

# Winooski School District Budget 2015

**Winooski School District ENDS Statement** *All students will graduate from the Winooski School District (WSD) college and career ready at a cost supported by a majority of the Winooski community. WSD students will lead healthy, productive and successful lives and engage with their local and global community.*

## Building our Community!

As we remodel our educational system to meet the ever-increasing demands of 21st century life, it's more important than ever that we are clear about the priorities of our school district and the larger community. In a word, it is not easy to face the reality of rising expenses in the context of limited resources. The WSD Board of trustees, administration and community members began meeting in November to examine budget priorities in the context of WSD's new ENDS Statement and our desire to personalize learning.

The budget cycle started with challenging news from Governor Shumlin and Department of Taxes Commissioner Peterson as their November 26, 2013 memos outlined a \$0.05 increase in the base homestead property tax rate and a decrease in the base education amount. In late December, both of these figures were adjusted which increased the base homestead property tax rate by \$0.07 and modestly increased the base education amount. Overall, this adjustment provided schools with a difficult hill to climb in building budgets.

New Superintendent of Schools, Sean



*Winooski students practice their problem-solving skills at a "Community Reads" program on engineering.*

McMannon, and his staff presented information on enrollment, staffing, special education, English Language Learners, information technology and operations and maintenance to build the context for the board. Notably, we are experiencing more students with disabilities in the higher-need Intensive category than ever before and our ELL population has grown from 128 to 265 students in the past seven years.

The budget includes the following investments:

- **\$25K to redesign a Curriculum and ELL Director position** so our current Special Education Director

can focus sharply on our students with disabilities and build a more robust early learning continuum for Winooski children ages 3-5. The Curriculum and ELL Director position will primarily concentrate on the needs of our blossoming ELL population while also coordinating K-12 curriculum, instruction and assessment.

- **\$60K to improve capacity in the area of technology.** This will allow for a full-time Webmaster to improve our website and serve the day-to-day needs of staff and students. It also

provides a K-12 Data Manager to build a student-centered data system to monitor student growth and evaluate our instructional efforts over time.

These investments coupled with reductions of over \$300K from the baseline budget resulted in a board-approved budget of \$13,419,758, an increase of 6.27% over last year.

### WSD BOTTOM LINE

CATEGORY	% INCREASE	DOLLAR AMOUNT
Salaries and Benefits	2.8%	\$354,000
Special Education Tuitions	2.6%	\$326,000
Tech Center Tuitions	.6%	\$71,000
Other	.27%	\$40,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6.27%</b>	<b>\$791,000</b>

### WANT MORE BUDGET INFORMATION?

**Monday, February 17, 2014**

*Televised Presentation*  
Channel 17 - 5:25-5:55 p.m.

**Wednesday, February 19, 2014**

*Community Dinner*  
WSD Cafeteria - 5:00 p.m.

**Monday, March 3, 2014**

*Annual Meeting* - Performing Arts Center  
Winooski Educational Center  
6:00 p.m. - City Budget Presentation  
7:30 p.m. - School Budget Presentation

# College & Career Readiness

The Winooski and Burlington School Districts are innovative, collaborative, and equitable learning organizations that inspire all learners to lead their communities to a

dynamic and sustainable future. The five levers of this vision are:

- Personalized & Proficiency-Based Learning
- Teaching & Learning Environments
- Community-Based Learning
- Youth Engagement & Leadership, and
- Family & School Partnerships



WHS teachers and students, supported by the Partnership for Change, and with community input, have developed challenging standards for Winooski students to meet. This is one of the initial steps in moving to a personalized and proficiency-based learning environment. The Graduate Expectations (GXs) below will be coupled with essential content standards in areas such as Math and Science to become our proficiency-based graduation requirements. It is no longer about seat time. It is about students demonstrating their learning in a variety of ways to meet rigorous standards.

## Here are the GXs:

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Physical, Social, and Emotional Well-Being
- Effective Oral and Written Communication
- Engagement in Learning
- Persistence
- Cross-Cultural Understanding and Community Engagement



## "BRAIN IN, BODY IN"

What does this mean? It means that children are paying attention and actively participating in their learning. "Brain in and body in" increases the rigor in the classroom and holds children responsible for their learning. This is one

example of the **Social Thinking** program that is in the second year of implementation at JFK and new to the middle school this year. Social Thinking is based on how expected or unexpected behaviors impact the individual, classmates, adults and the broader community. We want children to realize that expected

behaviors bring "green thoughts" or good thoughts and this will impact their relationships in a positive way. Also, students learn and practice specific strategies to manage challenges that arise.

In addition to Social Thinking, nearly half of JFK classrooms are practicing

## mindfulness

on a daily basis.

Mindfulness is the act of bringing one's complete attention to the present moment.

This calming and focusing practice complements Social Thinking by providing both a proactive

and responsive strategy to stress. Students and teachers have remarked about how much they enjoy this part of their day and how much it helps them learn and cope with stressors in their life.



