



Vermont's Tuition System

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2023 Taconic & Green Advisory Article



Shall the Taconic & Green Regional School District advise the School Board, the Vermont General Assembly and Governor that:

1. Because our district does not operate a public high school, students have the opportunity to choose from a variety of public and independent high school options;
2. The electorate does not support the public funding of any school that discriminates against students or staff on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, disability, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity;
3. The electorate supports the current structure of independent schools having autonomy over their governance and operations within the current regulatory framework. This structure of oversight has enabled our districts to make high school education available, as required by the State of Vermont, while maintaining confidence that the schools serving our students provide a high quality of education; and
4. The electorate opposes efforts to change the current structure in a way that eliminates educational opportunities made possible by our current practice of high school choice. The electorate believes our current local educational system, in a great example of Vermont traditions, has evolved within this current structure, through a high level of community commitment and an appropriate exercise of local control, to provide high quality, equitable educational opportunities for our students.

PASSED: YES - 90.7%
NO - 9.3%

Member Towns

Bennington County

- Dorset
- Landgrove
- Manchester
- Peru
- Sunderland

Rutland County

- Danby
- Mt. Tabor

Windham County

- Londonderry

Windsor County

- Weston

State Aid & Independent Schools

BBS ineligible for some state aid

MANCHESTER — Students from Burr and Burton Seminary (BBS) a private high school here, are not eligible for 50 per cent transportation costs to attend vocational education centers, according to Arthur Ericson, state director of education.

“Responding to a question from the audience, Ericson explained that the **funding is not available to BBS because it is a private institution and the law specifically states that transported students must be picked up from a public high school!** Ericson said BBS parents would have to appear before the state board of education or go through their legislators to have the wording of the law changed.”

- Bennington Banner, Mar 29, 1977

**State building aid for BBS?
Only if it changes its status**

“Vermont Department of Education Director of Administrative Services Edward J. Fabian told the school directors and an audience of more than 30, which included several BBS trustees, that **if Burr and Burton wants 30 percent state funding for improvements to the present campus it will either have to go public or change its self-perpetuating board of trustees so two-thirds of them are appointed by the selectmen.**”

- Bennington Banner, Feb 25, 1975

Average Announced vs. Allowable Tuition

Average Announced Tuition - 16 V.S.A. § 826

Set by the school board in January and applicable to non-resident students attending the school from a non-operating district. The tuition is an *estimation* of what the receiving school district anticipates the actual cost to be.

Allowable Tuition (AKA Net Cost per Pupil) - 16 V.S.A. § 825

The *actual* net cost per pupil - i.e. what the tuition should have been when actual costs are calculated. This is calculated by the AOE once actual costs are known. Under 16 V.S.A. § 836 a sending school district can recover for tuition overcharges and a receiving school district can seek additional funds to cover tuition undercharges.

Implications

Underestimating of Announced Tuition leads to lower actual tuition charged by independent schools than the actual net cost per pupil - 6% lower in FY21.

