

Regional School Unit 25

Bucksport, Orland, Prospect, & Verona Island

2022-2023 SCHOOL BOARD ADOPTED BUDGET

District Budget Meeting
Clain Auditorium
Bucksport Performing Arts Center
7:00 PM
May 25, 2022

Budget Validation Vote
June 14, 2022



Our Mission

“To provide a rigorous and inspiring education in partnership with our community”

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 25

Message from RSU 25 School Board Chair- Tom Foster

Thank you for your interest in the proposed 2022-2023 budget for RSU 25. This budget consists of pre-kindergarten through high school, special education, and adult education costs for the towns of Bucksport, Orland, Prospect, and Verona Island. This year's budget addresses cost increases related to teacher and support staff contracts, additions to technology, the assumption of transportation by RSU 25, all while striving to minimize the impact to the local taxpayer.

The proposed total budget of **\$16,998,643.94** represents a **4.38%** increase over the prior year's budget. The primary increases in this budget are related to salary and insurance cost, as well as the increases in diesel fuel, natural gas, and electricity. While the overall budget is up 4.38%, because of an increase in general purpose aid and the increase in use of balance forward monies, the impact to our local communities over last year's budget will be:

.32% for **Verona Island**, .61% for **Bucksport**, 1.39% for **Orland**, and 1.78% for **Prospect**

The school board is pleased to present this budget to you which meets state requirements in early education, provides for special needs students, and strengthens our higher level opportunities in high school mathematics and engineering, all while maintaining per pupil costs below the state average.

School Board Adopted Budget 5/10/2022

| Cost Center Summary Budget | Amount Recommended by School Board |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Regular Education | \$ 5,987,114.00 |
| Special Education | \$ 3,277,853.00 |
| Career and Technical Education | \$ 140,399.00 |
| Other Instruction | \$ 541,371.00 |
| Student and Staff Support | \$ 1,558,492.00 |
| System Administration | \$ 550,316.00 |
| School Administration | \$ 949,699.00 |
| Transportation and Buses | \$ 1,518,751.15 |
| Facilities and Maintenance | \$ 1,802,752.00 |
| Debt Service | \$ 631,896.79 |
| All Other Expenditures | \$ 40,000.00 |
| Summary of General Fund Expenditures | \$ 16,998,643.94 |

PER PUPIL OPERATING COSTS AND TUITION RATES REMAIN BELOW STATE AND COUNTY AVERAGE

RSU 25 continues to operate our school system below the State of Maine average per pupil cost while providing a full range of educational services. Based on the latest data available from the Maine Department of Education for the fiscal year 2021, RSU 25 per pupil operating cost remains **below** the State average per pupil operating costs.

FY 21 Per Pupil Expenditure Rate PK-12 State Average = \$ 15,647

FY 21 Per Pupil Expenditure Rate PK-12 **RSU 25** = \$ 13,927

FY 2022 Tuition Rate Pk-8 State Average = \$ 10,477

FY 2022 Tuition Rate Pk-8 **RSU 25** = \$ 8,637

FY 2022 Tuition Rate 9-12 State Average = \$ 11,774

FY 2022 Tuition Rate 9-12 **RSU 25** = \$ 10,157

RSU 25 District Budget Meeting Warrant Articles

The District Budget meeting is a required element of the Regional School Unit budget process. Once the School Board adopts a proposed budget it is presented to the voters of the district in a format similar to a Town meeting. Once a moderator is elected, the voters will proceed through a series of articles on which they are asked to take action. Each of the articles are outlined below with a short explanation.

ARTICLE 1: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for *Regular Instruction*.

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 5,987,114.00 | 35.22% of Total Budget |
|--|-------------------------------|

The regular education cost center supports general classroom instruction and for the upcoming year we are projecting RSU 25 will support approximately 1085 students PK-12.

ARTICLE 2: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for *Special Education*.

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 3,277,853.00 | 19.28% of Total Budget |
|--|-------------------------------|

Special Education provides students with identified disabilities specialized instruction designed to meet their unique learning needs, giving them the support and opportunity to meet the learning results. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires all qualifying students receive services free of charge through the public education system.

ARTICLE 3: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for *Career and Technical Education*.

