

**Spotlight on Education
Board of Education 2018/19 Budget Proposal**

**Voluntown Board of Education
Voluntown, Connecticut
May 11, 2018**

Dear Faculty, Staff, Parents, and Interested Citizens,

On May 10, 2018 the Board of Education approved an updated draft of a budget proposal for 2018/19, which was \$6,889,819 and represented an increase of \$104,165 or 1.54% over the 2017/18 approved budget of \$6,785,654.

This proposal includes:

- Negotiated salaries for teachers, classified staff, and non-certified personnel.
- The projected cost for the outplacement of Special Education students based on identified needs.
- Projected cost of tuition based on the estimated students attending Norwich Free Academy, Griswold High School, Norwich Tech, Ellis Tech, Quinebaug Middle College, Marine Science Magnet High School, and Killingly Vo-Ag program.
- The cost of health insurance.
- Projected energy costs for heating fuel, propane, electricity, and diesel/gasoline.

Board of Education 2018/2019 Budget Preparation Timeline

Goals for 2018/2019 include:

- Update security and safety equipment based on active planning by our School Security and Safety Committee.
- Implement the comprehensive Professional Development and Teacher Evaluation Plan.
- Implement instructional strategies to meet the Common Core State Standards as well as implement the new state (SBAC) or Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium testing that replaces the Connecticut Mastery Test.
- Implement year #1 of an updated Strategic Plan (2018-2022) for our school system.
- Maintain Scientifically Researcher-Based Interventions (SRBI) to help students improve academically.
- Guide instruction to appropriately support the number of special education outplacements.
- Implement the Technology Plan as well as meet SBAC testing requirements.
- Implement year #3 of a 5-year lease/purchase agreement for all new school busses starting in 2016/17.
- Maintain a Wellness Committee as part of a coordinated approach to nutrition and fitness.
- Implement year #12 of a School Readiness Grant for our Pre-School program for three and four year olds.
- Implement year #13 of a comprehensive Indoor Air Quality/*Tools for Schools*/Safety program.
- Replace the school oil tank as per state requirements and part of a Five-Year Maintenance Facilities Plan.
- Maintain storage areas for the effective retrieval of instructional materials.
- Implement the Safe School Climate Plan.
- Monitor savings to our community through use of the new solar panel system.
- Utilize the new stairway to Constitution Field completely funded by a grant.
- Increase information on the school website as suggested through our Community Conversations program.
- Actively plan for the continuation of drastic reductions in state and federal grants in 2018/2019.

Copies of the 2018/2019 budget proposal are available on the school website, in the V.E.S. School Office, the Central Office and Town Hall.

The Annual Town Meeting to vote on the Board of Education and the Town Budget proposals for 2018-2019 will be held on Wednesday, June 6, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the V.E.S. gymnasium.



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Development of the 2018/19 Board of Education Budget Proposal

The Board of Education reviews in detail all encumbrances, expenditures, and available funds at each regular monthly meeting. This detailed information is part of an ongoing budget review and development process that allows the Board of Education to make decisions about the current budget and aids in the creation of the proposal for the budget for 2018/19.

For a number of years we have applied for a School Readiness Grant and received funding for our Pre-School programs for three-year old and four-year-olds. It is important to note that our School Readiness Council meets on a regular basis and a grant application will be submitted for the upcoming 2018/19 school year to again provide funds for this important program.

Our School Security and Safety Committee spent time reviewing the current status of our security systems and the need for any upgrades. The committee has researched, reviewed, and developed a priority list along with costs for consideration by the Board of Education and the Board of Selectmen as part of a coordinated school/community initiative. Every effort is being made to include any necessary upgrades within the existing and proposed Board of Education budget. We also apply for available grants to secure funding from the State of Connecticut and other sources to further increase school security.

High school tuition is based on students attending one of our designated high schools including: Griswold High School, Norwich Free Academy, Norwich Tech, Ellis Tech, Marine Science Magnet High School in Groton, Quinebaug Middle College in Danielson, and the Killingly Vo-Ag Program.

Voluntown will receive an increase in our Education Cost Sharing grant in 2018-2019. We are now waiting for confirmation of the final grant allocations to municipalities for 2018-2019 based on the May 9, 2018 late night vote by the state legislators and approval by the Governor.

It is important to note that the bottom line of this current proposal may change based on the upcoming work of the Board of Education in the budget development process, as well as receipt of the actual amount of state and federal grants for education.

The goal is to make every effort to develop a budget proposal with a sincere understanding of the cost impact to local property taxes. Therefore, this proposal must be carefully reviewed and adjustments considered during these challenging economic times. The ultimate goal is to meet the educational needs of students.

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