

**Q6 Please feel free to provide feedback below. Please note that we may share comments on our Facebook page, but will keep identities confidential if we do so.**

Answered: 219 Skipped: 147

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	My child has GREATLY benefitted from both the math and literacy interventionists, and it's upsetting that the school is being forced to choose between the two, since the budget is being cut yet again this year. Our children NEED these services in order to reach their full potential. These services are essential, and must remain available to our children, who desperately need them!	1/19/2018 2:04 PM
2	I wish the mayor, reps and school board would figure out how to advocate for BTV at the state level. We provide good service (and taxes) to the state so we need support!	1/19/2018 2:02 PM
3	Property and education taxes are out of control in this city. The mindset of continuing to add services and social programs that are not directly related to education without a way to pay for these services and social programs other than raising taxes is unsustainable and unacceptable. The school system is not set-up to be the "safety net" for every child's needs. Our school system needs to educate, and anything not directly related to teaching our kids should be cut. I do not support another dime increase in taxes towards meeting a school budget...we can not continue to see a declining or level population of kids in our schools with a never ending increase in costs.	1/19/2018 1:37 PM
4	I chose the option of supporting a budget that includes more investments because I think that the problem lies with the state government, not our local government. The 7% increase is an issue because of some terrible (my opinion) decision making at the state level regarding education funding, and has been kicked down to the local level as "our problem to solve", when really, our state government should be doing a better job with our tax money to providing adequate funding for our schools.	1/19/2018 12:48 PM
5	A student will succeed if we invest in them. Let's be sure to keep that in mind and move forward on the proposed future budget.	1/19/2018 12:47 PM
6	The school taxes here are ridiculously high. The teachers are among the highest paid in the nation (compared to other states). Enough already!	1/19/2018 12:43 PM
7	I can afford a tax increase only because my household income is relatively high. I already pay \$4000/yr in taxes on a home in the lower range of the market and with a homesteading credit. It is getting harder to afford this.	1/19/2018 12:41 PM
8	The resources to schools are too small as is. Support our town and give students ALL the resources they need.	1/19/2018 12:37 PM
9	As a Burlington parent and resident I believe that we must invest in our (meaning collectively as a community) children's schools, as they are the future. We cannot and must not conflate the value of our tax dollars with the value a high quality and equitable education for the children of our city. For every dollar we invest into them, they will have additional growth, knowledge, and opportunities which will positively impact them and those around them for the rest of their lives.	1/19/2018 12:28 PM
10	Our schools have been operating on bare bones for several years now. It's time for us to invest in our schools. The classrooms are too large with not enough support. The expectations on teachers and student performance is very high, but they cannot meet the demands without support staff. We really need to ask ourselves about teacher satisfaction and how can we retain our high quality teachers?	1/19/2018 12:26 PM
11	I am the parent of 3 elementary aged children. I don't support cuts in instructors at the elementary level. Our magnet school would be significantly impacted. Our students have greater needs than most other schools and thus require more individual attention. You can't remove the interventionist nor can you increase our class sizes. Your actions will lead to the failure of SA. Are these your intentions?	1/19/2018 12:17 PM

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12	I feel like external budget pressures are putting BSD in an impossible situation. I'd like to see the School Board put more pressure on the city to allocate the appropriate share of PILOT funds to the school district to free up BSD funds to support educational costs.	1/19/2018 12:09 PM
13	Do not cut interventionist positions. They are vital to supporting students who are struggling. They provide direct services to students. We need more interventionists, not fewer. We need more EL staff. There are 65 EL students for 1.5 EL teachers at EES. Most students do not get the services they need. We need more than 1.0 EL staff. Cut academic coaches, grants coordinator, assistant to the curriculum director to save money. These positions are not necessary. Do not add data specialist. Teachers and principals can analyze and understand data at their schools. We don't need more people to look at the problem of the achievement gap; we need more people (like interventionists) to help address it. Sports? Extra-curricular activities? Why are these not cut first, before academic positions? Dual language and international students programs added? These are extras that should not be added until the district can meet the basic needs of all students. The achievement gap is real. Our neediest students are struggling and the district is proposing to cut the teachers who serve them directly. Cut the trips to Harvard to learn about the achievement gap and fund the people who are already addressing the needs now.	1/19/2018 12:07 PM
14	I want to emphasize my strong desire for no cuts to multi-tiered and direct instructors in the elementary schools, which is where we have the greatest opportunity to prevent the achievement gap from widening later.	1/19/2018 11:52 AM
15	I just want assurance that my kids get a good education. It's hard to feel assured of this with increasing taxpayer demand and less support in the classroom. It gives me great anxiety on both ends of the spectrum personally and financially.	1/19/2018 11:52 AM
16	Quality education for all children is important. Our community needs great schools.	1/19/2018 11:52 AM
17	I am a parent of an SA 3rd grade student and rising Kindergartener. There are SO many students with needs at SA. Many times the brightest children do not even receive enough instruction because the teachers have so many needs to attend to. Cuts to direct instructors hurts everyone -- those most needy as well as the very brightest. SA needs everyone they have right now AND MORE!!!! There should be no cuts to multi-tiered and direct instructors in the elementary schools, which is when we have the greatest opportunity to prevent the achievement gap from widening later. Thank you!	1/19/2018 11:45 AM
18	I am in favor of putting forth a budget that has a strong chance to pass on March 6th. I think sending a bigger budget to the voters to see if they support it, and it fails, will be damaging to both the district and the city. After the recent teacher strike, we need to avoid more conflict and focus on healing and coming together.	1/19/2018 11:36 AM
19	The School Board MUST be more proactive in this discussion with Montpelier. Since Act 60 (2000), school budgets have been consistently in-line with Vermont's Gross Domestic Product. They have risen at the same rate... Montpelier's funding of Education, however, has fallen from 43% (2000) to 32% (2015). IF Montpelier funds Education to their pledged responsibility, this property tax crisis is avoided. PLEASE ADDRESS THIS PUBLICLY!	1/19/2018 11:30 AM
20	The budget approval and teachers' union contract needs to be approved at the same time. The community needs to better understand the impact of any changes to the budget and this would create significantly more transparency to one of the larger cost buckets.	1/19/2018 11:29 AM
21	One important factor that attracted our family to this area was its schools. Cutting the schools' budget would affect the schools performance and deeply affect the children who need some degree of intervention. We should, as a community, support the betterment of our schools in order to make for a better future society.	1/19/2018 11:18 AM
22	Can't afford to pay more taxes will have to move. August: Vermonters receive news that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBS-VT) insurance premiums will rise 9.2%, the largest increase ever. For a standard family silver level plan, this means an increase of nearly \$113 per month, or \$1,352 per year. November: The administration announces that homeowners can expect a 9.4 cent increase in their property taxes next year. On a \$200,000 house, this would mean an increase of \$188 on a family's property tax bill. December: Green Mountain Power announces they have reached an agreement with the Public Service Board for a 5% rate increase. This constitutes another \$80 million out of Vermonter's pockets. What will your family have to give up to cover the additional \$2000+ in out-of-pocket costs?	1/19/2018 11:18 AM
23	I oppose the cut of a teacher and interventionists at Sustainability Academy. This is a school with already poor results in math and literacy. Instructors are sorely needed to insure equal opportunities in education to all.	1/19/2018 11:16 AM

