

**Missisquoi Valley School District
Budget Community Input Forum
MVU School Library
Board Meeting Minutes
January 16, 2024**

Location: The MVSD Board and Administration participated at the Missisquoi Valley Union School Library for the Budget Informational meeting. The meeting was held hybrid with remote access for the community and other interested persons.

Date: January 16, 2024

Board Members

Renick Darnell-Martin, Devin Bachelder, Don Collins, Joanne Johnston, Peter Magnant, Tobias Maguire, Jen Chevalier, attended remotely

Administration

Julie Regimbal, Superintendent, Lora McAllister, Business Manager, Rusty Gregory, MVSD Director of Technology, School Board Secretary Pierrette Bouchard (attended remotely)

Visitors Present in Person/Virtually

Comments/Questions- Yvon Dandurand, Chevon Cooper, Brooks Sturtevant

Call the Meeting to Order

Renick Darnell-Martin called the meeting to order at 7:06PM

Correspondence, Visitors, and Public Comments

To hear the public comments, follow the link below:

[MVSD Board Meetings on Northwest Access TV](#)

MVSD Budget Input Presentation

Devin Bachelder reported that they held a community budget survey in the fall where over 20% of the respondents were residents without children in the school system. This is a significant increase in input from those stakeholders. The top priorities from the survey were Instructional Programs, Success After High School, Teacher recruitment and retention and School Facilities Investment. The District Goals adopted by the Board align with the priorities from the survey. Joanne Johnston reported that they have implemented intervention services in reading and math, professional learning for teachers to support instruction, increased tutoring for students who are struggling, and a new math program resulting in improved math results. They have proposed keeping Intervention positions and supports to address gaps resulting from COVID. They are proposing adding new class offerings to reduce study halls at MVU. They are adding a social studies for MVU, teachers for alternative classroom in Swanton and MVU Middle School. They are proposing to purchase an evidence-based Reading program and Professional Development for teachers.

With strategies for success after graduation, they reported the following in progress:

- Added Ag. Teaching Staff and Professional Learning
- Added hours to AG to meet CTE requirements
- Increased Work Based Learning experiences
- Increased access to NCTC for grade 10 students
- PLP teacher focused on Flexible pathways
- Aspirations work with VSAC
- Software to facilitate WBL pathways
- After School experiences for career exploration

They have proposed the following in the budget:

- Added .5 FTE Business Teacher
- Continued and expanded partnerships with community partners for internships, job shadows, work and career explorations
- Development of program to train youth in leadership and employ them in afterschool program with younger students

Peter Magnant reported on the progress of the capital projects for the facilities:

- MVU Roof Project
- New LED lighting in all schools
- Highgate HVAC in most of brick building
- New sign at MVU
- Air purification in all buildings
- Expansion of Franklin Central School
- New Kitchen Hood and Fire suppression in Highgate
- Begin process over several years to have conditioned air in Swanton Elementary
- Security Cameras and building access
- New windows for Babcock building this summer

Peter reported that he has proposed the following capital projects in the FY25 Budget:

- Highgate
 - Brick Building new roof after many failed repairs
 - Fire alarms replacement
 - Basketball hoops
- Swanton
 - Babcock roof replacement
 - Central roof repair
 - Stormwater
 - PA system
- MVU
 - Parking lot resurfacing phase 1
 - Parking lot lighting
 - Roof next phase
 - Field Hockey Scoreboard
- Franklin:
 - Security cameras

Devin reported on the following comparison from FY24 to FY25 Budget:

	FY24	FY25	Variance
Expenditure Budget	\$44,983,567	\$53,222,437	\$8,238,870
Education Spending	\$33,981,084	\$42,327,407	\$8,346,323
Est. Spending per LTW ADM	\$11,858 (if Act 127)	\$13,043	\$1,184

Devin went over the Homestead Property Tax Estimates:

FY25 Proposed Budget (DRAFT)	\$53,222,437
Less Projected Revenues	-\$10,895,030
Remaining is : "Education Spending"	\$42,327,407
MVSD FY25 Estimated LTW ADM	3,245.32
Education Spending per LTW ADM	\$13,043
Est. Property Dollar "Yield"	\$9,171
Est. Eq. Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.422
Est. Eq. Homestead Tax Rate W/ 5% Cap	\$1.299

Devin went on to explain the estimated tax rates as they are impacted by the Common Level of Appraisal in each town.

Same Home in 2024 with CLA Change	Franklin	Highgate	Swanton
2024 Appraised Value	\$83,760	\$85,180	\$89,540
2024 CLA	0.7285	0.7883	0.7898
2024 Taxable Value	\$114,976	\$108,055	\$113,370
2024 Equalized Tax Rate	1.2990	1.2990	1.2990
Total Tax	\$1,494	\$1,404	\$1,473
Tax increase	\$256.44 (20.73%)	\$166.54 (13.46%)	\$235.58 (\$19.04%)
Tax Increase From School Budget	\$61.86 (5.00%)	\$61.86 (5.00%)	\$61.86 (5.00%)
Tax Increase From Change in Taxable Value	\$194.58 (15.73%)	\$104.68 (8.46%)	\$173.72 (14.04%)

The equalized tax rate is 1.299 but with the CLA impact, it results in a different tax rate in each town. The following is the result of the CLA impact in each town:

	Franklin	Highgate	Swanton
A Taxable Value	100,000	100,000	100,000
B Common Level of Appraisal (CLA)	0.7285	0.7883	0.7898
C Town Appraised Value [A x B]	72,850	78,830	78,980
D Total Tax	\$1,299	\$1,299	\$1,299
Calculated Tax Rate [C / D]	\$1.7831	\$1.6478	\$1.6447

Town specific tax rates that appear on tax bills are different, but only to account for the difference in appraised value of homes with the same market (taxable) value. Homes with the same market value are taxed equally in all three towns in our district.

Devin provided an overview of Act 127. Act 127 is a law designed to improve student equity across the state. It redesigned how pupils are weighted in order to more equitably fund the needs of students, particularly those living in poverty, and in rural/sparse communities, or are English Language Learners. MVSD has been highly advantaged by this shift. Our budget has been strategically developed to invest in our schools with a minimal increase to our equalized educational tax rate. Devin went over the tax capacity that Act 127 provides for our district. The first 0 to 5% Increased Tax Capacity funds the interventions and services students needed. The 5% Tax Rate Cap protects the taxpayers from future tax rate increases and lowers risk. On January 12th, an update was made to the Property Dollar Yield that had the effect of increasing tax rates across the state by 3% for any district with spending below this Tax Rate Cap. 9.9% Cap on spending per LTW ADM allows our community to invest in much needed and deferred capital projects. Devin explained that by completing these capital projects, this strategy will protect us next year if the legislature changes the cap or the yield, MVSD can shave the capital projects back and guard us from large tax rate increases.

Questions and Answer Period

Questions from the visitors attending included additional clarity on the caps, capital projects and what happens if the legislature makes changes to the law.

For more and additional details regarding the PowerPoint Presentation and the questions/comments from visitors, please view the January 16th meeting date video below:

[MVSD Board Meetings on Northwest Access TV](#)

Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm