

Hello, my name is Owen Tyburski and I would like to thank you all for giving me the opportunity to testify about my views on my school and education in Vermont.

I am currently in 8th grade at Burke Town School. I am part of the Student Council, the Robotics Team, and the Odyssey of the Mind program.

I would like to talk about what I think is going well in my school and what needs improvement to make it a better educational environment.

Our school is in such a rural place, so there is more outdoor space to enjoy and explore. But, because of this space, people live so far apart that connecting outside of school can be difficult.

Many parts of our school's campus are very nice. We have bike trails, a soccer field, a pavilion, and a softball field. But I think that some of the buildings could be improved. Both the gym and the cafeteria are quite small, and very old. The acoustics in the gym are terrible and whenever we host any sort of activity, like the ski swap, or dances, or our all-school assembly, it gets hot and loud and uncomfortable.

Our school is very important to our community because it brings people together for large events. For example, the annual ski swap provides people more affordable opportunities to participate in skiing and snowboarding. The ski swap also generates thousands of dollars every year for the Parent Teacher Organization, which funds programs that our school can't provide.

There are many field trips and activities that we do throughout the year. Last year our school started experiential learning. Once a week we would leave school around lunch and go to our chosen experience: either mountain biking, playing musical instruments, or fishing. I found this to be a very fun way to get out of the classroom and do enriching activities with the community. Our school's after-school program helps fund some of the activities that I do. The Robotics Team and the

Odyssey of the Mind program promote growth in teamwork and problem solving skills.

I think that passing the school budget each year is very important because it funds the materials and other programs we need. But I realize that it can be financially difficult for community members, because whenever the budget is raised, taxes are increased.

Thank you all again for giving me the opportunity to testify about my school and Vermont's education.