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24	Question #5 is too simplistic. I will support a budget that provides the best educational outcome for our children. I do not want to see cuts to programs, interventionists, or para-educators.unless there is a viable plan for providing their services. I suspect the there are savings that can be found in the teacher's contract. They do a hard and valuable job and should be paid well, but I think their total benefit package has gotten out of proportion with the community they serve.	1/19/2018 10:43 AM
25	I am concerned that using all of our reserves just postpones part of the problem till next year. Prefer to use only 50% this year. I also support the staffing reductions because we have to adjust to long term enrollment declines.	1/19/2018 10:32 AM
26	While I am in support of certain reductions to achieve a 7% tax increase, one area of critical need that I find unacceptable for the district to be considering cuts is in the area of Special Ed and paraeducation. All three of my children who at the start of their academic years, benefited greatly from the Remedial help they received in math and reading in those pivotal years of K-2. The ability for these educators to screen a child and ascertain risks that those children might have as far as underachieving in areas of need in these early years is critical to ensuring the success of those students in their later years all the way up and through high school . It is the laying of a "foundation to a house". This type of "early intervention" very possibly it can be assumed, saves the district funds in the long run by addressing the potential problems early on with students. The Home room teachers alone have little and limited expertise and special training nor the time or capacity to manage this with these at risk students solely by themselves. They absolutely rely and need the help of these para educators and special ed teachers to be present in their schools. On a non-academic note, these integral professionals are critical in helping support many of our high needs/mental health student populations in this very unique Burlington School system. I do not support cuts to these individuals.	1/19/2018 10:30 AM
27	I am extraordinarily concerned about the proposed reductions in behavior interventionists around the district. They are invaluable staff who provide an enormous amount of support to students, which then benefits all students by freeing teacher time and focus. The impact of these reductions would be huge and I would like the district reconsider this cut.	1/19/2018 10:27 AM
28	I urge you to strongly reconsider the proposed cuts to the Elementary School classroom teachers and interventionists at SA, Smith, and Flynn. Student/staff ratios have a substantial and direct impact on students' learning and success. By stretching classroom teachers further and removing interventionists you are eliminating the greatest opportunity to prevent the AG from widening. Our family thought very carefully about which school in Chittenden County to select for our 3 children. We are fortunate to have a lot of choice in where to send our kids. We selected SA for a lot of reasons, and class sizes were a HUGE part of that decision. If you increase class sizes, while removing instructors, you are: 1. damaging the quality of classroom instruction, and 2. diminishing the appeal to the very families you NEED in this district. The two magnet schools have established strong reputations inside and outside of Burlington. Don't tarnish SA's reputation and reverse the wonderful work that has been done in attracting families from a wide pool in Chittenden County.	1/19/2018 10:19 AM
29	Could you please take control of your spending, and stop asking for more money? It's been less than a year since the last time you begged us for money, so I'd appreciate it if you showed some decorum.	1/19/2018 10:15 AM
30	I believe that cuts should be made in areas that are not involving direct student support. Keep interventionist, reduce the coaches. We NEED more hands on skills and bodies in the classroom to help to close the achievement gap.	1/19/2018 10:10 AM
31	Education is important to our community. Please invest in it. If cuts need to be made please don't cut the core of education. Maybe look at after school or administrative.	1/19/2018 10:06 AM
32	I can see that a great deal of work has been put into creating the proposed 2018-2019 budget and I commend all of the people who have taken on this important work. As the parent of a child who attends Champlain Elementary School, I'd like to voice my concern about the proposed cuts to 6 full-time Interventionists in the Elementary schools in BSD. These educators provide a crucial service to students who are struggling to perform at grade level and likely don't have access to other forms of support. Without their important work, the likelihood is higher that these children will continue to fall behind and the achievement gap will continue to widen. As a taxpayer, I am more than willing to pay more in taxes in order to ensure that the important work of our Interventionists continues to receive funding.	1/19/2018 10:00 AM
33	Please do not cut the alpine ski team at BHS. Many students coming up from hunt will be joining. May not go to BHS I'd cut.	1/19/2018 9:58 AM

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34	I would like to emphasize NO to emphasize no cuts to multi-tiered and direct instructors in the elementary schools, which is when we have the greatest opportunity to prevent the achievement gap from widening later. This is extremely important to Sustainability Academy, our community and the children of Burlington, Vermont.	1/19/2018 9:56 AM
35	What is most important to me is that our kids have the best opportunities they can. I do expect the school board to be fiscally responsible and to not raise taxes without strong consideration of the benefits of doing so.	1/19/2018 9:49 AM
36	The more you invest in our schools, the more likely we are to remain residents of your city. More cuts will continue to drive young professionals out of the city. Our annually support the proposed budget - ask for what you need to BUILD and EXPAND programs not eliminate based on rumors from Montpelier.	1/19/2018 9:42 AM
37	I think you are asking the wrong question - it is not just about the tax increase, but rather about the prioritization of spending. If the budget were applied toward improvements in academic classroom instruction, I would be more likely to support it, regardless of the amount of increase. As it has stood over the last number of years, the district has instead seemed to prioritize many things other than direct academic instruction, with the result that as taxes has ballooned, the academic program has become more and more impoverished.	1/19/2018 9:40 AM
38	I'm in favor of the reductions at central office, but concerned about the rest of the proposed reductions. I'm also worried about what will happen next year if we use the FY17 surplus it will require an even larger increase in the future to catch up. Since my 4th grader entered this district we have seen nothing but cuts and I worry about all of the negative impacts. I don't want to leave Burlington in search of a better school district. Please advocate at the state level. If legislators outside Chittenden County do not understand the differences yet then you haven't effectively communicated them yet.	1/19/2018 9:35 AM
39	We feel passionately that our schools and children cannot afford any further cuts.	1/19/2018 9:35 AM
40	How in good conscience can we continue to ask public schools to excel with less money and staff and then criticize their failures?	1/19/2018 9:30 AM
41	I would like to see all children's needs addressed at all levels. A good education is not only important for the children, but for the city and community as a whole.	1/19/2018 9:30 AM
42	Our schools are already struggling. It seems like we are paying for the mistakes of the previous administration. Although it is frustrating, I don't want our kids suffer.	1/19/2018 9:28 AM
43	Do not cut our interventionists. Without these people delivering the 1 on 1 attention some kids need, all of the classroom teachers will be forced to manage classroom behaviors and will not be able to teach to their potential.	1/19/2018 9:27 AM
44	I do not think that the district can absorb any more cuts to instructional staff, including teachers and interventionists. I would gladly pay more taxes to ensure that we hold our kids harmless.	1/19/2018 9:25 AM
45	The district could benefit on reductions in administrators. From a business perspective the district appears to be top heavy with resources tied up in management instead of in the product (the children).	1/19/2018 9:20 AM
46	I am happy to pay more than 7% provided the board can share where current and future money is being spent with transparency and accuracy. I strongly advocate for Paras in K classes and DO NOT SUPPORT increasing class sizes or reduction in services for kids in order to rectify poor money management of the past. I do support fiscal responsibility and believe it can be done without austerity measures. I DO support reduction in administrative staff and cuts to salaries of highly compensated Admin staff. I DO NOT support cuts to staff who interact directly with the kids. Tighten up on the top end and do not negatively impact kids currently in school for money mismanagement of the past or current State budget issues. If class sizes increase or additional services are taken away from kids currently in school, I will likely remove my children from the public school and may consider leaving VT in favor of better run public schools elsewhere.	1/19/2018 9:19 AM

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47	<p>Thank you for your efforts in coming up with a fair and balanced budget. While I honestly believe your work has been done in good faith, I think cutting elementary school teachers and interventionists, while funneling some of that money to "closing the achievement gap" is a fool's errand. Those teachers and interventionists are our best chance at closing that gap. I personally know of multiple children who have benefited from their services. Yes, there is an achievement gap, but many of those under-performing children would not even be in these mainstream schools without the extra support and instruction they get from those teachers and interventionists. If I read the report correctly, both interventionists will be removed from SA. That would be devastating. I honestly don't know if we can get by with one since I do not know how many kids they see on a daily schedule, but to have no interventionist on the grounds would be hugely detrimental to many kids. SA in particular has new Americans attending the school every year, dealing with culture shock and trying to learn a new language. In addition, there are numerous families that come to SA particularly because it is a supportive community that accepts children of all learning styles and levels, as well as identities. I strongly encourage a detailed look at the demographics of each school before treating them all the same. Also, I question whether the rooms at SA could handle the increased class sizes. Fire codes may prevent it. They seem pretty crowded already. Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and thanks again for your hard work in moving the BSD forward in these challenging times.</p>	1/19/2018 9:19 AM
48	<p>I hope that in revising their budget plans the Burlington Schools will keep funds where they are most important, in the classrooms, to ensure that all students are challenged and supported. This means including funds for intervention specialists and teachers over administrative positions.</p>	1/19/2018 9:18 AM
49	<p>In order to continue to make Burlington a desirable place to live in addition to making sure that it attractive to prospective businesses, we have an obligation to continue to pay for a high level of education. This level requires money.</p>	1/19/2018 9:18 AM
50	<p>I am strongly opposed to budget decisions that would result in reductions in services provided to students. In particular, I am opposed to elimination of any literacy or mathematics interventionists.</p>	1/19/2018 9:17 AM
51	<p>Our schools must continue to make progress despite pressure from state equalization.</p>	1/19/2018 9:15 AM
52	<p>The proposed increase far exceeds any increase in our ability to pay, in general.</p>	1/19/2018 9:15 AM
53	<p>Investment in our schools and educators are the most important civic priorities we should have - and we must be willing to pay for that investment via our taxes if necessary (as long as the trade-offs are well articulated.)</p>	1/19/2018 9:14 AM
54	<p>I have always supported school budgets. However, I do not support the way schools are supported by property taxes. I have unfortunately come to the conclusion that the only way for the state/city to change the way our education is financed is to refuse to pay any more. A new funding mechanism must be found and as long as we keep approving increases in our property taxes, it will never change.</p>	1/19/2018 9:08 AM
55	<p>Please do not cut our interventionists</p>	1/19/2018 9:08 AM
56	<p>Cutting the essential frontline workforce is detrimental to the children and families most in need. I urge you to think creatively about how to improve efficiency within the administration to avoid reducing the impact on the educational well being of our children.</p>	1/19/2018 8:51 AM
57	<p>It is unacceptable to me, as a taxpayer, to have a teacher and language and math interventionists cut from a school whose sole purpose is to create more equity between students. These services are needed and necessary--not fanciful. There is already no excess at SA, it's a small, tight knit school doing the best with what it has, and it is unconscionable to remove integral resources from students who need them most.</p>	1/19/2018 8:48 AM
58	<p>It is crucial to support our teachers and staff who work directly with the students. I am not in favor of cutting any classroom teachers or interventionists.</p>	1/19/2018 8:38 AM
59	<p>We must aggressively lobby the state gov't to ensure that the needs of BTV students and educators are reflected in budget decisions.</p>	1/19/2018 8:34 AM
60	<p>I would like to see more equity among school districts within the states. My impression is that Burlington is considered super wealthy by rest of the state, but there are is much more need for student support here as well.</p>	1/19/2018 8:33 AM
61	<p>Proposed cuts are potentially damaging to our students. Eliminating teaching staff at the elementary level is concerning. I would like to see the budget demonstrate an understanding that our youngest students would benefit from more support (general para educators in classroom and sufficient intervention to set the groundwork for successful academic years going forward.</p>	1/19/2018 8:22 AM

