



Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Development Process

*Board Meeting
February 12th, 2025*



Tonight's Goals



- Share knowns and unknowns
- Begin to discuss the paths forward
- Begin to discuss the target
- Identify next steps for community input

Budget-Building



- Requests from staff and community
- Cost projections
- Building / Program Admins
- “Collaborative Budget Meetings”
- Barb / Matt / Jon

YOU ARE
HERE

- Budget Workshops & Board Meetings
- Continual Honing
- Refined Cost Projections
- Final Proposed Budget

Votes:

- 1) Board,
- 2) Public Budget Meeting,
- 3) Budget Referendum

Back of your minds...

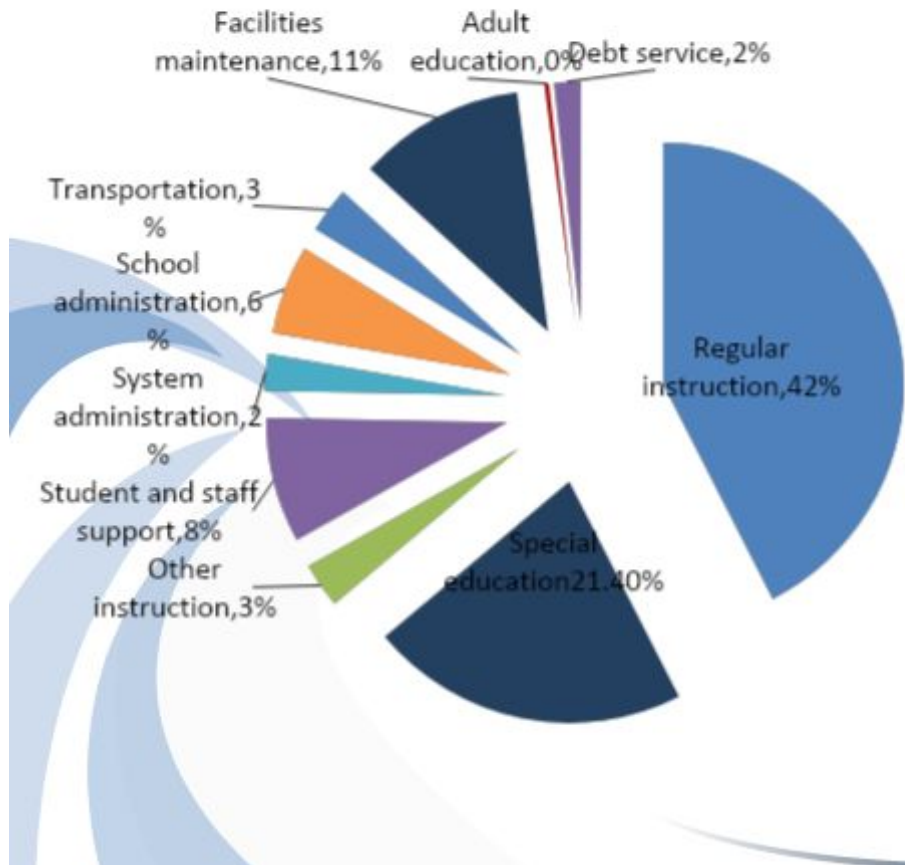


- CDS services
- Grants much less available
- Cuts in FY24 and FY25
(263 full-time equivalent → 246)
- Valuations are a 3-year average
- Federal Funds (~\$1.4M total)
 - Titles IA, IIA, IV-A
 - Local Entitlement
 - eRate

