

Town Meeting Day is March 5th!

Visit www.bsdt.org/budget for complete budget and voting information.

BALLOT LANGUAGE

Shall the voters of the Burlington School District approve the school board to expend \$119,604,584, which is the amount the school board has deemed necessary for the support of the school system for the ensuing fiscal year?

PROPOSED BUDGET AT A GLANCE

Total Current Year (FY24) Budget	\$104.1 million
Annual Increases to Wages, Health Insurance, Debt Service, Utilities, etc.	+ \$5.9 million
BHS/BTC 2025 Borrowing	+ \$9.5 million
Modest Strategic Plan Investments (literacy, leadership, recruitment, mental health)	+ \$1.2 million
Offsetting Reductions (Central Office staff and budget, 4 FTE teaching positions)	- \$1.1 million
Total Proposed FY25 Budget	\$119.6 million
Increase from FY 2024	14.84%



TAX IMPACT ESTIMATES

The estimates below show scenarios for if we qualify for a tax break from ACT 127 and if we do not. In either scenario, 9% of the increase is due to the decline in Burlington's CLA. See reverse for more information.

	WITH Act 127 Tax Cap	WITHOUT Act 127 Tax Cap
Property Tax Payer	13.97% Increase	15.6% Increase
Impact on \$370K homestead	\$749	\$836
Income Tax Payer	10.99% Increase	10.99% Increase
Impact Tax \$50k income	\$134	\$134



BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

1. Budget includes first bond payments for new high school and technical center!
2. Burlington's CLA adjustment raises tax impact from 5% to 13.49% (the CLA has no connection to school budget decisions; see more on the back of this document).
3. The BHS/BTC bond, wages, benefits, and increased operating costs account for 93% of new spending.
4. Nearly all strategic investments are offset by reductions in other areas.



What's the story behind our budget?
Turn this this page over to learn more!

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What is the Story Behind this Budget?

We entered into this year's budgeting cycle prepared to face three major challenges. First, we knew that ESSER funds (Federal COVID-relief funds) would no longer be available. We also knew that wages and benefits were increasing and that this would be the first year that we saw a major impact from our bond to build a new high school and technical center (\$9.5 million). As we worked to cushion the impact of these for taxpayers, the State provided two sets of bad news for school districts. In December we learned that there was not enough money in state education fund to keep community tax rates down. Then, in January, we learned that an adjustment for Burlington's Common Level of Appraisal would itself cause taxes to increase 8%.

The proposed budget responds to these budget pressures by including reductions in Central Office operations and some strategic positions, resulting in about \$1.1m in reductions. It also minimizes impacts on staffing, retains the current level of art positions in elementary schools, and provides us with about \$1.1m in modest investments in areas such as literacy, mental health support, magnet schools, and our strategic plan.

How Does the ACT 127 Tax Cap Apply to Our Budget?

The new Weighted Pupil Law, ACT 127, includes a provision which caps the tax impacts of district spending at 5%. (This is separate from the CLA, noted below.) However, the Vermont Legislature is actively working to repeal the cap. The good news in Burlington is that we developed this budget with the long-term impact in mind and specially worked to limit additional spending. If the cap goes away, our equalized tax rate would only increase from 5% to 6.51%.

The Impact of the CLA - Why We're Projecting a 13.97% Tax Impact

The CLA is causing a 9% Tax Impact, unrelated to school spending decisions.

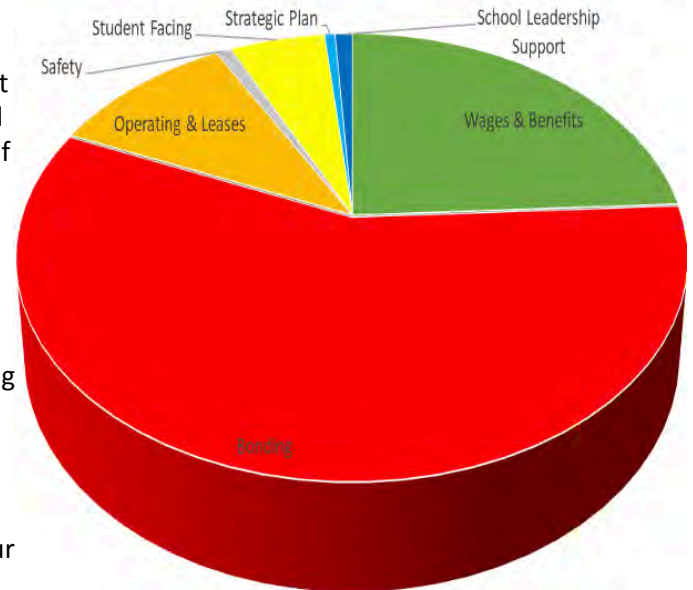
The CLA is a measure of how closely property in a community is valued (for tax purposes) at fair market value. It is designed to ensure that everyone who pays Education Property Tax in Vermont pays based on the fair market value of their property. Basically, when home values increase without being officially reappraised, the value of the property for tax purposes falls below fair market value; the CLA attempts to make up for this by increasing the tax rate during school budget season. This year's CLA came in at -7.87%, driving the tax impact of our budget up nine percentage points. **Because of the CLA, the only way to get a tax impact of less than 10% would be to cut staffing levels by 50 full-time employees (nearly 12%).**

How Does Borrowing for the BHS/BTC Project Impact this Budget?

Costs of Borrowing are in-line with District estimates!

The biggest tax impact of the BHS/BTC project will happen in FY25. We are projecting the project to have +10% impact on taxes, which is in line with our initial estimate that the bond would have a 9.5% impact this year. Without the bond and the CLA, this year's budget would have resulted in a tax reduction!

Proportion of Increased Spending



Development of BSD's budget is informed by the District's Strategic Plan and our North Star: every learner is challenged, empowered, and engaged. Turn this document over to learn more about the budget.