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62	The individual learning needs of our VT kids inside the schools is our main priority. Please consider outside administrative costs and how that balances with the needs inside the school buildings! Please take a close look at what the employees and students are experiencing inside the schools with this budget decision- more support seems to be needed. Thank you.	1/19/2018 8:18 AM
63	The math and literary interventionists are so important to the students of our school and cutting them will directly impact children I know in a very negative way. These students are from many different families and backgrounds and have many different ways of learning, and in many cases parents for whom English is very new, and they are struggling to keep up already even with their help. These are core subjects and our entire classes will suffer- even the high performers- if they are cut. Our classes are already much bigger than other districts and our teachers have that larger size to manage in addition to a more diverse learning population in the classes. Taxes should go up to support our schools, because strong schools make a strong city and under-performing schools will hurt us in the long run.	1/19/2018 8:17 AM
64	It is important to understand that funding schools is expensive - it is a people-heavy business! It is crucial that we support and attract strong, skilled educators and provide the health care and educational supports they need. If we are truly instituting Restorative Practices, for example, cutting interventionists by half doesn't make sense. There are many reasons for students struggling in our schools - we all share the responsibility, not just interventionists! This is a complicated issue: please listen to the educators!	1/19/2018 8:05 AM
65	Our school system has been gutted by mistakes made by past administrations. These cuts have removed critical support staff positions from our schools at the time of the greatest need. Teachers are overwhelmed--many on the verge of burnout. An increase in a budget is not only an investment in students and community but is also an investment in your property. A well funded and performing school district will attract new families, and business to the area. This is a win for everyone.	1/19/2018 7:37 AM
66	As a parent of a student at SA, who has heard conversations about the importance of bringing everyone 'up to level', I struggle to understand how cutting teachers and interventionists meets that goal. We chose SA because we want to see our neighborhood school thrive and know it to be possible. However, given the great diversity of backgrounds, resource pools and experiences of our families, sometimes our children need extra support to help them thrive. How this is possible through cutting what already seems to be a lean operation is hard to understand. This said, raising taxes that will disproportionately impact lower income households is also hard to accept. Are there other actions being pursued to reconfigure the funding models in addition to asking us to pay more?	1/19/2018 7:29 AM
67	It seems we cannot afford to lose our school interventionists. I know my son directly benefits.	1/19/2018 7:08 AM
68	Can we not keep the status quo without taking away CRUCIAL STAFF and TEACHERS? Don't add any new programs.	1/19/2018 3:16 AM
69	I do not like the working in the previous question. I want a budget proposed that meets the needs of our district while being mindful on budget increases (Which is difficult I know). To say I support a budget with a 7% increase, or not support 7% without any backup is meaningless.	1/18/2018 11:06 PM
70	Our schools are the backbone of our community. If we continue to decimate them we will see more and more flight of middle class families to the outlying towns of Chittenden County leaving us with only high poverty and English language learners as our student base. All of our property values will suffer if we cannot attract middle class families to Burlington. If we keep cutting our programs we will surely head in that direction. This is the best investment we could possibly make in our children, our future and our community.	1/18/2018 10:38 PM
71	What a terrible situation. The district clearly needs to make investments for the students, but with level enrollment it seems difficult to ask the entire community for large budget increases. I hope the district focuses on the fundamentals of educating students, and fights at the state level for support for our diverse population.	1/18/2018 9:40 PM
72	I think investing in our school district is the number one priority right now. The cuts that have been implemented to try to avoid high tax increases have had a detrimental impact on kids and families and we are seeing the negative impact of that in the community. We need to invest more into our schools and I'm willing to pay more taxes to do so.	1/18/2018 9:31 PM
73	Our schools and children need support, through increased investment. This is an investment in the future of our community.	1/18/2018 9:21 PM

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74	The external financial pressures on the District are enormous. The budget as presented shows a good faith effort to balance real needs in our schools with reasonable impact on property taxes.	1/18/2018 9:19 PM
75	We'd encourage the school district to communicate its vision and effort at exploring new funding streams as the existing funding is clearly inadequate. Rising property taxes are not sustainable and will drive more families from the district and city, with negative budget impacts. As a parent and taxpayer, I'd like to hear more of the creative re-thinking how public school is providing for all students, and funded. Clearly a new model is needed, and maybe it takes painful cuts to make that happen. Unfortunately, our students are the ones who will suffer.	1/18/2018 9:10 PM
76	Please don't cut elementary school teachers and interventionists, especially at SA, the school with the highest poverty rates in the district according to your data. Our staff are already so stretched from managing years of staffing cuts, to the point where I fear further reductions could result in serious detrimental impacts on student learning. I continually hear board members and others saying that paras in the classroom don't improve learning outcomes, so you've cut many of those positions. The interventionists are a different model of support for students that directly complement and augment the teaching happening in classrooms. They are a vital part of our school community and help our kids facing the biggest obstacles to learn and thrive in the classroom.	1/18/2018 9:09 PM
77	It is critical that BTV's children are not hurt, again, by mismanagement of the education fund at the state level. People who want tax cuts need to take it to the legislature & governor & tell them to fully fund the education fund.	1/18/2018 9:06 PM
78	I am strongly in favor of increasing the school budget to ensure that all students' needs are met, even if that means increasing taxes by a greater percentage than is currently forecast.	1/18/2018 9:03 PM
79	"Closing the achievement gap" seems to be a frequently used phrase in the budget proposal and in meetings. I do not understanding how cutting 3.0 FTE teachers/staff (interventionists) would in any way help close the gap at the Sustainability Academy - which, sadly, still has the highest rate of low-income families (88%, according to the Superintendent's presentation in December). We cannot expect to see students progressing if we do not provide a solid foundation in their elementary years.	1/18/2018 8:48 PM
80	No raises for teachers/staff making over 50K for this year. No tuition reimbursement for one year. Monies poured into offset the horrific tax hike that if there is another BEA strike, it will rip this city apart. You all have an impossible job and thank you for your hard work	1/18/2018 8:29 PM
81	I'm willing to pay more in taxes for better education. It works out in the end!	1/18/2018 8:11 PM
82	I think the survey misses the point. I'm not able to decide if I would support investments greater than 7% without knowing what those additional investments would be. You are doing this backwards. First make the case for what schools really need to serve every student.	1/18/2018 7:43 PM
83	State funding appears to be a long term problem. If more cuts aren't made now, the board with think this financially possible for me and my neighbors. Our taxes are already 20% higher than Colchester, South Burlington, and Shelburne. If our taxbase becomes unaffordable our schools will suffer even more.	1/18/2018 7:19 PM
84	A tax increase would be painful but is absolutely necessary. We are cutting into the bone at this point. My husband and I are considering moving out of Burlington because we feel very alarmed about the downward trend in education funding in the city and what that means for the quality of our children's education. Meanwhile the supertendent's salary is incredibly high and I am very upset that he received a waiver to live in another town so his children do not attend Burlington schools.	1/18/2018 6:48 PM
85	Anyone who spends a minute in the schools right now can see that nothing is easy. Everyone there is on the front lines of a storm of generational poverty, negligence and the opiate epidemic. You can pay for it in the hundreds now, or the millions later. We have a real opportunity here in Burlington to be on the cutting edge of making things better with an amazingly committed community and parents who want to make a difference. Please, please, please don't short us now, as every other branch of government is doing. We're better than that. Let's show it.	1/18/2018 6:41 PM
86	Please no cuts to interventionists.	1/18/2018 6:29 PM
87	Property value appraisal in Burlington lags behind market value and needs to be evaluated to bring property taxes in line with market value then we won't need to ask tax payers to support such large increases to close education revenue gap	1/18/2018 6:26 PM