RSU 34 Expenses



GENERAL FUND - EXPENDITURES PIE CHART

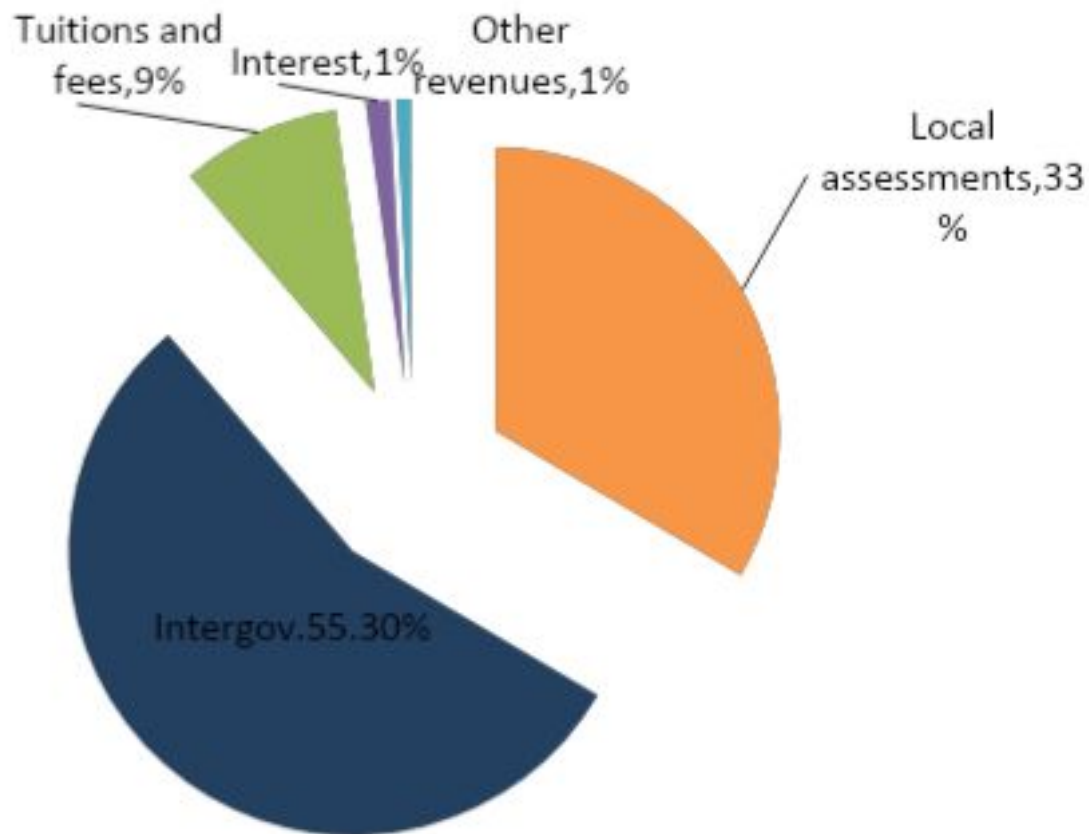


State-wide averages – June 30, 2023

Cost center	
Regular instruction	38.96%
Special education instruction	17.83%
Career and tech instruction	1.54%
Other instruction	2.23%
Student and staff Support	8.19%
System administration	3.51%
School administration	5.25%
Transportation and buses	5.60%
Facilities maintenance	11.17%
Debt service	5.42%
All other	.30%

Regular Instruction,
Special Ed Instruction,
Other Instruction:
RSU34 66.4%
State 59.02%

RSU 34 Revenues



Source: RSU 34 Audit

Recent Tax “asks”



FY21 4.19% overall budget increase resulting in the following tax impact by town:

- Alton: **-\$3,480.71 (0.67% decrease)**
- Bradley: **-\$5,823.63 (0.44% decrease)**
- Old Town: **-\$32,769.29 (0.61% decrease)**

FY22 0.38% overall budget increase resulting in the following tax impact by town:

- Alton: \$4,936.81 (0.95% increase)
 - Bradley: **-\$1,045.27 (0.08% decrease)**
 - Old Town: **-\$106,573.24 (1.98% decrease)**
- *Additional state funding further decreased the ask by a \$28,512
*Additional state funding further decreased the ask by a \$73,226.67
*Additional state funding further decreased the ask by a \$289,472

FY23 6.91% overall budget increase resulting in the following tax impact by town:

- Alton: \$23,610.15 (4.51% increase)
- Bradley: \$23,115.98 (1.77% increase)
- Old Town: \$48,527.12 (0.92% increase)

FY24 3.16% overall budget increase resulting in the following tax impact by town:

- Alton: \$35,359.08 (6.46% increase)
- Bradley: \$68,567.75 (5.16% increase)
- Old Town: \$433,838.55 (8.17% increase)

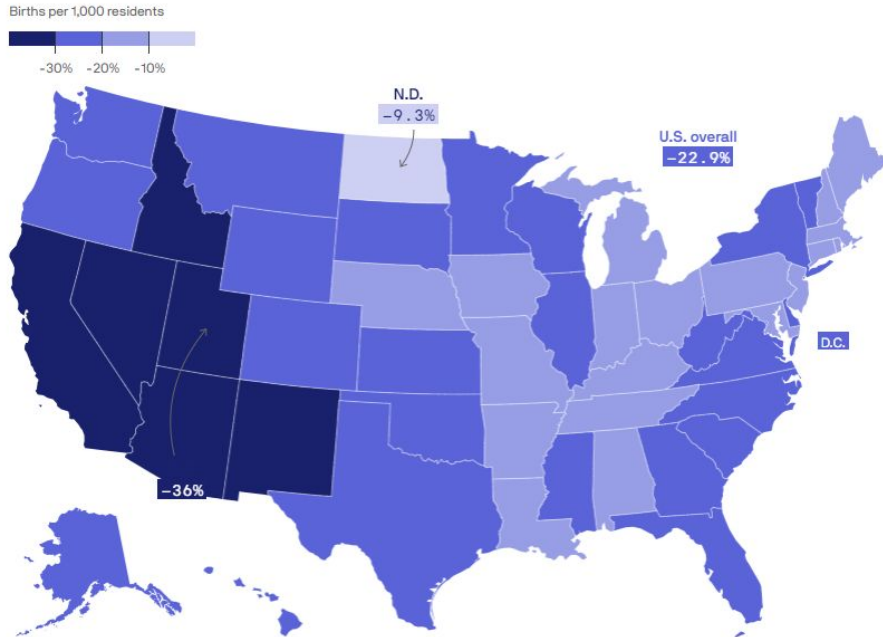
FY25 2.64% overall budget increase resulting in the following tax impact by town:

