



FY24 Voter Guide



A Word on the Budget

The Fairfax School Board recognizes the challenges in the community in the current financial climate. This naturally makes budgeting a top priority, as it always is, to control expenditures within the school. In the current fiscal year, FY23, Fairfax has the third lowest Homestead Education Property Tax rate in the State according to the Vermont Department of Taxes. We look to continue this trend and are forwarding on to the voters a budget in which there are very few additions. We have a surplus from FY22 due mostly to the labor shortage and some positions going unfilled, as previously noted. The Board debated heavily on how this surplus should be allocated back to the taxpayers and came to the decision that it will be brought forward to offset both the FY24 and FY25 budgets. The reason for splitting this between two fiscal years is to not artificially lower the tax burden in one year to the detriment of the next. We also have the added line item in the budget of "debt services", but even with this extra expenditure we are still on target to remain one of the lowest spending districts in the state while continuing to support students with offerings to promote success within the school and beyond.

Scott Mitchell, Fairfax School Board Chair



**SCHOOL
INFORMATIONAL
PRESENTATION**

**Saturday,
March 4th**
10am • BFA
Elementary Gym

**TOWN
INFORMATIONAL
PRESENTATION**

**Immediately following
school presentation**
Elementary Gym

Vote Early

At the Fairfax Town
Clerk's Office NOW until
Friday, March 3rd at 4pm

Voting Day

Tuesday, March 7th
7am-7pm • BFA Middle School Gym

**Vote by
Mail-in Ballot**
Request from the
Town Clerk's Office

Fairfax Town Clerk's Office: 12 Buck Hollow Road, Fairfax, VT 05454 • (802) 849-6111 • clerk@fairfax-vt.gov

**FAIRFAX
SCHOOL BOARD**

EMAIL
fxboard@fwsu.org

WEBSITE
fwsu.org/page/bfa-fairfax-board

TWITTER **INSTAGRAM** **FACEBOOK**
@FWSU

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Partial-interest bond payment included
- Fiscal responsibility
- Reduced contracted services amounts
- Reduced co-curricular wages
- Settled Master Agreement for Teachers
- Addition of High School Teaching & Learning Coach
- 12.7% insurance increase (as dictated by State-wide bargaining)
- Refresh of new technology 1:1 lease



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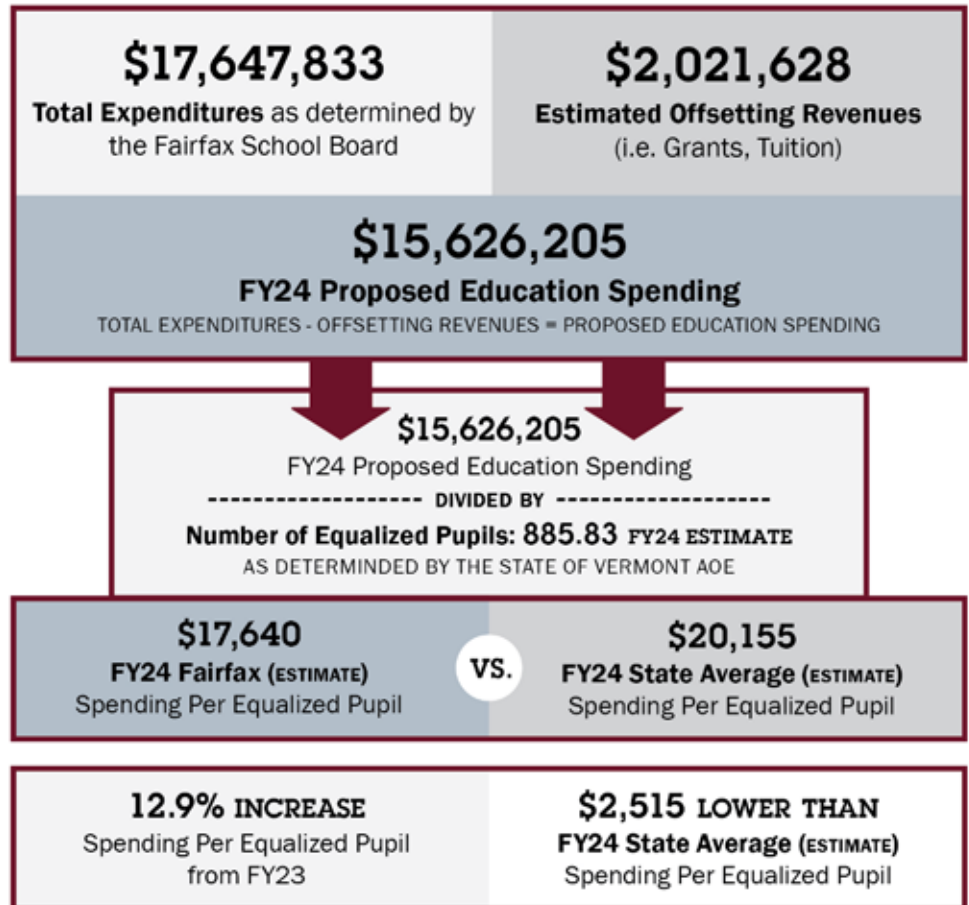
On the Ballot: Article 2

ARTICLE 2: Shall the voters of said school district approve the school board to expend \$17,647,833 which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$17,640.19 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 12.90% higher than spending for the current year.