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88	I am very concerned about the cuts at the high school. Low proficiency EL students have very few choices when they are choosing classes. Just last week, the guidance counselor told me he was having difficulty filling schedules of new students who are arriving, a situation that has often existed at BHS because of the fact that the appropriate English/Math/Reading/Science/Social Studies classes are only offered once. There is no more room in PE at this point in the year, even though we've just started a new semester. And Art is a full-year class, so starting now is not an option. Low English proficiency limits other choices for classes. Our students do not participate in extra-curricular activities, often because they do not yet feel welcome or because they have outside obligations, including working (a few of our students also are primary bread-winners) or household duties. Would offering credit through extra-curricular sports also then preclude those students from participating during the day to free up those spaces for other students who don't participate in sports? I also am concerned about cutting golf and Nordic skiing, saying students can participate on their own. Has someone looked into the financial resources of students who currently participate in these sports? With more than 50% of all Burlington residents qualifying for FRL, I doubt all of these students have the economic capacity to do this on their own.	1/18/2018 6:25 PM
89	The teachers contract locks taxpayers in to significant budget increases. You can't talk about the budget without talking about teachers contract.	1/18/2018 6:24 PM
90	It is critical that we invest in our schools. I understand the state deficit and it's impact - which is why I support a budget up to 10%. I do not want to continue cutting into programs that affect our students.	1/18/2018 6:19 PM
91	Please stop making cuts where it hurts our children. Yes, make cuts at central office and if there is administrative overlap but do not cut teachers and interventionists, who are critical to providing the type of robust and supported learning environment our kids deserve; and athletic teams (golf and alpine skiing at BHS) which offer another opportunity for kids to learn, grow, develop discipline and time management skills, and, so importantly, feel school spirit and camaraderie with their peers and school mates.	1/18/2018 5:43 PM
92	The alleged \$1.1 m surplus? Guess where it came from. Tax money	1/18/2018 5:38 PM
93	We need enough staff to support the kids, and I've seen firsthand how overwhelmed the teachers are.	1/18/2018 5:31 PM
94	On Elementary interventionists: while it is true that they are not classroom teachers, they have a true impact on the day to day functioning of a classroom. When they join a class for 1/2 hour - 1 hour, they support our most vulnerable students and leave the classroom teacher with more availability to support other students. In my class of 24, when the interventionist comes and supports students, it gives students access to two teachers. With such a large class size, this is powerful. Increasing class sizes and cutting interventionists will have double negative impact.	1/18/2018 5:30 PM
95	I am very concerned about the health of our students - particularly kids who are struggling for any reason - low-income, special needs, bullying, past trauma. My kids are not, so this is not self-interest talking, but what I am hearing from friends and colleagues. We need more support for kids who are challenged in our schools.	1/18/2018 5:18 PM
96	Increase class size, teacher/student ratio Reduce non-school programs -> keep academic and athletic programs just for students. Drop outreach programs, as worthy as they may be. We can't afford to do lots of other stuff.	1/18/2018 5:05 PM
97	I am not accepting a tax increase because I'm rich or it would have no financial effect on my family. Quite the contrary. However, as a parent of two children in the district, I will pay more for my children to have the best education we can provide them, and that means no further cuts that have direct student impact. In fact, more investment is needed.	1/18/2018 4:49 PM
98	Here are my thoughts, in no particular order: How do we rethink education funding?? - I have asked this question for years! We continue to slice about 15% of the budget into smaller and smaller pieces. It's important to have high quality instruction and supports for all our students, especially in the early stages of elementary school. I'm not comfortable with the idea of cutting interventionists at the elementary level. How do we address under- or un-funded mandates like preschool (which I believe in and support, but who pays)? And mental health support at school? Our schools have become social service organizations because society and social/health organizations are failing its community members. How do we push back on some of the organizations so they can do their part, so the schools can better address educational issues. I don't have an answer since this is all a complex web, but we need to have some frank conversations about who else is stepping up to the plate to invest in our students, our community and the future of Burlington.	1/18/2018 4:13 PM



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99	Taxes are already way too high.. CUT spending! Get rid of Deadwood	1/18/2018 3:49 PM
100	We trust the school board to make the best, informed decisions for their students and community.	1/18/2018 3:26 PM
101	I understand the external pressures the school board is facing and I hope the Mayor will release the pilot funds that can be used for non educational purposes so that some resources can be freed up. Our schools have been facing austerity since I have been a parent in the district and teachers and support staff have been under increasing pressure to do more with less. We have great schools and dedicated professionals here. I hope that we can find the money into invest in our schools and community even given the difficult situation Gov. Scott and the state are putting us in. I think we have to support tax increases to prevent further cuts. There is no other solution for this in the short term. In the long term, all of us parents and tax payers to show up en masse in Montpelier to advocate for policy changes that don't burden Burlington tax payers disproportionately.	1/18/2018 3:01 PM
102	I am totally frustrated with these huge school budget increases year after year. Please feel free to contact me through my email to setup a time to discuss. I would like to get some questions answered and share my opinion.	1/18/2018 2:50 PM
103	DO NOT CUT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS - research again and again shows that investing in the early years pays off for society as a whole in the long-term. Please work with the city and the state to fight for Burlington students.	1/18/2018 2:17 PM
104	As a citizen of Burlington, I am extremely concerned about the impact of staffing cuts on students, namely as it relates to the intervention positions. Because interventionists service the most vulnerable of students to bring them to proficiency, this proposed cut is directly in contrast with the district's own objectives to close the achievement gap. I request that you reject this portion of the proposal for the harm it will cause to the district's objectives and the most vulnerable students of Burlington and keep the interventionist program intact, fully staffed.	1/18/2018 2:01 PM
105	I appreciate that discussions are underway to find reductions, although I have concerns with the amount of reductions at the Elementary school level. I would also like to hear more information regarding cuts of Interventionists, and how they are expected to be better utilized vs. current usage.	1/18/2018 1:10 PM
106	The District really needs to consider consolidation. Simply put, there are too many elementary schools. Teachers also need to realize how good they have it compared to most people - maybe we should require BSD teachers to live in Burlington so that they can pay the taxes that their 'above-inflation raises' contributed.	1/18/2018 1:01 PM
107	you cannot ask people for 7%increase w/the way our roads are, lack of elderly housing, the north ave project which is a joke!!! also why should Burlington elderly population have to pay for all the minorities who get funded by the federal gov. try going to there country and see what you get!! no more taxes!!! people of Burlington must unite.. we need better leadership in the mayors office. we need to let our council men Hartnett, curt wright know enough is enough.. the futureof the city needs to go back to the people, people make change and we need it.. raising taxes is not the answer..	1/18/2018 12:30 PM
108	I would not vote for a school tax increase ever that is much more than the cost of living/inflation rate. I realize this is a federal and state-wide problem, but at the local level we need to contain costs which shouldn't a staff headcount reduction automatically. Teacher contracts and their portion of benefit costs should be evaluated annually and contracted raises should not be a given. Like my personal household budget, we need to practice and maintain living within our means. I have to believe a fine review of the budget will reveal savings from bloated salaries of administrators to discretionary lines that encourage use or lose decisions.	1/18/2018 12:28 PM
109	I think the board should put forward the budget that reflects what they believe BSD needs, so if that means a 10% increase, then that is what the budget should be. The superintendent and board should then work hard to explain what that number means to the public. They should also make it clear what will be cut from schools if the budget they put forward does not pass. This should include how cutting the budget offered will impact class sizes, and course and extra curricular offerings.	1/18/2018 12:26 PM
110	AOE Education Quality Standards does not take into consideration the demographics of Burlington, VT versus the rest of Vermont, and neither does Obeng.	1/18/2018 12:18 PM
111	It is very difficult for us to understand how the number of students decrease and costs increase. The sad reality is that there will be an exit by Burlington property holders who cannot afford the increase in the regressive property tax	1/18/2018 12:13 PM

