

Mt. Blue Regional School District - RSU 9 ~ 2024 – 2025 (FY25) Budget Review



Community | Culture | Curriculum

“Working together to provide high-quality educational opportunities for all.”

Chesterville | Farmington | Industry | New Sharon | New Vineyard | Starks | Temple | Vienna | Weld | Wilton

Annual Budget Hearing
 Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 7:00pm
 Bjorn Auditorium
 Mt. Blue Campus
 129 Seamon Rd., Farmington

2024-2025 Proposed Budget Summary

We hope you find the information presented in this RSU 9 Budget Review Newsletter helpful. We look forward to your attendance and questions at the Annual Budget Hearing at 7:00pm on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, in the Bjorn Auditorium located on the Mt. Blue Campus.

****Please be on the lookout for a second mailing which will break down the individual Budget Articles in what we hope, based on feedback received last year, is a format that will give voters a clearer understanding of each Budget Article.**

Message from the RSU 9 Board of Directors

The RSU 9 Board of Directors is pleased to present our proposed 2024-2025 (FY 25) District Budget. The Board’s Budget Committee worked diligently, collaborating with administrators, to identify both essential needs (“must-haves”) and desirable additions (student support we feel is needed to meet more of our students’ and families’ current needs) if they could be added in a fiscally responsible manner.

The committee made difficult decisions, requesting the administration to find budget reductions without compromising student well-being or the district’s strategic plan. On Tuesday, April 23rd, the Board voted to approve the budget recommended by the Budget Committee to go forward to the voters.

RSU 9 strives to:

- Enhance Learning: Provide necessary support for meaningful learning through a comprehensive curriculum that equips each student to communicate, collaborate, and apply knowledge effectively for present and future success.
- Establish Inclusive Learning Environments: Ensure all students, staff, and families are supported through resources which encourage diverse learning pathways. Analysis of student data indicates a district-wide need for a full time Pre-K Program and greater support in kindergarten and grade 1.
- Attract and Retain Talent: Continue attracting and retaining dedicated, effective staff at all levels by offering competitive wages and benefits during a challenging economic climate.
- Demonstrate Financial Stability: Secure a predictable financial future by utilizing Balance Forward funds (previous budget savings) in a planned way. To safeguard against unexpected expenditures exceeding budgeted amounts, RSU 9 has established Reserve Accounts in four key areas: Special Education, Operations/Maintenance, Technology, and Fuel.

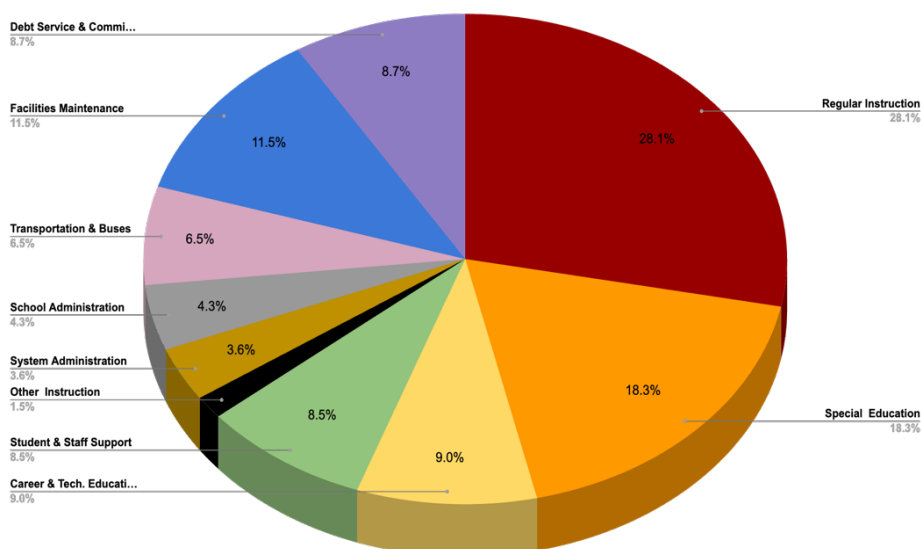
Budget Considerations:

RSU 9’s use of ESSER funds avoided budget shortfalls experienced by other districts in Maine. We are committed to maintaining a balanced budget while acknowledging the challenges presented by rising wages and inflation. We take this responsibility seriously and appreciate your continued support as we work to provide the best possible education for our children.

Thank you,

Chair Dee Robinson

Budget Breakdown by Cost Center



General Budget Summary

Our 2024-2025 RSU Budget is built on five areas of focus:

- **Objective 1:** Support increased student academic, social, emotional, and family needs.
- **Objective 2:** Meet negotiated wage, benefit, and inflation increases.
- **Objective 3:** Implement an RSU 9 Balance-Forward Plan.
- **Objective 4:** Continue with present district programming options.
- **Objective 5:** Develop a new Special Education Revenue Source.