## MATH BEST PRACTICES

All K-12 math teachers have been working collaboratively to increase their mathematical knowledge and to focus on promoting high-level student discussion about math in our classrooms. Over the course of a year, our teachers, coaches, and administrators meet four or five times for a "studio day".

During "studio day" teachers design a plan that involves the "live" rehearsal of a lesson, observe each other teach, gather and analyze student data, and create the next steps of learning for students. The focus is on the big mathematical ideas and how students learn math. Research tells us that students learn math by doing math, making mistakes, reflecting on their thinking and verbalizing their learning with others. Early observations in classrooms show that teachers have put these practices in place thoughtfully and quickly.





# Parent & Community Engagement



## PARENTS AS EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

Nearly twenty parents of New American students are attending the first Parents as Educational Partners (PEP) class this year. Parents were given a tour of the facilities by Special Services & ELL Director Robin Hood. Also, they participated in a School Scavenger Hunt of the district in small groups accompanied by ELL instructors. They learned about key locations in the school such as the cafeteria, the main office and their children's classrooms. In each room they had a short discussion about what their children do in the specific space. Parents have been learning about the tardy and attendance procedures and how to contact the school if their child will be tardy or sick. They are also practicing using English to call the school with different scenarios such as asking about student progress and preparing for parent-teacher conferences. It is great to see parents learning about our school with the purpose of supporting their children's learning!

## K-12 WELCOME BACK BBQ

The first ever K-12 "Welcome Back BBQ" was held on August 21st. It was a great success! Winooski students and parents were greeted by WSD staff and enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by the Abbey Group on a beautiful summer evening. After dinner,



parents and students visited their new classrooms and teachers to build excitement about the new school year and lessen any "butterflies" about the first day of school. Winooski parents said "Loved it!", "Great to see school opened up to everyone.", "It was very welcoming," and "Hope to have more experiences like this."

## Parents & Community Together Supporting Schools (PACTS)

The PACTS group has continued to support students in a variety of ways. They were a huge contributor to the first ever K-12 "Welcome Back BBQ" and continue to organize the popular "Community Reads" celebration each month. The Communications subcommittee is researching language translation equipment so all parents in our community can participate in school activities. Also, the Transitions subcommittee is planning important parent informational sessions for the significant student transitions in our school such as Kindergarten to 1st grade, 5th grade to middle school and middle school to high school. However, the most important aspect of this group is that parents and educators gather every other month to share dinner and build meaningful relationships with the purpose of supporting our children. Please check the school calendar for the next PACTS meeting and join us!



## Newsletter of the Winooski School District

Winooski School District  
60 Normand Street  
Winooski, VT 05404

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### Contact Info for School Board and Superintendent

#### School Board:

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Julian Portilla - 399-0241

#### Superintendent:

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smcmannon@wsdschools.org

\* DO YOUR PART \*

**VOTE!**

MARCH 4, 2014

POSTAL PATRON

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*

WINOOSKI, VT 05404

## Details You Need To Know

### ISSUES TO BE VOTED ON

#### Property Tax Relief

If your adjusted gross household income is less than \$99,000 you are likely to be eligible for a reduction of your education property tax.

Eligibility for property tax relief is based on your household income, home value, and city school tax rate, and will be applied to your 2014-15 tax bill. Renters may also be eligible. The maximum 2014 Property Tax Adjustment is \$8,000.

Instructions and forms are in the Vermont income tax booklet, which is available in post offices, libraries, city/town halls or from the Vermont Department of Taxes. Forms can be downloaded at <http://www.state.vt.us/tax/formsincome.shtml>

### BALLOT QUESTIONS

#### ARTICLE I:

Elect a Moderator and Clerk.

#### ARTICLE II:

Shall the District accept the 2014 Annual Report and all included sub reports?

#### ARTICLE III:

Shall the Board of School Trustees be authorized to allow appropriate groups and agencies to use school facilities and equipment in accordance with District policies?

### AUSTRALIAN BALLOT ARTICLES

#### ARTICLE IV:

Shall the District accept and expend the sum of One million, Six hundred twenty-seven thousand, and One hundred eighty-six dollars (\$1,627,186) or whatever sum is provided by federal programs for the support of compensatory education and special programs? Said sum shall be exclusively federal funds received by the District. (No local or statewide school property taxes included in these funds.)

#### ARTICLE V:

Shall the District vote to appropriate the sum of Thirteen million, Four hundred nineteen thousand, Seven hundred fifty-eight dollars (\$13,419,758) for the support of public schools for the period July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015? Said sum shall include the amount anticipated from state and federal education aid and reimbursements, except as provided in Article IV above, and all other sources of revenue.

#### ARTICLE VI:

Shall The Winooski School District No.17, allocate its current fund balance, without effect upon the District tax levy, as follows: assign One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) of the current fund balance as revenue for the 2014-2015 operating budget and assign the remaining balance to the capital reserve account.

*VOTE on March 4, 2014 at the Senior Center on Barlow Street, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.*