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112	The school budget should reflect the needs of our students, teachers and schools. The budget should dedicate increased resources for more personnel to help our students succeed.	1/18/2018 12:00 PM
113	Please send out another survey with more detailed questions. This does not provide enough detail to properly express my position with regard to the budget	1/18/2018 11:57 AM
114	Middle class families will continue to leave Burlington if property taxes rise	1/18/2018 11:55 AM
115	I understand the district and the board are in a difficult position. I am hopeful they can find a proposal that focuses on educating all of our youth in Burlington.	1/18/2018 11:53 AM
116	We need to really lobby the legislature to stop forcing unfunded mandates on our schools while simultaneously raiding the education fund. Vermont does not have a one-size-fits-all situation. Burlington schools are facing completely different issues than small schools in rural areas. We have been making drastic cuts for at least the past ten years. Montpelier needs to better understand our situation.	1/18/2018 11:45 AM
117	I have not received an increase in my salary in two years and my affordable health insurance will be gone in a year. I cannot afford anymore increase in my taxes. You are pushing out the people who support this community to find affordable housing in another town. I suggest you do not have a tax increase and use the tax level you have now for the children instead of the comfort of the teachers. At least they have good health insurance! They should be grateful for what they have now. I can tell you that the quality of the education the kids are getting or showing is well below the US standard.	1/18/2018 11:35 AM
118	Thank you for all your hard work under very difficult budgetary constraints. I appreciate and support many of the aims of the current budget and I am very likely to support it. I am, however, very disappointed about elimination of sports teams at the high school. The two teams that lose funding in this budget, alpine skiing and golf, are very inclusive teams. Nobody gets cut from either team and the student athletes love participating in these activities. Inclusive, outdoor teams sports, particularly those like skiing and golf that celebrate lifelong outdoor activities, should be supported in the budget. The cost for these programs is tiny compared to the scope of the budget and they yield huge benefits to the participants. Please restore funding for these programs in the budget. Thanks again for your hard work.	1/18/2018 11:18 AM
119	We need to cut administration and consolidate out dated school and duplicate services	1/18/2018 11:12 AM
120	As a parent of one elementary aged child and another of preschool years, I find it absolutely disheartening and unbelievably short-sighted that Burlington schools are continually asked to cut staff and services to make up or avoid a tax-increase. It is absurd that they bear the brunt of the cuts and, not to sound cliché, but it is the children who suffer as a result. It is no wonder that young families are leaving VT in droves as they search for both a more affordable cost of living and communities that value education. The two do not have to be mutually exclusive and yet that seems to be the reality here in Burlington.	1/18/2018 11:10 AM
121	I do not agree with cutting teachers and support staff in order to make a budget work. There are far better ways to lessen the amount the district spends that won't hurt the teachers or children in my opinion.	1/18/2018 11:06 AM
122	I want our schools funded. Period! I'd support a 14% increase!	1/18/2018 10:53 AM
123	I understand the need for taxes to increase in order to provide good schooling for our students and I have reviewed the most recent Budget Process Update. I support the investments that BSD needs to make to support its staff and students. My biggest concern is that if property taxes go up, I will not be able to afford housing.	1/18/2018 10:49 AM
124	We cannot continue to starve our schools for the resources they need. We MUST insist that Montpelier change the way our schools are being funded. In the meantime, we must keep our teachers, our classes, and our options for excellence. I pay considerable taxes and believe it's worth it.	1/18/2018 10:35 AM
125	Year after year there are increases toward school tax without wage & salary increases mirroring those and with mediocre results/performance reported in grades from the schools.	1/18/2018 10:25 AM
126	I'm really frustrated about this. Reductions AND a tax increase? What is going on? I expect quality schools in Burlington and I feel like we have all these budget issues every year. Also Burlington has unique needs in the state as a refugee resettlement city. We need more resources. I feel like we keep scraping by.	1/18/2018 10:23 AM

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127	<p>This response is a copy of the email I recently sent Board members: Dear School Board Members: I understand that you are actively seeking feedback from the community as it pertains to the school budget and a tax increase. As I understand it, the Burlington community sees to see a tax increase over just over 7% without increasing and programs or services and that were we to increase any services, staff or programs, we would see an additional increase of at least 2%. My partner and I are not wealthy by any means, but we do own our home and we pay taxes. I assume that you are hearing from many people in our community who are against an increase in education-related taxes at all. People are rightly frustrated (and/or confused) by the state education budget formula and can't imagine why we would need to increase our taxes at all, let alone by 7% or 10%, but that frustration and anger doesn't mean that an additional tax burden isn't the right thing to do for our students. I am writing to strongly advocate for placing forth a budget which includes additional services and supports. The needs of our schools far exceed our current capacity. I very concerned with the way the current budget fails to meet the needs of our students, especially those at IAA &amp; SA. Article after article talks about how, nationally, students are more stressed, more anxious, more in need of services now than at any time in the past. Vermont children are at least as deeply affected as those in other parts of the country. In Burlington, the needs are even greater for many reasons, including the high numbers of second-language learners and increasing amounts of trauma in families. If you need evidence of this, I urge you to talk to our principals, staff and teachers. Visit a classroom if you haven't already. The biggest need, at least as it appears to me based on my classroom visits, is for paras in Kindergarten and the need for additional support staff. Not only are our most frail students missing out on learning, but those in the middle and top performers are too -- unmet individual student needs in the classroom affects all students. We cannot continue to educate our students without increasing our supports. Of course, there are additional needs, such as upgrades to IAA's HVAC system (it's so loud students and teachers often cannot hear each other), and improvements to the physical space to ameliorate hazards to physical safety on the playground, but it's the need for additional supports that I hope you're most aware of. No one wants to see a tax increase of any amount, but I know that my family and many others like us, will do what we need to support a double-digit increase (so long as that increase goes directly to improving the schools.) Thank you for your time and consideration. -Leandre --- My letter was written the day before the specific proposed budget recommended cutting interventionists in our schools. I am floored that any budget would cut services to children who are clearly in need of additional support. My understanding of the argument in support of these cuts is that we can do more with less (fewer interventionists). I do not understand this logic and would like to request that more information be shared about how this would be possible. I know SEVERAL families who current success in the schools would not be possible without the interventionists.</p>	1/18/2018 10:16 AM
128	<p>We need to make a larger and bolder investment in education. As a middle-class, middle-aged homeowner, I know that better schools mean higher taxes. But what could be a more important or meaningful way to spend your money? Think about it. I encourage our leadership—administrators, school board, mayor and, especially state and federal representatives—to strongly promote greater commitment to our schools and make the case for why we need this and how we are going to increase the budget. Great—not just adequate—schools are an essential foundation of community health and long-term economic vitality.</p>	1/18/2018 10:14 AM
129	<p>Taxes in Burlington are high enough already, instead of increasing taxes the City of Burlington should look long and hard at reallocating funds to fill this funding gap.</p>	1/18/2018 10:12 AM
130	<p>My son receives special education at the Sustainability Academy. He would not have made the progress he has with out interventionist and other dedicated staff. My son is part of our collective future and because of the taxes we all pay, he will be happy and successful.</p>	1/18/2018 9:35 AM
131	<p>The superintendent came out with very strong feelings at the last board meeting that we're not doing enough to solve the achievement gap. I agree with him. He was saying it in reference to not cutting golf and skiing. It's going to take a lot more than that. Cutting interventionists seems insane to me. My daughter is an overachiever, but she can't learn much in school due to how far behind the other kids are. They need interventionists. They need more paras to help with behavior challenges. We sink or swim together. Cutting the ratio further... no one who's spent time in a classroom would think that's a good idea. I also think the BEA is extremely frustrating. I think professional development could be cut in the short term. I'm not sure why we have a helicopter. No idea why we spend a zillion dollars on football which causes brain damage, when we can't afford a school lunch monitor for Champlain Elementary? The board claims the decisions are data driven. But is that data connected to results? I'm not convinced we're analyzing correctly. Also, please try harder to shake \$ from PILOT and the state. It seems like the efforts now are a good start, but have a lot of room for growth.</p>	1/18/2018 9:33 AM