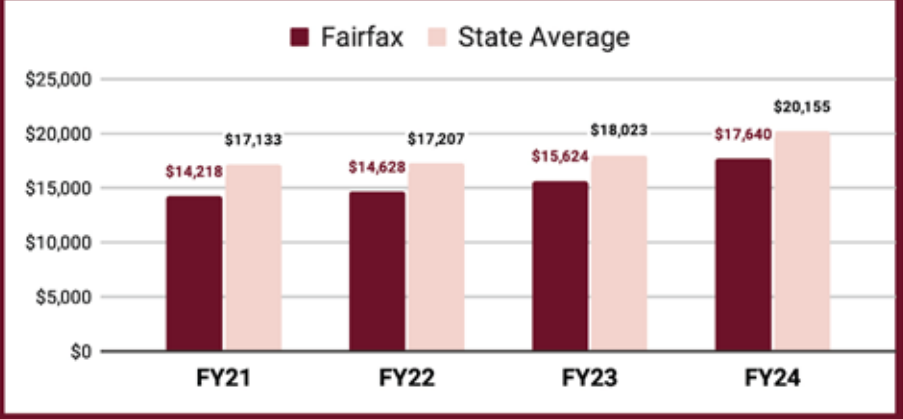
Understanding the Budget

On January 18th, 2023 the Fairfax School Board approved a budget of \$17,647,833 for the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24). This represents a spending increase of 12.38% over the current year's budget. The state formula calculates this to be an estimated 6.97% tax increase (see "Estimated Property Tax" and "CLA: Common Level of Appraisal" tables below for more information). Check out the Budget Highlights panel (left) to see all this year's budget entails; approval by voters would allow the school board and administrators to continue to provide high-quality instruction that ensures student success at BFA Fairfax.

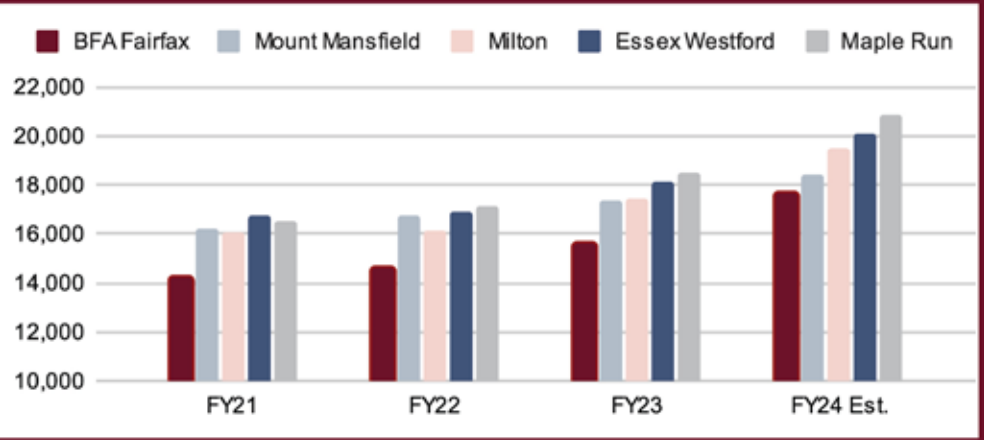
Summary of Budget Impact



FAIRFAX VS. STATE AVERAGE PER PUPIL SPENDING



EDUCATION SPENDING PER EQUALIZED PUPIL COMPARISON



BFA K-12 ENROLLMENT

	2021-22	2022-23 (as of 1/31/23)	2023-24 (Projected)
PK 3	19	17	18
PK 4	19	25	21
Kindergarten	75	59	68
Grade 1	67	75	60
Grade 2	81	68	75
Grade 3	65	82	68
Grade 4	65	64	84
Grade 5	72	66	65
Grade 6	68	71	67
Grade 7	71	82	72
Grade 8	65	74	82
Grade 9	71	64	75
Grade 10	68	68	64
Grade 11	72	75	68
Grade 12	83	63	76
ES Total	391	390	394
MS Total	276	293	286
HS Total	294	270	283
	961	953	963

	FY23	FY24 EST.	INCREASE
Home Value	1.0092	1.0796	0.0704
\$300,000	\$3,028	\$3,239	\$211
\$350,000	\$3,532	\$3,779	\$246
\$400,000	\$4,037	\$4,318	\$282
\$450,000	\$4,541	\$4,858	\$317
\$500,000	\$5,046	\$5,398	\$352

Estimated Property Tax Impact

<< HOMESTEAD TAX RATE

This table reflects totals prior to the property tax adjustments due to income sensitivity. Tax implications can vary based on information released by the state. This Homestead Education Property Tax Rate is based on the per-pupil spending as determined by the FY24 budget.

Understanding the Tax Increase

Public schools are funded in part through residential property taxes. Some communities have higher property values, so the legislature designed the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) to ensure all districts contribute their fair share to the Education Fund. Houses in Fairfax have been selling for more than their appraised value, leading to a drop

CLA: COMMON LEVEL OF APPRAISAL				
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Fairfax	89.19%	85.93%	116.28%	105.56%

in the CLA. As CLA decreases, local residential property tax rates increase due to town reappraisal. Public Schools are also funded by non-homestead property tax, state sales, use, meals, and rooms taxes. This year these revenues to the Education Fund are projected to be healthy, resulting in the Fairfax School Board's ability to propose a budget with a 12.38% education spending increase and property tax payers can expect to see only a 6.97% increase in property tax rates.