- Alton: \$21,224.33 (3.64% increase)
- Bradley: \$28,380.31 (2.03% increase)
- Old Town: \$505,799.21 (8.80% increase)

U.S. Birth Data



Change in birth rates, 2007 to 2022



Data: CDC; Map: Axios Visuals

From: 2000 To: 2024

Zoom: 10Y 20Y 30Y 40Y 50Y All



Maine -18.0% from 2007 to 2022
U.S. -22.9% from 2007 to 2022

2018-2024 Averages

- Alton: 7.3 births per year
- Bradley: 11.9 births per year
- Old Town: 67.1 births per year

Total: 86.3 births per year

(enrolled cohorts of 95-110 were typical not that long ago)

Enrollment: 2-yr. avg.



Student Enrollment					
	Year	Total Attending Pupil Average (2-year average)	Grades PK - 5	Grades 6 - 8	Grades 9 - 12
	FY21	1502.5	674	314.5	514
	FY22	1481	638.5	312.5	530
	FY23	1437	592	309.5	535.5
	FY24	1420.5	583	306.5	531
	FY25	1404	575	292.5	536.5
	FY26	1377	563.5	279.5	534
Enrollment change over the last 6 years		-125.5	-110.5	-35	20

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Students Requiring Special Services

Year	Special Education	% of Total Enrollment	Multi Lingual Learners
FY21	308	20.10%	21
FY22	336	22.90%	9
FY23	347	23.80%	9
FY24	392	27%	10
FY25	414	29.20%	5
FY26	399	29%	28
Change	91	8%	7

Valuation: 3-yr. avg.



Community Valuation Changes (3-Year Average)

	Alton	Bradley	Old Town
FY21	\$42,683,333	\$112,100,000	\$452,416,667
FY22	\$44,550,000	\$114,416,667	\$452,300,000
FY23	\$46,616,667	\$118,383,333	\$463,816,667
FY24	\$49,283,333	\$123,666,667	\$506,266,667
FY25	\$52,416,667	\$131,533,333	\$580,583,333
FY26	\$55,650,000	\$145,083,333	\$682,666,667
% Increase over 5 years	30.38%	29.42%	50.89%
\$\$ Increase over 5 years	\$12,966,667	\$32,983,333	\$230,250,000

Valuation: 3-yr. avg.



Community Valuation Increase Over Last Two Years

	FY24 to FY25	% Change	FY25 to FY26	% Change	% Last 2 Years	% Last 2 Years
Alton	\$3,133,334	6.36%	\$3,233,333	6.17%	\$6,366,667	12.92%
Bradley	\$7,866,666	6.36%	\$13,550,000	10.30%	\$21,416,666	17.32%
Old Town	\$74,316,666	14.68%	\$102,083,334	17.58%	\$176,400,000	34.84%

Community Valuation Increase Over Last Three Years

	FY23 - FY26	% Change
Alton	\$9,033,333	19.38%
Bradley	\$26,700,000	22.55%
Old Town	\$218,850,000	47.18%

Contributions: State vs. Local



Local Required Contributions to Meet EPS									
	Alton	Alton %	Bradley	Bradley %	Old Town	Old Town %	Total Local	Total State % Contribution	Total Local % Contribution
FY21	\$349,149.66	7.03%	\$916,978.00	18.46%	\$3,700,768.34	74.51%	\$4,966,897.00	68.72%	31.28%
FY22	\$323,433.00	7.29%	\$830,665.00	18.72%	\$3,283,698.00	73.99%	\$4,437,797.00	72.64%	27.36%
FY23	\$330,978.34	7.41%	\$840,521.66	18.83%	\$3,293,098.34	73.76%	\$4,464,599.34	73.53%	26.47%
FY24	\$343,504.83	7.26%	\$861,956.67	18.22%	\$3,528,678.67	74.53%	\$4,734,159.20	72.22%	27.78%
FY25	\$346,998.34	6.86%	\$870,750.66	17.20%	\$3,843,461.66	75.94%	\$5,061,211.66	70.88%	29.12%
FY26	\$339,465.00	6.30%	\$885,008.33	16.42%	\$4,164,266.67	77.28%	\$5,388,741.00	69.25%	30.75%