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132	I am a strong supporter of public schools. Unfortunately the ELL children often require as much, if not more resources than special ed students, yet they don't qualify for state aid, like special ed students do (IEP, 504, etc). This is going to destroy schools with refugee populations, both from a budget perspective, as well as a program and facilities perspective. You will see a revolution over tax increases on top of already high taxes. Your leadership needs to lead the charge to get federal and state funding for ELL programs on par with special ed programs, so our tax base doesn't destroy our schools and our community. We cannot continue to pay higher taxes.	1/18/2018 9:20 AM
133	There are no winners in these budgets	1/18/2018 9:13 AM
134	I can't even start how frustrated I am with taxes in Burlington. We pays as much as Camden county in New Jersey, yet don't show for it. Compared to Europe, the level of high school education is not comparable at the best and pitiful at the least. And we must have like the least number of school days in the world. We are planning to move out of the district as soon as our daughter is out of school.	1/18/2018 9:12 AM
135	We can and should fight for change at the state level, but locally the decision is framed differently. If 7% is certain and has nothing to do with our educational offerings and service, to me that makes it somewhat out of consideration. The question becomes do we aim for flat budgets and attrition, or do we invest, as always. Some may feel 2% on top of 7% is untenable. I think if we are going to pay more we might as well get some benefit from it. Some local adder on top of the statewide amount seems small compared to the latter. As to the impact on tax bills and the rhetoric, Vermont's income sensitive property tax means that only relatively wealthy people pay the full bill and the State pays the rest.	1/18/2018 9:07 AM
136	As a senior citizen on a fixed income, I cannot afford another tax increase. In the past, I always voted yes to questions supporting schools because I believe that every child deserves the best education possible. I can no longer afford to do so. There has to be a better way to support schools without always putting the responsibility on Burlington homeowners.	1/18/2018 8:58 AM
137	Cuts to direct service for students should not be cut. Teachers and interventionists work directly with students daily to bridge the achievement gap.	1/18/2018 8:50 AM
138	We need to fund the schools robustly so the kids get a robust education.	1/18/2018 8:47 AM
139	We should invest in our kids, they are the future	1/18/2018 8:44 AM
140	Why not ask us about priorities? This is worthless.	1/18/2018 8:38 AM
141	While the situation seems to place an undue burden on schools to make dramatic changes to remain operational, please also remember to take into account young families who, whether they own or rent their homes, will likely be dramatically impacted by whatever decisions are made.	1/18/2018 8:33 AM
142	Please put the blame on the Governor Scott who caused the current crisis in the Education Fund.	1/18/2018 8:32 AM
143	Education is a non-negotiable investment in our community and in our future. Our schools are already struggling to meet the needs of our students and our teachers have been making do too long with too little resources and support. Defunding under these conditions would be, in my opinion, inexcusable.	1/18/2018 8:24 AM
144	I agree with the proposal that reduces FTEs in the higher grades and non-classroom personnel in the lower grades. An increase in any one year should be at most 2%, not 6, 7 or 8%. I don't get increases that high in my paycheck.	1/18/2018 8:23 AM
145	Please ask the teachers what they see as opportunities in cost savings. They know the day to day needs best. Please make sure they are asked, too	1/18/2018 8:18 AM
146	Much of the increase in the tax rate is the result of forces outside the district's control. I can understand not wanting to impose too high a jump on taxpayers but the cuts year after year aren't good for our kids. Investment in our schools is the most important thing we do with public money. I'll also be writing to the legislature to stop making things harder for local school boards by shifting costs to the education fund and using all the reserves in one year so that rates jump up the next year no matter what districts do.	1/18/2018 7:57 AM
147	Please do not cut anymore from the elementary schools budget - they have been hit hard enough in recent years!	1/18/2018 5:10 AM
148	Tough choices to make, I'm ok with the proposed budget and impacts... let's continue to maintain or improve the quality education experience of our students and support for our teachers.	1/18/2018 12:10 AM

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149	Hello, I think we can do in better in terms of staffing reductions and downsizing. I hope to see a 6:1 ratio of pupils-staff, and student-teacher ratio of 15:1. Such ratios will benefit the children with a budget that is sustainable and affordable for taxpayers. Enrollment is not growing so cuts and layoffs will be needed to achieve those figures.	1/17/2018 11:23 PM
150	Please do not reduce the number of elementary school staff. Especially teachers.	1/17/2018 11:11 PM
151	I think you should reduce the budget by reducing administrative positions. And I believe that hiring people based solely on furthering diversity is not in the best interest of the students.	1/17/2018 10:55 PM
152	The amount of pressure and resposibility on teachers and educational support staff to protect, support, and teach our kids is deplorable when they aren't even compensated with a livable wage and salary. How about making some reductions in the salaries of the people in the higher administration members? Don't make further cuts to add to the workload that is crushing our wonderful educators!	1/17/2018 10:39 PM
153	The Cities tax burden is huge. I don't believe the school dept or board are doing good job managing the budget when each year a large increase is requested. A budget review expert is needed. We can't sustain these increases. I pay over 4k in taxes for a small cape assessed at 157k, that's rediculous and the schools are driving single family households out of town.	1/17/2018 10:19 PM
154	There needs to be a campaign to put pressure on the state legislature, our representatives, and the Governor to change how education is funded in Vermont and to prioritize education spending. A system where a modest budget proposal results in a 7% tax increase at the local level is unsustainable.	1/17/2018 10:12 PM
155	Cut administrative costs	1/17/2018 10:05 PM
156	As a student, I am tired of seeing teachers leave and administrative positions increased. I think priorities should be in making sure that teachers, paras, and EL supports (liaisons, etc) are protected. I am disappointed in the pattern of educator layoffs and the simultaneously fattening salaries and benefits for administrators and higher-ups. PLEASE do not sacrifice teachers for proposals by the Superintendent: we need to support students at every school, with ever ability, and at every English proficiency. Simply put - restorative justice and maker spaces should not be added while teachers are lost. This pattern does not just hurt us in the short term; it leads to a degraded district reputation, nervous teachers, angry taxpayers, and low morale as far as the eye can see. The Board's claim to be pro-teacher is hollow and a fantasy as long as teacher cuts continue in the Burlington School District.	1/17/2018 9:58 PM
157	Stop cutting programs and staff.	1/17/2018 9:45 PM
158	Cut the budget, it's out of control how much we spend to poorly educate citizens	1/17/2018 9:44 PM
159	In the aftermath of the teacher strike earlier this past year, rumors spread about the inequality in allocations that the budget affords to administration salaries, vacation time, etc. As a parent of 2 elementary aged students and a Burlington taxpayer, this information, while "rumored," was quite alarming especially when weighed against the school boards refusal to hire paras to afford teachers more time to do their jobs. Now the taxpayers are being asked to consider more cuts while enduring an increase in our tax rate. At this point, I believe it is the duty of the administration and our school board to be completely transparent regarding the allocation of funds in this budget.	1/17/2018 9:40 PM
160	The IAA community is experiencing a huge increase in need for behavioral/emotional intervention and I don't see where your .20% reduction plan for the school budget addresses this need for more intervention and early - i.e. adding paras back to the K classrooms would be an amazing start. The fact that they were cut 4 years ago is starting to play out and it's not an equitable environment nor is it breeding a positive learning space...the teachers are stressed and so are the students. It is time to apply some of that surplus to supporting our teachers and students so they can get back to learning and excelling. I think the citizens of Burlington are ready to be asked for a slight increase...I think the school board and district now has proven that they can balance a budget, stick to a budget and can be trusted to offer transparency and accuracy to the taxpayers. If we continue on like this Burlington will no longer be one of the best cities in this country to raise a family.	1/17/2018 9:36 PM
161	Cut admin costs and building improvement funds and fully staff elementary classes. Growing positive learners who feel good about themselves in school is crucial. Overwhelmed teachers cannot attend to kids enough to help them be / feel nourished when they need it most in early building blocks times.	1/17/2018 9:21 PM

