



BFA Fairfax School Budget FY22 Proposal

*Presented by:
Fairfax Board of School Directors*



When we met at this time last year there were many questions about the coming pandemic and a couple of weeks after that meeting the Governor ordered a dismissal that lasted the remainder of the school year. The dismissal ignited a pivot to remote learning something that still continues to this day in some capacity. Our administrators, teachers and staff have had to re-think student engagement and while it has not always been a smooth road we continue to evolve and grow. Currently, we have all pre-k -6 students back to in person learning 4 days a week, while grades 7-12 continue to be in our hybrid model, 2 days in person and 3 days remote.

Our Mission

Committed to ensuring all students become **informed, literate, critical thinkers** who demonstrate **responsible social and civic behaviors**.



2

Through all of this the Board, Administration, Faculty and Staff remain committed to our mission;

Highlights from FY21

- Four Presidential Scholars, for the second year in a row
- Recognized in top 10 Vermont High Schools for college readiness
- Implementation three grade 1 & 2 Multi-Age classrooms
- Implemented new Proficiency Based Middle School Report Card
- Launched new writing block and writing program (Jump into Writing) for Grades 3 & 4
- Boys Varsity Soccer team were undefeated in the regular season and Coach Jake Hubbard was selected as the Mountain Division Coach of the Year



Covid-19 FY21



- Remote Graduation ceremony for the Class of 2020 with drive-in at School to obtain diploma
- Increased access to 1:1 iPads in Grades K-4
- Held first remote music concert
- Implemented athletic, music and drama activities
- Engaging students and our community in a remote drama production
- Returned Pre K - 6 students to in-person instruction 4 days a week

School has had to change over the past year. The efforts of the Faculty, Staff and Administration have been above and beyond as they try to insert some level of normalcy into students lives. Over the past year many events and activities have been what is being referred to as “virtual.” I would like to borrow from our High School Principal, John Tague, for my next point. The meaning of virtual in the context of computing is “not physically existing as such but made by software to appear to do so.” However, these events and activities are taking place, only they are taking place, remotely in the end these do physically exist and did happen. Some of the things that have taken place in the past year due to COVID-19

FY21 Building Improvements

- **Replaced the final three roofs in our roof replacement schedule:**
 - **Elementary Gym/Lobby**
 - **High School Gym**
 - **43 Wing of MS/HS above HS Art room**
- **All of the roofs on the school have now been replaced.**

5

We have also been able to complete the roofing projects that voters approved funding for last March. The sections replaced were;

This bring all of our roofing projects up to date for the foreseeable future

Upcoming Capital Improvement Projects

- **Current Balance in Capital Fund: \$244,911 (Pending FY 2020 Audit)**
 - **Replace tile in High School Hallway (1st and 2nd Floor)- \$35,000**
 - **Replace tile in 1st floor High School Classrooms- \$40,000**
 - **Replace tile in Multi-Purpose Room- \$8,000**
 - **Replace last 2 ES Cafeteria Tables- \$10,000**
 - **Replace doors at HS/MS entry (Wood end)- \$20,000**
- Total= \$113,000**

6

We also have a healthy Capital Fund at more than a quarter of a million dollars. These funds will be used in the next year to;



We are incredibly proud of our students for demonstrating flexibility, resilience, and civic engagement throughout this past year. They cooperated by wearing masks, washing hands, being socially distanced, and demonstrating support for one another. Our students continued to participate in modified co-curricular opportunities and community partnerships to support service learning. They made the best of our current situation by creating outdoor learning spaces and embracing new formats and expectations for the classroom and athletic events. Students were engaged in learning in class, and online, as we responded to an ever changing landscape throughout the pandemic.

Beyond the flexibility of in the classroom on the part of our students and staff, some extra examples of the flexibility within our community are:

The Good Citizen Challenge:

As part of the statewide Good Citizen Challenge, before the pandemic, a group of 6th (and now 7th) grade students began meeting to learn and participate in a friendly competition about our state, civics and community involvement. BFA’s good Citizens continued to meet via zoom for the past year and are now recruiting others to participate. Thank you Alice Scannell for flexible leadership with this group!

