Salisbury	135.20%	\$ 1.63	\$ 1.20	\$ 2.19	\$ (0.99)	-45%
Shoreham	148.26%	\$ 1.63	\$ 1.10	\$ 1.97	\$ (0.87)	-44%
Weybridge	91.85%	\$ 1.63	\$ 1.77	\$ 1.94	\$ (0.17)	-9%

\*Based on results of 2024 Equalization Study (12/26/2024).





## BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Once again, 2024 proved to be a very busy year for the Board. After approving the Strategic Plan in December 2023, we adopted a framework to transition District leadership from Interim Superintendent Tim Williams to incoming Superintendent Wendy Baker. Dr. Baker began engaging with ACSD staff and community soon after, and officially assumed her role on June 1, 2024.

The Board has since been working closely with Dr. Baker and her team to operationalize our strategic goals. The Board's three foundational goals from the 5-year [Strategic Plan](#) are deliberately rooted in equity and focus on students' access to resources, sense of belonging, and academic success. To support successful implementation of the plan, we have focused on ensuring our board policies, practices, and decision-making processes are in alignment with the Board's strategic goals. The FY26 budget presented to the Board was developed with transparency and equity-based budgeting principles at the forefront, while supporting the Board's stated strategic priorities. The Board agrees that the proposed budget provides an equitable distribution of resources to help meet the needs and goals of every student.

The proposed budget also reduces the District's per pupil spending. It is worth noting that a status quo budget based on FY25 would have increased our total education spending by over 6%, due primarily to increases in healthcare benefits and wages. To provide much needed relief to our taxpayers, we directed the Superintendent to cap these increases to 2%. Restricting growth in education spending has required significant attention to how we are currently spending our money. The District employed a "zero basis" budgeting approach to ensure our spending is strategically tied to our goals. This process achieved spending reductions, some of which the District is proposing to reinvest into staffing and programming tailored to achieve our 5-year Strategic Plan improvement targets. The proposed budget also increases rural elementary school classroom sizes to comply with the District's class size policy, prioritizes student experience and success based on student proficiency data, invests in a high quality licensed educator workforce, reduces education spending per student, and provides financial transparency as we work toward sustainability.

It is with confidence and genuine commitment to our community that we present this budget to you for your support. On behalf of the Board, I would also like to acknowledge the hard work and thoughtful discussion that went into making this equity-based budget a reality by the District's administrators, building leaders, staff, and community.

There will be many opportunities to be involved in the work of our schools and district in the year to come. Stay up-to-date with all aspects of Board and Committee work at [www.acsdvt.org/school-board](http://www.acsdvt.org/school-board)

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Wilson - ACSD Board Chair



### ACSD STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

**BELONGING** ~ Everyone will feel safe, welcomed + included in our schools + the district. Students and families will be able to engage with the school system in valuable ways.

**ACCESS** ~ ACSD will allocate resources to address students' needs across the district in equitable, sustainable + fiscally responsible ways. ACSD will maintain infrastructure + facilities that support varied learning + successful outcomes for all students.

**SUCCESS** ~ ACSD's learning environment will inspire a passion for learning + value diverse identities + abilities, while preparing our students to make positive contributions to the community + beyond.



### Learn more about our students & schools

**Bridport** ~ [acsdvt.org/bridport](http://acsdvt.org/bridport)  
**Cornwall** ~ [acsdvt.org/cornwall](http://acsdvt.org/cornwall)  
**Mary Hogan** ~ [acsdvt.org/maryhogan](http://acsdvt.org/maryhogan)  
**Ripton** ~ [acsdvt.org/ripton](http://acsdvt.org/ripton)  
**Salisbury** ~ [acsdvt.org/salisbury](http://acsdvt.org/salisbury)  
**Shoreham** ~ [acsdvt.org/shoreham](http://acsdvt.org/shoreham)  
**Weybridge** ~ [acsdvt.org/weybridge](http://acsdvt.org/weybridge)  
**MUMS** ~ [acsdvt.org/mums](http://acsdvt.org/mums)  
**MUHS** ~ [acsdvt.org/muhs](http://acsdvt.org/muhs)

Find the full Strategic Plan:  
[acsdvt.org/district-link/strategic-plan](http://acsdvt.org/district-link/strategic-plan)