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|--|-----------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 140,399.00 | .83% of Total Budget |
|--|-----------------------------|

The monies in this cost center support the cost of students attending Hancock County Technical Center (HCTC). Because of a change in CTE funding, the local costs for CTE have reduced, but students may still access a full range of programming through Hancock County Technical School. BHS averages between 45-50 students per year participating in coursework offered through the CTE program, and BHS runs the welding program for HCTC which is available to students from across Hancock County.

ARTICLE 4: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for *Other Instruction*.

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|--|------------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 541,371.00 | 3.18% of Total Budget |
|--|------------------------------|

The Other Instruction cost center includes the cost of summer school, co-curricular and extracurricular programming.

ARTICLE 5: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for *Student and Staff Support*.

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|--|------------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 1,558,492.00 | 9.17% of Total Budget |
|--|------------------------------|

This section of the budget includes all costs identified as support services for educational programming. Included costs are the library, health services, guidance, technology, and improvement of instruction.

ARTICLE 6: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for *System Administration*.

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|--|------------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 550,316.00 | 3.24% of Total Budget |
|--|------------------------------|

Costs included in this section are all expenses associated with the School Board and the central office functions.

ARTICLE 7: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for School Administration.

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|--|------------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 949,699.00 | 5.59% of Total Budget |
|--|------------------------------|

Costs associated with this section of the budget are inclusive of the administrative offices for each of the buildings.

ARTICLE 8: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Transportation and Buses.

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|--|------------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 1,518,751.15 | 8.93% of Total Budget |
|--|------------------------------|

By statute, RSU 25 is required to provide transportation for all students. Previously this had been a contracted service, but beginning in FY 2022 RSU 25 has operated our own transportation program as part of a transportation collaborative with three other school units.

ARTICLE 9: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Facilities Maintenance.

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|--|-------------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 1,802,752.00 | 10.61% of Total Budget |
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This cost center contains the expenses for all of our building operations and maintenance expenses.

ARTICLE 10: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Debt Service

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|--|------------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 631,896.79 | 3.72% of Total Budget |
|--|------------------------------|

The debt service portion of this budget includes the associated debt for the State approved construction projects at the High School and Middle School as well as smaller voter approved projects.

ARTICLE 11: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for All Other Expenditures.

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|---|-----------------------------|
| School Board Recommends \$ 40,000.00 | .24% of Total Budget |
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The monies associated with this cost center are used to support the cost of running the RSU 25 school based food service program.

ARTICLES 12 THROUGH 14 RAISE FUNDS FOR THE PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

ARTICLE 12: To see what sum the Regional School Unit will appropriate for the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act and to see what sum the Regional School Unit will raise and assess as each municipality's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act in accordance with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688. Recommended amounts set forth below:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Total Appropriated (by municipality): | | Total raised (and Regional School Unit assessments by municipality): | |
| Town of Bucksport: | \$ 8,838,975.55 | Town of Bucksport: | \$ 3,181,036.66 |
| Town of Orland: | \$ 3,117,977.60 | Town of Orland: | \$ 1,774,053.34 |
| Town of Prospect: | \$ 1,187,372.77 | Town of Prospect: | \$ 414,166.66 |
| Town of Verona Island: | \$ 689,832.66 | Town of Verona Island: | \$ 408,486.66 |
| Regional School Unit | | Regional School Unit | |
| Total Appropriated | | Total Raised: | |
| (Sum of above) | \$13,834,158.58 | (Sum of above) | \$5,777,743.32 |

Explanation: The Regional School Unit's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act is the amount of money determined by state law to be the minimum amount that the Regional School Unit must raise and assess in order to receive the full amount of state dollars.

ARTICLE 13: *To see what sum the Regional School Unit will raise and appropriate for the annual payments on debt service previously approved by the Regional School Unit voters for non-state-funded school construction projects and non-state-funded portions of school construction projects in addition to the funds appropriated as the local share of the Regional School Unit's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12.*

School Board Recommends \$ 229,034.29

Non-state-funded debt service is the amount of money needed for the annual payments on the Regional School Unit's long-term debt for major capital school construction projects that are not approved for state subsidy. The bonding of this long-term debt was previously approved by the Regional School Unit voters.

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|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Bucksport</i> | <i>\$ 135,034.80</i> |
| <i>Orland</i> | <i>\$ 61,709.85</i> |
| <i>Prospect</i> | <i>\$ 18,324.91</i> |
| <i>Verona Island</i> | <i>\$ 13,964.73</i> |

ARTICLE 14: (Written ballot required). *To see what sum the Regional School Unit will raise and appropriate in additional local funds (Recommend \$1,769,581.94), which exceeds the State's Essential Programs and Services allocation model by (Recommend \$ 1,729,581.94) as required to fund the budget recommended by the School Board.*

The School Board recommends \$1,769,581.94 for additional local funds and gives the following reasons for exceeding the State's Essential Programs and Services funding model by \$ 1,729,581.94: This amount is needed to cover costs of Regional School Unit schools that the state's funding model does not recognize including the following: 1) the full cost of special education programming, 2) the full cost of extra-curricular and co-curricular programs, 3) transportation costs, 4) food service costs and local debt. Also, the State's funding model recognizes costs of larger, more urban school districts to a greater degree than our schools.

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Bucksport</i> | <i>\$ 1,043,316.00</i> |
| <i>Orland</i> | <i>\$ 476,787.24</i> |
| <i>Prospect</i> | <i>\$ 141,583.27</i> |
| <i>Verona Island</i> | <i>\$ 107,895.43</i> |

ARTICLE 15 SUMMARIZES THE PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

ARTICLE 15: *To see what sum the Regional School Unit will authorize the School Board to expend for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022 from the Regional School Unit's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act, non-state-funded school construction projects, additional local funds for school purposes under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15690, unexpended balances, tuition receipts, state subsidy and other receipts for the support of schools.*

School Board Recommends \$16,988,643.94

ARTICLE 16 AUTHORIZES EXPENDITURE OF GRANTS AND OTHER RECEIPTS

ARTICLE 16: *In addition to amounts approved in the preceding articles, shall the School Board be authorized to expend such other sums as may be received from federal or state grants or programs or other sources during the fiscal year for school purposes, provided that such grants, programs or other sources do not require the expenditure of other funds not previously appropriated?*

ARTICLE 17 AUTHORIZES THE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM AND RAISES THE LOCAL SHARE

ARTICLE 17: To see if Regional School Unit No. 25 will appropriate **\$211,407.67** for adult education and raise **\$115,000** as the local share; with authorization to expend any additional, incidental, or miscellaneous receipts in the interest and for the well-being of the adult education program.

Local support for Adult Education is \$115,000 with the remainder of the budget provided from the State of Maine and self generated revenues from program fees. This program supports adult learners in acquiring high school completion programming, HiSET® programming, college course work, driver education, and enrichment activities.

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Bucksport</i> | <i>\$ 67,802.08</i> |
| <i>Orland</i> | <i>\$ 30,985.02</i> |
| <i>Prospect</i> | <i>\$ 9,201.09</i> |
| <i>Verona Island</i> | <i>\$ 7,011.81</i> |

ARTICLE 18 AUTHORIZES A TRANSFER TO THE CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

ARTICLE 18: Shall the School Board be authorized to transfer up to **\$600,000.00** from unallocated fund balance to the School Capital Reserve Fund and have authority to expend up to \$350,000 to fund the rehabilitation of the middle school athletic fields.

Currently the capital reserve account has a balance of \$ 650,698.58 and the monies in this account are targeted for capital projects. The Board is planning to fix the Middle School non-masonry exterior walls which have failed. We are currently working with an engineering firm to develop and engineer a solution to the problem and anticipate moving to construction in the summer of 2023. It is the Boards goal to use Capital Reserve monies to pay for the project which is estimated to be approximately \$1,000,000.

In the past, voters have approved expenditures from this fund to pay for the Miles Lane Roof (2015), the Miles Lane Playground (2015), the Track rebuild project (2016), Bucksport High School Roof (2016) and the phone system upgrade to the High School and Central Office(2016), and, installation of lights on the varsity soccer field (2021).

ARTICLE 19 TRANSFERS AVAILABLE FUND BALANCES TO THE FUEL COST STABILIZATION FUND

ARTICLE 19: Shall the School Board be authorized to transfer up to **\$10,000.00** to the fuel cost stabilization fund from year end available fund balances?

Statutory Disclosure Statement relating to Fuel Cost Stabilization Fund: The fuel cost stabilization fund balance is currently **\$10,000.00**. If this article is approved as written, and supported by the Board in full, the fuel cost stabilization fund balance will be **\$40,000.00**. The amount used from the fuel cost stabilization fund in the last four years through the date this article was prepared is as follows:

Fiscal year 2019-2020: \$ 0.00
Fiscal year 2020-2021: \$ 0.00
Fiscal year 2021-2022: to date \$0.00

The fuel stabilization account has a current balance of \$30,000.00 based on our FY 2021 audit. Monies in this fund are intended to offset unanticipated increases in fuel cost, and require School Board authorization prior to expenditure.

ARTICLE 20 AUTHORIZES THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS INTO THE TECHNOLOGY RESERVE ACCOUNT

ARTICLE 20: Shall the Board be authorized to (1) transfer up to **\$100,000** in unallocated fund balances to the Technology funds.

The establishment of a technology reserve allowed the School Board to use unallocated balance forward monies to fund significant investment into technology without increasing the bottom line of the school budget. There remains a balance of \$ 115,618.07 in the technology reserve. Monies in this reserve may only be expended with School Board approval.

ARTICLE 21 AUTHORIZES THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS INTO THE SPECIAL EDUCATION RESERVE

ARTICLE 21: Shall the Board be authorized to (1) transfer up to \$ **100,000** in unallocated fund balances to the Special Education reserve fund.

The establishment of a special education reserve allowed the School Board to prepare for unanticipated special education costs without increasing the bottom line of the school budget. There remains a balance of \$ 68,000 as of the FY 2021 audit. Monies in this reserve may only be expended with School Board approval.

ARTICLE 22 AUTHORIZES THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS INTO THE CURRICULUM RESERVE ACCOUNT

ARTICLE 22: Shall the Board be authorized to (1) transfer up to \$ **10,000** in unallocated fund balances to the curriculum reserve account.

Monies in this fund may be used to offset significant costs associated with curriculum materials and programs. Currently this account has a balance of \$77,325.00. Monies in this reserve may only be expended with School Board approval.

ARTICLE 23 AUTHORIZES THE DISPOSITION OF ANY ADDITIONAL STATE SUBSIDY RECEIVED

ARTICLE 23: In the event that the Regional School Unit receives more state education subsidy than the amount included in its budget, shall the School Board be authorized to use all or part of the additional state subsidy to increase expenditures for school purposes in cost center categories approved by the School Board, increase the allocation of finances in a reserve fund approved by the School Board, and/or decrease the local cost share expectation, as defined in Title 20-A, section 15671A(1)(B), for local property taxpayers for funding public education as approved by the School Board?

The FY 2022 budget has been developed based on an estimated amount of general purpose aid. It is anticipated the final legislative appropriation for education will be published after the RSU 25 School Board adopts the budget and calls the warrant. This warrant will allow the School Board the ability to use any additional general purpose aid the District may receive to reduce the local assessments for education, increase the capital reserve funds, or increase expenditure, or a combination of the options.



Adoption of New K-8 Math Program: Illustrative Math

This year, our district adopted a new math program for grades K-8. We are using the Illustrative Math program in all of our classrooms to provide standards-based instruction to meet the Maine Learning Results standards. Students engage in collaborative learning opportunities and in-depth problem solving to strengthen their understanding of key mathematical standards. Through this program, they are taught to see themselves as mathematicians. The program contains fluency procedures for math fact learning and builds upon real-world problem solving. Most lessons contain a warm-up activity, standards-based instructional activities, a lesson synthesis and then a cool-down. Our students have enjoyed the partner work time and the math centers that have been a part of this new program.

PreK Students Learn How to Make Pizza at Bucksport House of Pizza

Mr. Ron Provencher's PreK class experienced some real-world, hands-on learning early this spring with a field trip to Bucksport House of Pizza! As part of a project sponsored by Aspire Golden Bucks, Bucksport House of Pizza staff taught our young learners all about the pizza making business and process. Students learned all of the steps involved and each student was able to make their very own pizza, with some grownup help, of course! Aspire Golden Bucks has also funded the purchase of various job dress-up clothes/uniforms and career books for our PreK classrooms.