Local Required Contribution difference between FY23 to FY26					
	FY25 - FY26		FY24 - FY26		FY23 - FY26
Alton	-\$7,533.34		-\$4,039.83		\$8,486.66
Bradley	\$14,257.67		\$23,051.66		\$44,486.67
Old Town	\$320,805.01		\$635,588.00		\$871,168.33

Major Budget Factors



- State subsidy shift of responsibility +\$328K
- Maine FMLA district contribution +\$101.5K
- Worker's Comp + \$34K
- Special Education
 - transportation +\$20K
 - Ed Techs +1-2 / +~\$80K
- Summer program - anticipate no available grants +\$103K
- Other negotiated wage/benefit packages (attract & retain)
- New elementary math program adoption and training +\$100K
- Statewide Title IIA MOA -\$10K

- Supportive community, great team

Unknowns

- Impact of O.T. "sudden & severe"
 - Timeline: ???
- Insurance changes based on loss ratio
 - Timeline: March or April
- ESEA preliminary allocations
 - Timeline: April
- Federal
 - Contingency planning for proposals to eliminate ESEA, Local Entitlement, eRate (totaling ~\$1.4M)
- Outcome of Ed Tech CBA negotiations

First-Draft Budget



Total budget of \$25,724,771.18 / +6.39%

Tax Impact before applying EPS

Alton: +\$59,373.80 / 9.83%

Bradley: +\$178,807.36 / 12.54%

Old Town: +\$1,160,015.30 / 18.56%

Total: +\$1,398,196.46 / 16.89%

Next Steps:

More work line-by-line, big picture revisions

First-Draft Budget



Total budget of \$25,724,771.18 / +6.39%

Tax Impact AFTER applying EPS

Alton: +\$59,373 / 9.83% → +\$66,907 / 11.07%

Bradley: +\$178,807 / 12.54% → +\$164,550 / 11.54%

Old Town: +\$1,160,015 / 18.56% → +\$839,210 / 13.43%

Total: +\$1,398,196 / 16.89% → +\$1,070,667 / 12.93%

Next Steps:

More work line-by-line, big picture revisions

Discussion



We will work with administrators to find efficiencies without eliminating current student programming, but this will be challenging work having already cut 17 full-time equivalent staff in the past two years.

What is the Board's target for budget reduction given today's information? (keeping in mind we must also have a contingency plan if federal funds are reduced or eliminated during this process.)

We are out of feasible options when looking at further consolidation of our elementary programs.

Consolidation



Alton Elementary School (40 students)

- Currently occupying 3 Classrooms (Pre-K: 8 students; Kindergarten: 12 students; and a multi-age Grade 1 and 2 classroom: 20 students)
- Student Enrollment Breakdown:
 - 26 Alton residents (5 in PreK; 9 in Kindergarten; 7 in 1st Grade; 6 in 2nd Grade)
 - The remaining 14 students are Superintendent Agreements and Old Town / Argyle residents who would have previously attended OTES before COVID.

Viola Rand Elementary School, Bradley (32 students)

- Currently occupying 2 Classrooms (both PreK, each with 16 students)
- Student Enrollment Breakdown:
 - 9 Bradley resident students, 19 Old Town residents and 4 superintendent agreements
 - Old Town students bussed on regular runs to OTES where they are served breakfast, and then transported as a group with Pre-K staff to Viola Rand. Their day ends a little earlier than OTES and students are bussed with staff as a group to OTES where they are escorted to their 'going home' bus.

Early Childhood Center



Location: To Be Determined

Given current and projected elementary enrollment numbers, a responsible next step is to transition all remaining K-2 students from Alton to Old Town Elementary School.

Either Alton Elementary or Viola Rand School would serve as RSU 34's Early Childhood Center, serving all of RSU 34's Pre-K and (as required by the state) assuming case management services for 3-year-olds from Child Development Services (CDS). In this model, the RSU 34 School Board would follow school closure considerations outlined in statute for what to do with the empty school.

This model would generate additional cost savings without reducing student programming. Housing all grade-level cohorts in the same buildings would ensure equitable access to programs, enhance collaboration among PreK-5 staff, and create other efficiencies. These efficiencies could lead to budgetary savings or expanded opportunities for students.



- **Budget Workshops**

(as needed):

- March 5th, 12th, 26th
- April 2nd, 9th

- **March 19th**

Board Meeting:

- Updates on new information
- Discussion as the Board wishes

- **April 16th**

Board Meeting:

- Presentation of refined budget with greater detail

- **May 14th**

Board Meeting

- Budget Adoption

- **May 28th**

Public Budget Meeting

- **June 10th**

Budget Validation Referendum

- *Retirements*
- *Resignations*
- *Application processes*
- *Discussions with impacted staff*
- *Appointments*
- *Probationary & Continuing Contract recommendations*
- *Statute-required school closure steps*
- *Continued budget refinement*