BFA Courtyard Deck:

Thanks to a donation from Berlin City, we were able to build a large deck in the courtyard

off the MultiPurpose Room. Students built the deck in the early days of school. It was a great hands on learning opportunity for students in Mr Lane's classes and allowed students to get outside early in the year when they were getting used to wearing masks all day

<https://fwsu-blog.org/2020/09/28/bfa-courtyard-deck-years-in-the-making>

Sports:

After an abrupt and unexpected end to the sports season last winter, and the eventual cancellation of spring sports, our students were more than eager to get back on the fields, trails, and courts this fall and winter. Following specific protocols and guidelines ranging from masks, physical distancing, spectator limits, and daily health screenings, to significant adaptations to the rules of competitions and how events were structured, our students demonstrated tremendous adaptability and appreciation for the ability to play the sports they love.

The BFA Story



Fairfax/Lamoille Football Thriving In
New 7v7 Football Format



Engagement and Learning
In An Outdoor Classroom

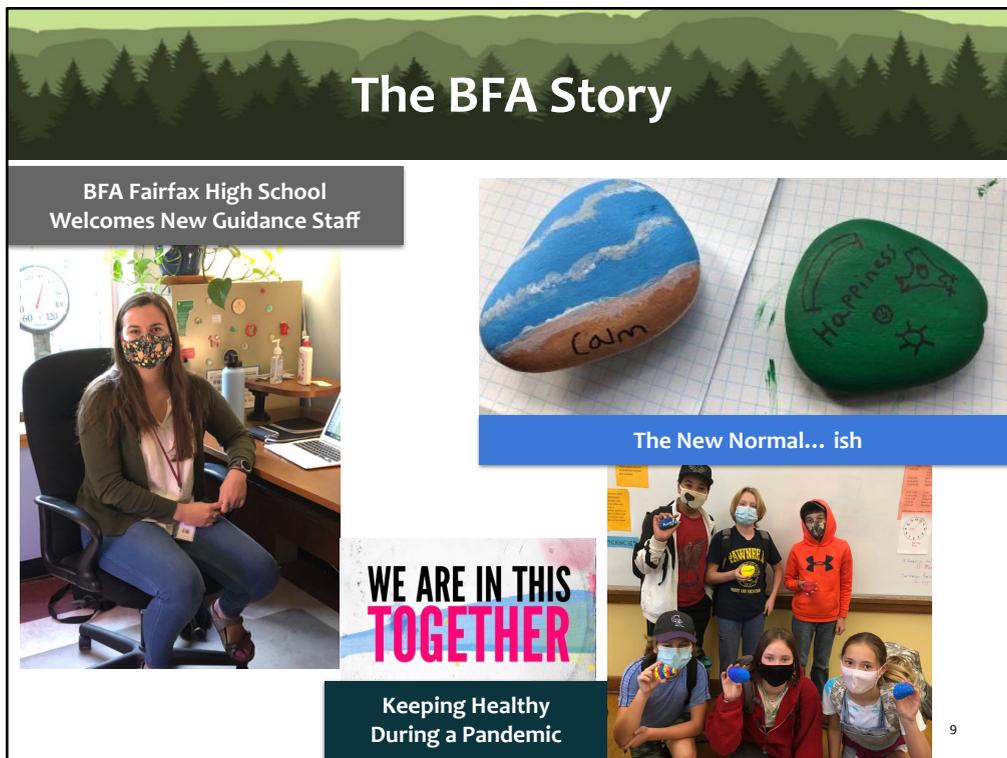


8

In doing so, our teams have not only adapted, but they continue to thrive and stand out amongst schools for their attention to safety, protocols, positive outlook, and expectations.