MLS Wing 1 Students Visit the Traveling Planetarium in the Gymnasium



As part of our Wing 1 Grades 1/2 classrooms' experiential learning programs this year, students studied space. Through a variety of cross-curricular activities, lessons and experiences, students engaged in hands-on learning opportunities. Earlier in the school year, they visited the Challenger Learning Center in Bangor. This winter, Northern Stars Traveling Planetarium came to MLS and classes participated in 'Our Family in the Sky'. This program is designed for students in grades K-2. During the show, the planets are personified as Mr. Sun guides students through a tour of the Solar System. The presentation included planets, comets, asteroids, the Moon, and a constellation 'point out'.

On May 27th, families of Wing 1 students have been invited to 'Under the Skies: A Wondrous Night of Sky Exploration' at Fort Knox. Teachers, students and families will meet at Fort Knox at 7:30pm for light refreshments. Then at 8:00pm, Wing 1 teachers will guide students and families on a 'moon gazing adventure' and some star storytelling. There will be a family-style scavenger hunt of the night sky for families.

Learning Centers Open and Actively Being Used at Both GHJ & MLS

Miles Lane School and GH Jewett School both have Learning Center spaces now set up and fully running. Students access the Learning Center rooms when they need a 'brain break' or when they need a quiet place to go for task completion. Both of our Learning Centers are used daily by many students. Miss Alecia Smith runs the Jewett Learning Center and Miss Kim Nason runs the MLS Learning Center. Each month, staff keep data on which students visit, time of day/subject matter of visits and track students who may need more regularly scheduled breaks through being issued what we call a daily 'pause pass'. Both Learning Center staff members work to develop relationships with all of our students and invite them for lunch groups. They also work with students who participate in our Tier 2 Check In/Check Out (CICO) behavioral intervention.



MLS Student Council-Sponsored Bucksport Community Concerns Food Drive



Our fourth grade student council sponsored a Bucksport Community Concerns Food Drive this past January for our local food pantry. Over the course of two weeks, students at MLS collected a total of 1,102 items. At the conclusion of the two weeks, our student council members helped box up and load the food pantry truck with the items donated.

Pictured here from left to right in the picture to the left: Brooklynn Fisk, Adelyn Palkie, Miranda Harvey, Aria Smith, Samuel Foster, and Mrs. Willey (Student Council Advisor)

MLS 2nd Graders Help Out Bangor Humane Society Fundraiser Efforts By Donating Artwork

During the week of April 4, students in Mrs. Ferrell's second grade class worked to support the Bangor Humane Society in their latest fundraiser. Donors to the Bangor Humane Society were gifted portraits of pets as a thank you for their donations. Mrs. Ferrell's students were guest artists for this important cause. Here is a collage of their finished products!



Bucksport Middle School

Todd West, Principal

Returning to In-Person Learning & More!



The 2021-22 school year encapsulated many milestones as schools returned to a more normal school year than either of the previous two school years. From the very first day of school in August, Bucksport Middle School students were attending school in person five days a week. While the technology utilized in previous years for remote learning was both impressive and appreciated, nothing can replace the daily interactions between students and teachers in the classroom.

As spring came and COVID cases further declined, students and teachers no longer had to wear masks. Everyone was excited to finally see each other's faces and bright smiles! With a substantial decrease in the number of students needing to quarantine and participate in temporary remote learning this spring, we feel like we have turned the corner and are able to provide students with educational experiences both in and out of the classroom that support their academic and social development.

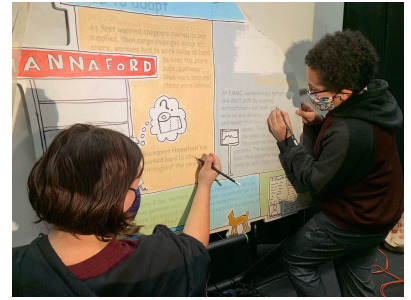
STARS Outdoor Classroom

Students in the new STARS [Students Taking Alternative Routes to Success] class this year have focused their energies on designing, building, and stewarding a new outdoor classroom space at BMS. These students started designing prototypes during a special summer kick off event and have worked with a wide range of professionals to create the outdoor classroom, which will serve as a homebase for the STARS class but will also be available for use by other school and community groups. As part of the class, students have learned design and basic construction skills, and have even built and painted all of the outdoor tables and chairs that will go into the classroom.