Our General Fund Budget has an overall average increase to taxpayers of 4.45% (not including Adult Ed). Town property evaluations then determine what the tax rate increase will be for each town. The total (FY 25) Budget is \$45,155,670, which is an 8.26% increase (\$3,445,002) over the present FY 24 Budget, but because of several one-time costs, which will be covered by Balance-Forward savings from previous years, taxpayers will be **paying 4.45% overall**. RSU 9 has received a small increase in State aid of approximately \$480,368 (district and Career Technical Center combined), which means that we will be using \$1.2 million, also from our Balance-Forward savings, to reduce taxes for 24-25.

Five budget cost centers represent programs and services specifically for our students and account for our largest expenditures at a combined total of \$29,542,349. Regular Education, Special Education and CTE are familiar to most. Other Instruction is co- and extra-curricular activities and Student and Staff Support include school guidance and social work, health, instructional technology, tuition, professional development, library services and student assessment. Beyond these five cost centers, much of the remaining budget provides upkeep and improvements to our facilities and transportation for our students at \$5,187,663 and \$2,927,159 respectively.

Debt Service (Mallett & MBC loan payments) for FY 25 is \$3,941,793. Of this amount \$197,930 is funded through local taxes.

Cost of the RSU 9 Budget to Taxpayers Including Adult Education

A town’s contribution to a school system is based on State property assessed values. The amounts below are determined by the State funding formula.

| Municipality | 2023-2024 Assessment | 2024-2025 Proposed Assessment | Increase/Decrease | % Change |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Chesterville | \$1,095,818 | \$1,149,680 | \$53,862 | 4.92% |
| Farmington | \$5,037,738 | \$5,267,884 | \$230,146 | 4.57% |
| Industry | \$1,037,050 | \$1,086,453.77 | \$49,403 | 4.76% |
| New Sharon | \$1,126,381 | \$1,146,385.50 | \$20,004 | 1.78% |
| New Vineyard | \$873,391 | \$888,709.63 | \$15,318 | 1.75% |
| Starks | \$570,934 | \$592,845.96 | \$21,911 | 3.84% |
| Temple | \$503,693 | \$510,138.30 | \$6,445 | 1.28% |
| Vienna | \$779,052 | \$805,156.85 | \$26,105 | 3.35% |
| Weld | \$670,376 | \$731,480.75 | \$61,104 | 9.11% |
| Wilton | \$2,819,283 | \$2,914,707.97 | \$95,425 | 3.38% |
| Total Assessments | 14,513,720 | \$15,093,444 | \$579,723 | *3.99% |

*Includes Adult Ed.

FY 2025 Revenue

RSU 9 will be receiving an increase of \$480,388 in state subsidy funding. We will also draw \$2,095,000 from our Balance-Forward to reduce the impact of our budget on local taxpayers. Our revenue chart follows:

| | 2023-2024 Budget | 2024 -2025 Proposed | Increase/Decrease |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| State Allocation | \$25,396,671 | \$25,877,060 | \$480,388 |
| Local Contribution | \$14,245,997 | \$14,880,569 | \$634,572 |
| Balance Forward | \$800,000 | \$2,095,000 | \$1,295,000 |
| CTE Donation & Carryover | \$360,000 | \$808,041 | \$448,041 |
| Other Revenue | \$908,000 | \$1,495,000 | \$587,000 |
| TOTAL REVENUES | \$41,710,668 | \$45,155,670 | \$3,445,002 |

Local Postal Customer

PRSR STD
 ECRWSS
 U.S.POSTAGE
PAID
 EDDM Retail

Additional information for the 2024-25 district budget can be found online at www.mtbluersd.org/about/budget-information/24-25-budget-information



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Articles & Voting Information:

The following Table corresponds to Articles 1-10

To see what sum the RSU will be authorized to expend for individual cost centers.

| Budget Category | Current Budget 2023-2024 | Proposed Budget 2024-2025 | Increase/Decrease | % Change |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 1. Regular Instruction | \$11,279,578 | \$12,692,567 | \$1,412,989 | 12.53% |
| 2. Special Education | \$8,123,414 | \$8,266,470 | \$143,056 | 1.76% |
| 3. Career & Tech. Education | \$3,294,454 | \$4,082,632 | \$788,178 | **23.92% |
| 4. Student & Staff Support | \$3,301,530 | \$3,819,656 | \$518,126 | 15.69% |
| 5. Other Instruction | \$563,143 | \$681,024 | \$117,881 | 20.93% |
| 6. System Administration | \$1,429,621 | \$1,608,093 | \$178,472 | 12.48% |
| 7. School Administration | \$1,835,131 | \$1,948,613 | \$113,482 | 6.18% |
| 8. Transportation & Buses | \$2,912,288 | \$2,927,159 | \$14,871 | 0.51% |
| 9. Facilities Maintenance | \$4,961,605 | \$5,187,663 | \$226,058 | 4.56% |
| 10. Debt Service & Commitments | \$4,009,904 | \$3,941,793 | -\$68,111 | -1.70% |
| 11. All Other Expenditures | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Total General Fund | \$41,710,668 | \$45,155,670 | \$3,445,002 | 8.26% |

**Increase in state CTE funding and contingency fund (which does not impact local taxes)

Article 12 – State/Local EPS Funding Allocation: Provides the district with state subsidy for the 2024-2025 school year.