Outdoor Classroom:

The start of this school year at BFA Fairfax brought with it many new and creative ways to teach and learn. One of these unique opportunities takes place in our new outdoor classroom. Prior to the beginning of the school year, Mrs. Caswell applied her new learning about facilitating instruction in an outdoor environment. She presented a comprehensive plan in mid-August and immediately began constructing a learning space in the woods on our school property. Outdoor learning provides a unique opportunity for our students to engage with nature. Researchers have consistently indicated that being outside is an effective environment to foster mindfulness, an appreciation of nature, and integration and application of academic content.



Additionally, this promotes greater physical health and engagement through movement and breathing fresh air. Fortunately for our school, we have many spaces to implement outdoor learning! Several resources are available such as our hiking trails, the Recreation Path, a pavilion, a gazebo, and many tent structures for students and staff to utilize throughout the day.

New HS Counselor:

Dave Buckingham retired at the end of the 2020 school year. We were able to hire Linnea Jahn as a high school counselor. Katherine McElroy assumed the role of Director of Guidance. During the pandemic, hiring occurred over zoom. Staff was hired without actually meeting in person or having the opportunity to see our school. Good candidates come through even in a virtual interview!

<https://fwsu-blog.org/2020/10/23/bfa-fairfax-high-school-welcomes-new-guidance-staff/>



Jump into Writing:

Last spring BFA Fairfax Elementary determined there was a need to create a writing block in our grades three and four schedules. This determination was the result of many conversations about ways to extend our literacy block and increase opportunities to engage and provide additional writing instruction. Jump Into Writing is a program developed to support teachers who use the writing workshop model for writing instruction. Our experience with Jump Into Writing has been positive, fostering student agency and increased engagement in writing.

Holiday Giving:

This year we had a near record setting food and gift donation season! Despite, or maybe due to the pandemic, our community really stepped up (even more so than we are normally grateful for) to supply many area families with Thanksgiving and Holiday meals and needed holiday gifts.

We invite all of you to follow our story via our blog at <https://fwsu-blog.org> where the story of our school and our Supervisory Union are told regularly from the people who are living this story on a daily basis.

What you'll see on the ballot...

Article 2: School Budget

Shall the voters of said school district approve the school board to expend **\$14,636,092** 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 **\$14,589.86 per equalized pupil**.

This projected spending per equalized pupil is **2.29% higher** than spending for the current year.

Estimated School Tax Bill

Prior to income sensitivity property tax adjustments

HOME VALUE	FY21 Actual 1.4541	FY22 Proposed 1.4913	Change FY21 to FY22
\$100,000	\$1,454	\$1,491	\$37
\$150,000	\$2,181	\$2,237	\$56
\$200,000	\$2,908	\$2,983	\$74
\$250,000	\$3,635	\$3,728	\$93
\$300,000	\$4,362	\$4,474	\$112

12

What will this mean to your tax bill? Under the current conditions without income sensitivity a person with a home valued at \$300,000, roughly the average value of a home in Fairfax, the School portion of the Property tax bill will increase by \$112

These numbers are a significant departure from what the State Budget office predicted in the fall and is also lower than many surrounding districts proposed increases. The Board and the Administration continue to work in a fiscally conservative manner to alleviate the pressure on the taxpayer while not compromising our current programs.