FY21 Average Secondary Tuition

Announced:	\$16,387
Allowable:	\$17,236
Difference:	\$1,003

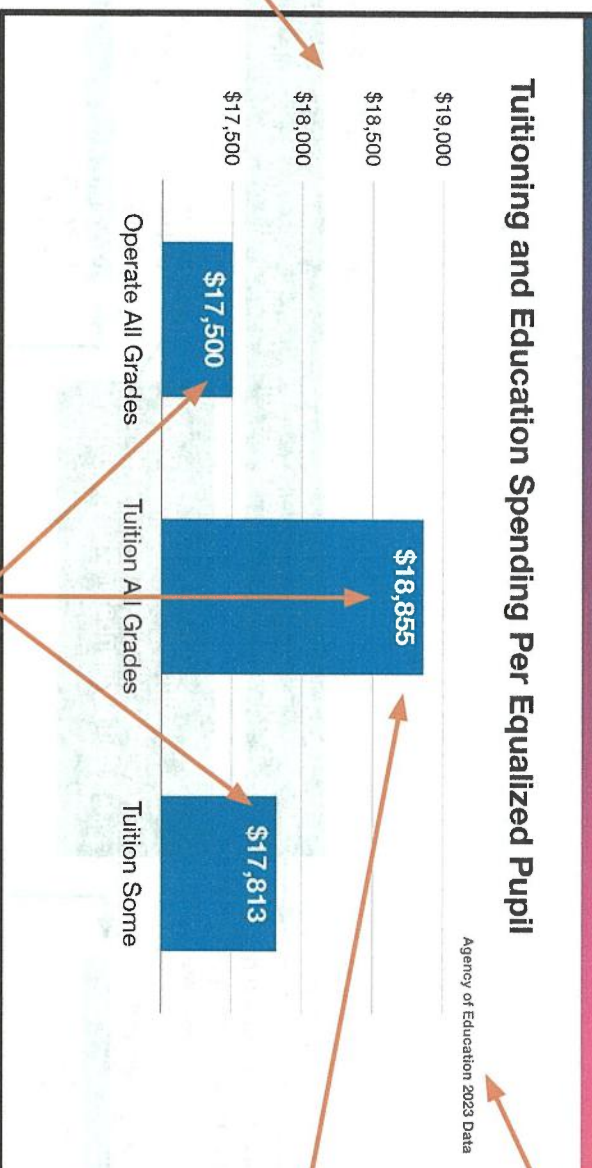
Source: AOE FY21 Final Allowable Tuition Report & FY21 Announced Tuition Report

Analysis of Odell Presentation - Slide 20

Vermont's Tuitioning System - Financing

Tuitioning and Education Spending Per Equalized Pupil

Agency of Education 2023 Data



Truncated Scale

Unweighted Averages

AOE Attribution

Calculated from Altered Data

Analysis of Odell Presentation Data Set

Altered Data Set Attributed to AOE

Tuition All Grades	
Winhall	19,782.50
Stratton	16,087.46
Searsburg	16,233.68
Pittsfield	14,829.94
Ira	16,277.36
Sandgate	15,952.48
Stannard	17,950.59
Jay	18,777.58
Westfield	15,137.46
North Bennington ID	19,010.99
Morgan	12,878.16
Buel's Gore	43,900.00
Granville-Hancock USD 80	19,588.09
Northeast Kingdom Choice SD 65	17,564.10
AVG	18,855.03

Ferdinand (with 1 pupil) was removed from data set, but the author chose to retain Buel's Gore, even with anomalous data with 3 pupils that dramatically skewed unweighted average

Wide variance in equalized pupil counts causes significant distortions in the unweighted average

Analysis of the full data set shows the altered data set impacted the unweighted average, and also shows unweighted and weighted averages with and without gores

Data Set Including Eq. Pupils & Missing Gore

Tuition All Grades		
School District	Eq. Pupils	Per Pupil Spending
Winhall	236.69	\$ 19,782.50
Stratton	62.95	\$ 16,087.46
Searsburg	18.09	\$ 16,233.68
Pittsfield	56.82	\$ 14,829.94
Ira	41.80	\$ 16,277.36
Sandgate	55.41	\$ 15,952.48
Stannard	15.34	\$ 17,950.59
Jay	48.25	\$ 18,777.58
Westfield	36.48	\$ 15,137.46
North Bennington ID	155.57	\$ 19,010.99
Morgan	38.29	\$ 12,878.16
Granville-Hancock USD 80	88.65	\$ 19,588.09
Northeast Kingdom Choice SD 65	292.44	\$ 17,564.10
Buel's Gore	3.13	\$ 43,900.00
Ferdinand	1.00	\$

Averages	
Calculation w/ Altered Data Set	\$ 18,855.03
Unweighted average without gores	\$ 16,928.49
Unweighted average with gores	\$ 17,598.03
Weighted average without gores	\$ 17,835.00
Weighted average with gores	\$ 17,890.39

Source: spreadsheet referenced in Odell presentation