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162	From what I have gleaned from newspaper articles about the school budget, it seems the State does not assess the needs of Burlington students fairly. I don't want to see a tax increase but I think we have to shoulder this burden as a community and speak loudly to the State that the measures being taken to address issues with school funding around Vermont are inequitably impacting Burlington. Instead of making our educational system more efficient, it appears we are only compromising it's integrity.	1/17/2018 9:16 PM
163	Thank you for all you do for our children.	1/17/2018 9:11 PM
164	I support Burlington schools and have been a consistent "yes" vote on the school budget. However, I watched social workers and other important supports for students be cut recently. A 7% increase in property taxes puts strain on my family when we are already questioning the priorities of Burlington School District. We love this community and want to support the schools, but are finding it increasingly difficult.	1/17/2018 9:07 PM
165	As a young professional with a young family, a 7% increase will make it challenging for my family to stay in Burlington.	1/17/2018 8:58 PM
166	I truly want proof that the money already being invested is producing excellent teaching and motivated students.	1/17/2018 8:41 PM
167	We need a foreign language taught in middle school. The fact that we do not have one is sub-standard for the taxes we pay to this district. No more "half days" to make up for missed snow days. These are bogus and a waste of the student's time. To really make up a snow day, we need a full day of regular teaching.	1/17/2018 8:35 PM
168	It is absolutely unacceptable to consider removing staff such as teachers, paraeducators, associates, etc, who have direct teaching and support duties. I have 3 children at the SA, one of whom receives special education services, and that school could not continue functioning at the level at which it functions with a reduction in staff. Please please please do not remove teachers or other staff from SA or other schools. (Consider downsizing coaching staff or other ancillary staff if necessary, but not staff that actually have direct daily responsibilities for our kids).	1/17/2018 8:35 PM
169	While fully understanding the needs of a school system filled with diversity, I feel the state, the local school boards, city government and state government overall are totally ignoring the needs of the older citizens of this state that built this state. Time to get real and say no to teacher contracts that dictate unreasonable raises compared to the avg. citizens wages that indeed are actually going down when insurance etc. is figured into the computation.	1/17/2018 8:32 PM
170	This is a huge disgrace to the residents and tax payers of the City. Every year, with out doubt more money is demanded by our failing school district. It is absolutely terrifying that the officials can't create a budget that lasts a year with out asking for more money the next. That isn't a budget, that's poor financial management, and above all, pure greed. Truly consider this reality, this careless act of crippling the tax payers year after year. I ask you, please take a year off seeking an increase. Just one year. We know you will be right back at it next year for an addition 8 to 15%	1/17/2018 8:29 PM
171	I wish the school district and City funds were combined somehow to provide a "most livable city that financially supported its teachers and students. Also, we have got to work with the state to provide equitable resources.	1/17/2018 8:24 PM
172	I volunteer at IAA. I have seen the negative impact of budget cuts over the last several years and truly believe that our schools cannot withstand any more decreases in staffing. Building maintenance has been put off for decades, staffing positions have been eliminated. The learning environment has diminished, and many students' needs are not being met currently. I'm talking about academic needs, as well as age appropriate behavioral and emotional needs. The IAA mission, teaching through the arts, is a great equalizer. It gives all students a chance to access academics in creative ways, resulting in deeper learning. However, without adequate financial support from the district, the magnet school mission gets watered down because teachers don't have time to collaborate and there isn't enough staff to meet both academic and social/behavioral needs. The district cannot succeed if all the schools do not succeed. The district cannot succeed if all students don't have an equal shot at success.	1/17/2018 8:23 PM
173	As a childless, fixed income property owner in Burlington, I can no longer afford to pay any more taxes!! When this proposed increases is totaled, it will be more like a 10% increase for property owners. Responsible people who own rental properties can't simply pass all that along to tenants as a rental increase. We spend \$8000 pre student more than any other state! Just can't do it any longer. If more property owner's move away because of the outrageous taxes then there will be vacant lots all over the city, like other large cities across the country..	1/17/2018 8:22 PM

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174	Every year the middle class in Burlington get hit with an increase in school tax which is way higher than my property tax. It's time to cut back on administration cost. When I was in school in this school district the classroom sizes were bigger and teachers did just fine. Stop blaming this need for an increase on the state and federal government.	1/17/2018 8:21 PM
175	Education is a good investment	1/17/2018 8:02 PM
176	Your powerpoint presentation does not adequately explain why the local tax rate jumps 7% when the increased spending is only 0.6%. We know this is complicated, and perhaps you were able to enhance your PP presentation in the public hearing with additional info; unfortunately, we couldn't attend. BTW, we only answered #5 because the survey couldn't be submitted without an answer. We don't feel we have enough info to support any of the budget increase options.	1/17/2018 8:00 PM
177	I prefer a budget that has a 0 % budget increase, as your are killing the senior citizens of Burlington with the constant increases. I have not had an increase in my S/S of this kind of % since I have been retired. You keep forcing us to choose between paying school taxes and going without food or medicine. You will one day be in this same dire situation. Just remember this, as pay back is a "bitch" I ALSO DO NOT LIKE THE FACT THAT YOUR SURVEY FORCES ME TO ANSWER # 5 WITH THOSE THREE OPTIONS. YOU ARE FORCING US TO ANSWER THEY AY YO WANT SO YOU ARE NOT GETTING A TRUE OPINION. You people just don't get it!!!	1/17/2018 8:00 PM
178	7% is way out of line, you need to get to 2 to 3% before I will support your budget.	1/17/2018 7:47 PM
179	You aren't doing something right if you need to keep increasing taxes at this rate, as someone looking to buy property in the very near future these tax increases are likely going to push me to a surrounding town.	1/17/2018 7:43 PM
180	We need a budget based on what our students need. I'll support an increase of more than 7%.	1/17/2018 7:40 PM
181	Though the numbers of children in school continue to decline, budgets keep rising. Working in a school guarantees you the best of benefits and really good pay. I got laid off from a non profit in 2014 because of budget duress. Now I struggle to pay taxes so these folks can get raises and pay as little as possible for health insurance.	1/17/2018 7:40 PM
182	we have amazing schools here in VT. Let's keep them that way.	1/17/2018 7:38 PM
183	I believe the weight of this burden should be felt at the top. Superintendent Obeng should take a significant pay cut to lead by example. The Vermont average salary for superintendents is \$105,000 so at the very least a reduction to this would be reasonable.	1/17/2018 7:30 PM
184	I see first-hand the needs of the students in the district that we cannot meet due to past budget cuts. Our students deserve better, and I would support a budget that provides the services that we desperately need.	1/17/2018 7:30 PM
185	I am concerned about the continued upheaval in this District: strike, budget reductions each year. We need stability. We need a School Board that provides that stability. When will the Educational Support Professionals get a contract?	1/17/2018 7:07 PM
186	No reductions at the elementary level or interventionist positions. Cut paid vacation days and bonuses!	1/17/2018 7:07 PM
187	We are prepared to pay higher taxes in order for our schools to provide the education that our children deserve. Burlington schools have been going downhill for years now and it cannot continue. We need to be re-instating programs such as foreign languages, NOT making more cuts.	1/17/2018 6:56 PM
188	I vastly prefer paying more in taxes than making reductions. I am happy to pay to provide the best education we can for Burlington's children.	1/17/2018 6:52 PM
189	After seeing years of increases it would be nice to not see big numbers again. The tax increases are in excess of pay increases so there has to be a compromise somewhere. Property owners can't continue to absorb these increases. I am sure other taxes will increase as well such as state, GMTA and possibly local taxes.	1/17/2018 6:51 PM
190	I WOULD LIKE TO SEE A BUDGET +/- USING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MODEL WHEN ADJUSTING SS OR MILITARY SALARIES/BENEFITS.	1/17/2018 6:46 PM
191	taxes in burlington are out of control, and driving people to move out of state. school taxes go up faster than my annual salary. i cannot support the constant tax increases year after year and will be moving out of vermont soon!	1/17/2018 6:44 PM