The School Board recommends amounts set forth in the table below:

| Municipality | Total Appropriated (By Municipality) | Total Raised (District Required Assessment) by Municipality |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Chesterville | \$3,088,604.05 | \$781,160.00 |
| Farmington | \$12,443,100.02 | \$3,579,103.00 |
| Industry | \$1,342,216.90 | \$738,240.34 |
| New Sharon | \$2,766,950.41 | \$778,843.00 |
| New Vineyard | \$1,454,170.01 | \$603,854.34 |
| Starks | \$866,041.51 | \$408,233.34 |
| Temple | \$731,991.10 | \$346,667.34 |
| Vienna | \$1,122,704.19 | \$546,922.34 |
| Weld | \$512,104.12 | \$485,910.25 |
| Wilton | \$8,379,348.58 | \$1,979,931.66 |
| Total | \$32,707,230.89 | \$10,248,865.61 |

Article 13 – Non-State Funded School Construction Debt Service:

Provides funds to pay for non-State funded school construction projects that were previously approved by Regional School Unit No 9 voters, such as the local share of W.G. Mallet School and Mt. Blue Campus. The School Board Recommends **\$197,930**

Article 14 – Additional Local Funds: Local money that must be raised beyond the State/Local EPS funding Allocation and other receipts to fund the budget. The School Board Recommends **\$4,433,773**.

Article 15 – Summary Article: Authorizes the district to spend the money appropriated in the previous expenditure articles. The School Board Recommends **\$45,155,670**.

Article 16 – Adult Education: The School Board Recommends appropriating **\$599,956** and raising **\$212,572**. (FY24 raised \$267,723)

| Description | Current Budget | Proposed Budget | (+/-) | % Change |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Adult Education | \$537,642 | \$599,956 | \$62,314 | ***11.59% |
| Total | \$537,642 | \$599,956 | \$62,314 | 11.59% |

***Increase paid for by the Adult Ed. fund balance, not increased costs to taxpayers.

Article 17 – Other Grants and Other Receipts: Authorizes the district to expend state, federal and other aid grants it may receive during the fiscal year provided these funds to not require expenditure of local funds not previously appropriated.

Article 18 – Cost Center Transfers: Authorizes the School Board to transfer amounts exceeding 5% of the total appropriation for any cost center to another cost center or among other cost centers for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, provided that transfers shall not be permitted to increase the authorized total school budget.

Article 19 – Additional state Subsidy Funds: Authorizes the School Board to use all or part of any additional state subsidy to increase expenditures for school purposes in cost center categories approved by the School Board, increase the allocation of finances in a reserve fund approved by the School Board and/or decrease the local cost share expectation for local property taxpayers for funding public education.

Article 20 – Transfer from available funds balances: Authorizes the School Board to transfer up to \$250,000 to the Capital Reserve Fund from available fund balances at the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, and to expend from said Reserve Fund as needed at the discretion of the board.

Article 21 – Transfer from available funds balances: Authorizes the School Board to transfer up to \$300,000 to the Special Ed. Reserve Fund from available fund balances at the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, and to expend from said Reserve Fund as needed at the discretion of the board.

Article 22 – Transfer from available funds balances: Authorizes the School Board to transfer up to \$300,000 to the Technology Reserve Fund from available fund balances, including revenues from sales of RSU-purchased electronic devices, at the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, and to expend from said Reserve Fund as needed at the discretion of the board.



Budget Referendum Meeting and Voting Information

Annual Budget Hearing
Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 7:00pm
Bjorn Auditorium
Mt. Blue Campus
129 Seamon Rd., Farmington

| June 11, 2024 - Referendum Voting Hours by Municipality | | |
|---|---|------------------|
| Chesterville | Chesterville Town Office 409 Dutch Gap Rd. Chesterville, ME | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Farmington | Farmington Community Center 127 Middle St. Farmington, ME | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Industry | Industry Town Hall 1033 Industry Rd. Industry, ME | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| New Sharon | New Sharon Town Office 11 School Ln. New Sharon, ME | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| New Vineyard | New Vineyard Town Hall 20 Lake St. New Vineyard, ME | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Starks | Starks Community Center 57 Anson Rd. Starks, ME | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Temple | Temple Town Office 258 Temple Rd. Temple, ME | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Vienna | Vienna Fire Station 16 Kimball Pond Rd. Vienna, ME | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Weld | Weld Town Office 23 Mill St. Weld, ME | 10:00am - 8:00pm |
| Wilton | Wilton Town Office 158 Weld Rd. Wilton, ME | 8:00am - 8:00pm |

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