

2020 School District Ballot Summary

Question 1 Operating Budget

1. Shall the Milford School District vote to raise and appropriate as an **Operating Budget**, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$43,322,305? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$42,911,974 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Milford School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. **School Board recommends (vote 5-0); Budget Advisory Committee: recommends (vote 5-2).** Estimated Tax Impact: Proposed: \$0.28, Default: \$0.03
(Majority Vote Required)

The anticipated tax impact for a home valued at \$100,000 is \$28.00

The anticipated tax impact for a home valued at \$200,000 is \$56.00

The anticipated tax impact for a home valued at \$300,000 is \$84.00

EXPLANATION: Please see more detailed information on the following pages.

SCHOOL BOARD: We SUPPORT (School Board vote 5-0).

School Board Explanation:

The School Board unanimously supports the proposed budget. The budget contains expenditures that directly align with the strategic plan that the district has adopted. The Budget includes an increase of an elementary physical education/wellness teacher, an additional full time nurse to provide needed support and back up to all of the district's school buildings, an additional elementary teacher to keep classroom sizes down to a manageable level, an additional kindergarten classroom tutor, and a half time preschool teacher to support the expanding preschool program.

The proposed budget includes the continued funding of professional development for district staff; and the expansion of curriculum resources to support the continued roll out of the new math and reading programs to additional grades. Partial funding of track repairs, Chromebook cycle purchases, culinary program classroom upgrades and the purchase of a new lathe for the ATC program.

The Board supports these proposed costs and supports that they are in alignment with the Strategic Plan that was developed last year and adopted by the District. Additionally, the increase in the budget proposed is less than half the amount of additional revenue expected to be received from the state for one-time education funding.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: We SUPPORT (Budget Advisory Committee vote 5-2).

Budget Committee Explanation:

A majority of the committee SUPPORTS the school board's proposed Operating Budget for several important reasons:

- It includes investment in curriculum, professional development for teachers and staff, and urgent facilities repairs that have been under-funded for many years and are necessary to improve student outcomes.
- It supports the priorities outlined in the new Strategic Plan that was developed last year by a committee of community members, teachers, students and administrators.
- It is a reduction of \$275,000 from the original budget proposal, and is only 0.95% higher than the default budget.

A minority of the SBAC did not support the Board's proposed budget as we felt that in our review of the budget there were reductions that could be made without impacting direct services to students. Our recommended reduction of \$215,000 in a \$43 million budget is less than one-half of one percent. This could easily be managed through reductions in non-direct student services and savings from staff turnover.

We also believe that this amount can be justified as the proposed budget saw a reduction in debt service of approximately \$620,000 due principally to the final payment this year of the Heron Pond bond. The Board is proposing to use \$400,000 of this decrease to reinvest in infrastructure with their facilities expenditure trust fund. We believe that the taxpayers deserve to share in the benefit of the payoff of the Heron Pond school. Our recommended \$215,000 reduction returns to the taxpayers the savings no longer needed for debt service.

Question 2
Establishment of a Facilities Maintenance
Expendable Trust

2. Shall the Milford School District vote to establish a Facilities Maintenance Expendable Trust per RSA 198:20-c, V for the purpose of covering expenditures for necessary facilities repair, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$400,000 to be placed in this fund, and further to name the Milford School Board as agents to expend from the fund. This sum is to come from general taxation. **School Board: recommends (vote 5-0); Budget Advisory Committee: recommends (vote 5-2).** Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.25 (Majority Vote Required)

SCHOOL BOARD: We SUPPORT (School Board vote 5-0).

School Board Explanation:

The School Board unanimously supports this warrant article. Monies in the Facilities Maintenance Expendable Trust can only be spent for the purpose of facilities repairs and allows the board to address issues as they arise. These funds cannot be spent without first holding a public hearing to discuss the necessary expenditures. This trust, earns revenue, and once established can be added to annually or not, the voters will have the ability to decide that. The School District facilities are aging and in need of repair. The funding of this trust will begin the process of addressing these facility needs.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: We SUPPORT (Budget Advisory Committee vote 5-2).

Budget Committee Explanation:

A majority of the committee SUPPORTS the creation of the Capital Maintenance Expendable Trust, per RSA 198:20-c, V, for several important reasons:

- Milford's aging school facilities have recently required emergency repairs due to a roof failure, boiler failures and other facilities failures resulting from long-deferred maintenance of our aging buildings. The creation of this trust provides a less-disruptive way to pay for unbudgeted emergency repair needs as they arise. It also allows the district to save gradually for anticipated capital maintenance expenses over time, rather than having a large budget increase in a single year to replace high-cost items that are at the end of their life.
- This trust can be used only to pay for necessary facilities repairs and cannot be diverted to other items, as could be the case if the funds were included in the district's operating budget.
- Funds in this trust will earn interest. Taxpayers will have the option to add funds to this trust over time, which will potentially reduce or eliminate the need to issue bonds and can save taxpayers money.
- This trust increases transparency by requiring the School Board to hold a public hearing specifying how the funds will be used before any funds may be withdrawn.

Question 3

Establishment of a Special Education Expendable Trust Fund

3. Shall the Milford School District vote to establish a Special Education Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 198:20-c, V for the purpose of covering emergency expenditures arising in the area of Special Education, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$200,000 to be placed in this fund, and further to name the Milford School Board as agents to expend from the fund. This sum is to come from general taxation. **School Board: recommends (vote 5-0); Budget Advisory Committee: recommends (vote 7-0).** Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.12 (Majority Vote Required)

SCHOOL BOARD: We SUPPORT (School Board vote 5-0).

School Board Explanation:

The School Board unanimously supports the creation of this Special Education Expendable Trust. Discussion has taken place a number of times over the years to have a vehicle established to address the unanticipated special education needs that are difficult to budget for. This Trust, once established, will earn revenue, and can only be used for the purpose of supporting special education costs. A public hearing will be held to explain the reason for the request, prior to any monies being withdrawn from the trust.

The School Board has not put forth the contingency warrant this year and has instead opted to create the Facilities Maintenance and Special Education Expendable Trusts to limit the uses of the monies approved.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: We SUPPORT (Budget Advisory Committee Vote (7-0))

Budget Committee Explanation:

The committee unanimously SUPPORTS the creation of the Special Education Expendable Trust, per RSA 198:20-c, V, for several important reasons:

- In recent years the Milford School District has paid significant tuition expenses for students that require out-of-district services. These expenses can be unanticipated, and the District must pay for them in order to comply with students' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) as mandated by law. The creation of this trust

provides a less-disruptive way to pay for unbudgeted special education expenses as they arise.

- Unlike the contingency fund that voters have approved in previous years for the same amount (\$200,000), and which could be used for any expense as determined by the School Board, this trust can be used only to pay for special education expenses.
- Funds in this trust will earn interest. Taxpayers will have the option to add funds to this trust over time.