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192	Taxes are way too high at this point. The state needs to find another way to fund schools without making it impossible to afford a home.	1/17/2018 6:34 PM
193	The recent increases in the school budget over the past few years have pushed property taxes beyond what is reasonable or affordable by middle class families. People on fixed income, such as retirees, have limited capacity to handle increases that are way beyond the rate of inflation. Increases such as what is proposed mean that they must cut their standard of living in order to pay for these increases. The school, teachers, administration must adapt to a world where the rate of growth of salaries and income of citizens is much lower than what is being proposed by the board. Schools cannot be insulated from the economic/demographic realities of the community. The idea that we are not talking about real cuts, but rather cuts in the proposed budget rate which contains an increase that is multiples of the rate of inflation, tells me the board is not serious about dealing with its fiscal problem. While I strongly support public education, at this point it does not seem reasonable for the budget to exceed the rate of inflation, especially in light of prior year budget increase. I recommend looking for savings from top, and review the executive administration staffing, office space and compensation. Next cut non-essential programs. Golf?! Thank you.	1/17/2018 6:30 PM
194	Senior citizens simply cannot afford to pay more taxes!!	1/17/2018 6:28 PM
195	No cuts, please.	1/17/2018 6:23 PM
196	We need to focus on teaching students and providing them with the skills and knowledge to succeed at the highest possible level. It should not be a goal to narrow an achievement gap, but to lift all students to the highest level. Please do not shortchange our brightest students simply to improve a measurable (test score derived) metric.	1/17/2018 6:22 PM
197	Phil Scott's plan to not raise taxes is too push it onto towns. Our schools are struggling. Less money is not going to help.	1/17/2018 6:19 PM
198	We MUST invest in our schools. The cuts of the previous years are not sustainable	1/17/2018 6:05 PM
199	No more tax increases!!!!!!!	1/17/2018 6:02 PM
200	I'm for increased investment following the strategic plan but am aware this may be hard for a significant number of taxpayers. So if more money becomes available, please follow through on the strategic plan for which we hired Superintendent Obeng!	1/17/2018 6:00 PM
201	A 7% increase is too much in a city that already pays more per pupil than almost every other state is asking too much. >75% of the budget goes to compensation packages for employees. You are going to have to start cutting more deeply there to move the needle. This budget is unacceptable.	1/17/2018 5:50 PM
202	I am concerned about the plan to cut elementary classroom teachers and interventionists. I would like to know more about the interventionists, what works, and what will be done different. Teachers do need support to offer the differentiated instruction required. Overall this is the first time in several years that I feel hopeful about the direction of the district, but I am concerned about these specific cuts and am not convinced all are necessary to pass the budget. (I do worry about the cuts to maintenance as well, but understand we need to cut somewhere)	1/17/2018 5:47 PM
203	It's well past time to come up with better ways to fund education in Vermont. Taxpayers are tapped out. With enrollment decreasing, taxes should not be increasing.	1/17/2018 5:36 PM
204	I strongly oppose cutting 3 elementary teachers and cutting 6 of 12 interventionists. My children attend SA. Fortunately, our family is middle class and my children have no special needs. However, many of their classmates do. I do not understand (nor believe) that cutting teachers in elementary schools will help with closing the achievement gap. In addition, I am incredibly happy with how SA is weaving the concept of sustainability throughout the curriculum and view SA as a successful magnet school.	1/17/2018 5:23 PM
205	Why don't we have a choice that reads I am NOT likely to support a school budget that is greater than cost of living increases for those on a fixed budget.	1/17/2018 5:16 PM



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206	<p>All I can say is a property tax increase of even 7 percent right after a teachers strike where the unions demands were out of step with reality, plus the renewal of the Burlington superintendent's contract without public input, strikes me as taxation without clear-headed, rational representation. We own a house in Burlington, after scrimping and saving our entire lives. My wife is a professor at UVM. I am an instructor for a university in another state. We deeply value education and sympathize with the teachers, but the taxes in Burlington and Vermont are beyond anything a person who is not a dogmatic progressive ideologue can stomach. If my property tax bill goes up 10 percent we will be looking to move. We are trying to do good work, contribute positively to our community and raise children who love Vermont and want to make it a better place. We also want to try to build a nest egg and save for retirement, but all of the added costs of dealing with the winter and the shockingly convoluted tax structure makes it extremely hard to see how that will be possible here. Burlington is at a true precipice regarding the cost of living and taxes if it wants to recruit and retain the creative middle class and their education-focused children. The rhetoric must begin to speak to reality. The lake (our drinking water) needs to be cleaned up, there are billions in unfunded pensions, the infrastructure is crumbling, the tax base and student population is shrinking and yet our school board is demanding that we must pay 7-10 percent more on an already absurdly high education property tax rate? It is a farce. And I have heard no one apologize or even take responsibility for the out-of-control spending. They just blame and blame and expect that the proletariat will take it and ask for another. Good luck with that.</p>	1/17/2018 5:06 PM
207	<p>Continuing to have cuts especially at the high school level is unacceptable for another year. I will not support a budget that continues to make cuts to direct student education and support.</p>	1/17/2018 4:54 PM
208	<p>Public education is underfunded and is a bargain! At VT Commons, high school tuition is \$24,975 and they do not pay their teachers as the professionals that they are! Why do we expect to be able to do it for less? We cannot afford to support our most precious resource, our children, on the cheap and expect good outcomes. In addition, we must send the message to Governor Scott that we will not allow you tear down public education by supporting the policies of the present administration in Washington, D.C. I fully support a 10% increase in my property taxes if that is what is needed for our students.</p>	1/17/2018 4:21 PM
209	<p>Governor Scott needs to be responsive to the needs of the students of Burlington. He should be truthful that he ignores Burlington and supports rural schools. Rural community voted him in. He wants to be reelected. The administration is too large, unnecessary and expensive to maintain. The focus should remain in direct services provided to our needy community. Direct service is what will CLOSE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP. Teachers ARE doing the work. Listen to the teachers.</p>	1/17/2018 4:04 PM
210	<p>Here are some additional questions I did not get a chance to ask last night at the Board meeting:          1. Where/how will the new EL 1 FTE staff position be utilized?          2. What is the BHS World Language cost of \$20k for?          3. Please explain how the Jolly Phonics Curriculum will support the elementary school classrooms. Will teachers need training? Are there training funds already in the budget? Is this software or tech, and if so, will the curriculum supplant direct teacher-student contact time? If so, how much per student? Will the purchase require additional funds in future years? What are we buying for \$40k?          3. What is Non-Instructional Supervision for?          4. How will the \$7k dual language exploration funds be used?          5. Are there any cost-sharing opportunities with Winooski or So Burlington?          6. Can we please have the elementary class student: teacher ratios for Winooski &amp; So. Burlington</p>	1/17/2018 3:33 PM
211	<p>Where is the cool half million you saved when you forced the teachers to strike with that imposition? There's you interventionists!</p>	1/17/2018 3:21 PM
212	<p>Excellence requires investment. Also, thanks for doing this survey.</p>	1/17/2018 3:07 PM
213	<p>I understand the need to fund schools, and challenges with funding at the state level, but the education tax rate has been increasing at a rapid rate each year. This is unsustainable and something needs to change so that people can continue to afford to live here.</p>	1/17/2018 3:03 PM
214	<p>How can we close or reduce the achievement gap when the proposal from our superintendent is to cut the very people working closest to those in academic need? The 6 interventionists proposed to be cut will result in greater needs at the elementary school. If we must make cuts we must look elsewhere.</p>	1/17/2018 2:33 PM

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215	<p>Yikes. This on top of - August: Vermonters receive news that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBS-VT) insurance premiums will rise 9.2%, the largest increase ever. For a standard family silver level plan, this means an increase of nearly \$113 per month, or \$1,352 per year. November: The administration announces that homeowners can expect a 9.4 cent increase in their property taxes next year. On a \$200,000 house, this would mean an increase of \$188 on a family's property tax bill. December: Green Mountain Power announces they have reached an agreement with the Public Service Board for a 5% rate increase. This constitutes another \$80 million out of Vermonters pockets. Where will your family be coming up with an extra \$2,000???</p>	1/17/2018 2:23 PM
216	<p>Our district can no longer suffer cuts that affect our children or quality of our schools. Continued cuts will have long-term effects on Burlington's ability to attract and retain high-quality teachers and provide students with the education they deserve. This will in turn deter families from moving here, discourage businesses from investing, and lead to lower property values. This is everyone's fight. We have to say no to Montpelier and invest in our schools.</p>	1/17/2018 1:48 PM
217	<p>The year to year tax changes are a struggle as a Burlington resident. I want strong schools for my kids with fair wages and smart investments. As a tax payer though, I also want to make sure I can continue to afford my home in five years' time. Were the school board to develop and promote a five-year plan with estimated investments (e.g. so I know I'm not looking at 10% increases every year), I would be more likely to vote to support an increase beyond 7%.</p>	1/17/2018 1:43 PM
218	<p>We need to be making investments in our public education system so that it provides a truly equitable and supported education for ALL students. For too long we've been short-changing schools to fund bonds on the city side of the fiscal ledger, all the while watching state and city supports slide backward. We can't keep cutting our way out of this and we need to be making more investments in our kids. The money we spend on supporting and educating our kids is the best tax money we can spend.</p>	1/17/2018 1:28 PM
219	<p>I don't support a budget that will eliminate interventionists. These are very important professionals in our schools and essential for the success of many children (including mine) who don't qualify for IEPs but need more individualized instruction to get close to grade level.</p>	1/17/2018 1:24 PM

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