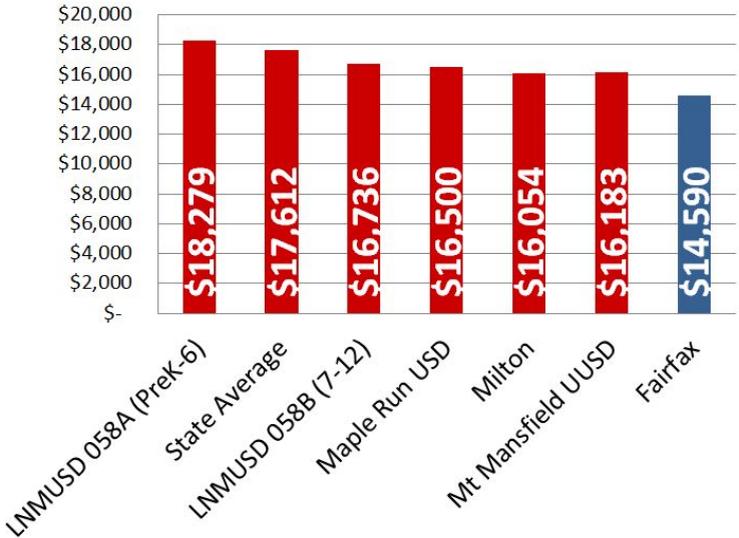
Summary of Budget Increase

- Health Insurance- an increase of \$327,048, due to the statewide bargaining for healthcare benefits combined with health insurance premium increases of 10 to 18%. This number reflects BFA Fairfax employees, along with the school district's share of the FWSU insurance increases. (48% of budget increase)
- Negotiated Staff Salaries/Wages- \$352,224 BFA Fairfax employees. (49% of the budget increase)
- FWSU Assessment increase of \$89,619 based on increased student enrollment. (13% of the budget increase)
- Transportation equipment reduction of \$95,000. We only need to purchase 1 Bus (-14% decrease of budget)

13

This budget which represents level services, meaning that no positions or programs have been added for next year. Here is an overview of impacting the increases and decreases of expenditures.

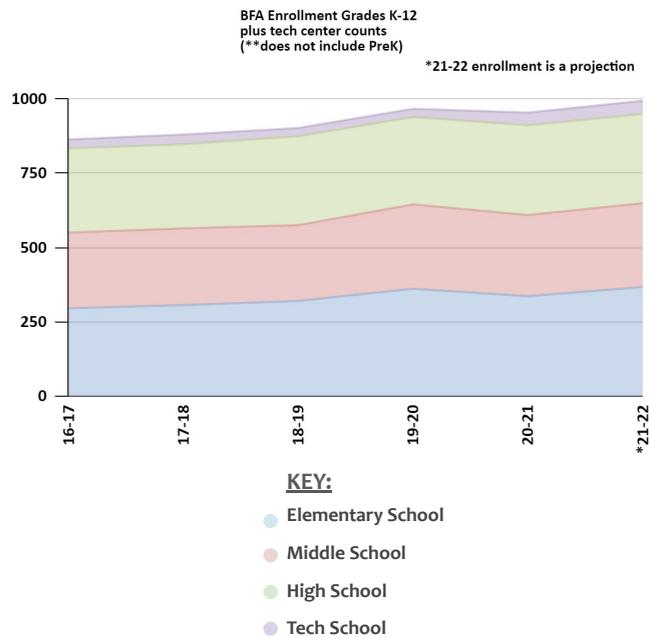
Per Pupil Spending Comparison



14

How do we compare to the surrounding Districts regarding per-pupil spending? Fairfax is again one of the lower spending districts in the State, well below the state average of \$17,612.

Student Enrollment



15

We continue to offer this value in part because our enrollment year over year keeps increasing and this has a direct impact on the tax rate. In the past 5 years our student population has increased by over 120 students and this trend looks to continue into the next fiscal year. BFA Fairfax continues to be one of the few schools in Vermont where declining enrollment is not happening.

**Thank you for supporting
our schools!**



Tuesday, March 2

BFA Fairfax

Polls Open 7am-7pm

Thank you for viewing this presentation. For your voting options please go to <https://www.fairfax-vt.gov/> and remember that the polls will be open at BFA Fairfax on Tuesday March 2nd from 7am-7pm. Should you have any questions regarding the budget or the School you can contact the School Board Chair, Scott Mitchell via email smitchell@fwsu.org, or attend the School Meeting on 2/27 at 10am

Please remember to VOTE.

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