The STARS program and outdoor classroom were made possible by a three-year, \$130,000 grant BMS received in the spring of 2021. Students are shifting their focus to gardens and greenhouses, which will be a major focus of the STARS program next year. A grand opening of the outdoor classroom is scheduled for 3:00 pm on Wednesday, June 1st.

“History In The Making” Mural

6th grade Art, English Language Arts, and Social Studies Students collaborated with teaching artists Laurie Downey and Gretchen Berg to create a four-panel mural depicting how COVID impacted them and those around them. By telling their own stories and listening to the stories of their families and community, students discovered how daily life was transformed and history created by major events. Every 6th grade student had a role in creating the mural, whether it was drawing, painting, or scribing the text. BMS received a \$5,000 Arts Learning grant from the Maine Arts Commission to support this project.



Extra-/Co-Curricular Activities Return with Success!



For the first time in three years, Bucksport Middle School was able to offer a full slate of extra- and co-curricular activities. The fall sports season saw the return of tackle football after a season of flag football, although due to low numbers of players the team competed in the 8-man format. Students also participated in cross country, golf, and soccer, with the girls soccer team going undefeated and capturing the Penobscot Valley Middle League championship.

We had enough student athletes try out for basketball that we were once again able to field ‘A’ and ‘B’ teams after a sharp decrease in numbers the previous year. Cheering saw the return of in-person competitions, including the always popular middle school cheering competition at Bucksport High School. After a two-year hiatus, our wrestling team returned to the mats, with several wrestlers qualifying for the state competition. Spring sports are underway, including baseball, softball, and a record number of students- over 80!- participating in track and field.

Clain Auditorium at Bucksport Middle School, in the Bucksport Performing Arts Center, had been dark for two years before this spring’s performance of the musical *Annie, Jr.* The cast and crew did a wonderful job entertaining the audience with their singing and dancing. A gifted and talented recital also allowed students to display their instrumental and vocal talents. Later this spring, the auditorium will also be filled for the annual band and choir concerts.



Finally, congratulations to 7th grader Emma Clement for winning both the BMS and Hancock County Spelling Bee and competing in the Maine Spelling Bee!

Academic Success

Despite the challenges that our students have faced over the last two years, they have been able to find a tremendous amount of academic success. We have been able to not only maintain our academic offerings, but we have also been able to expand them. The last couple of years we enhanced our engineering and technology offerings. This includes an Introduction to Computer Aided Design course which teaches students how to use a computer program to design products that can be reproduced through the use of our 3D printing machines and CNC machines. We currently offer six different Advanced Placement courses, eleven dual or concurrent enrollment courses, as well as a number of honors classes in each content area. Our students have a number of pathways available to them whether it be taking college preparatory courses, certification pathways through our partnership with Hancock County Technical Center, or pathways such as engineering and the fine arts.

Our graduating seniors continue to thrive after leaving Bucksport High School. About 70% of our graduates attend a 2 or 4-year post-secondary institution or training program. As part of our Aspire Golden Bucks and MELMAC work, 98% of BHS students have an identified plan after graduation whether it be college, career or military track. We continue to seek their feedback after they have left so that we can adapt and improve to meet the ever-changing needs of high school graduates.

Extra and Co-Curricular Activities

We had an excellent year in regards to our extra and co-curricular activities, with a number of our sports teams experiencing success this year. Our Girls Soccer team had an undefeated regular season, won the Class C Northern Maine Championship, and was the State runner up. It was a fantastic season for our Lady Bucks and we are very proud of their success. Our Boys soccer team also had an extremely successful season that saw them have the most wins in school history and an appearance in the Northern Maine semi-finals. Our cross-country team had another great season and finished third at the Regional Championship meet, and Will Hileman went on to finish second at the State Championship Meet. We also had great seasons from our golf, cheering, eSports, football, and basketball programs. Our Indoor Track teams also found success with both the Girls and Boys teams winning the EMITL Small School Championship and the Boys team finishing second at the State Championship. Currently our Spring teams are off to very fast starts and are on track for strong seasons.



Our other clubs and organizations were also very successful. Our robotics team built a robot that competed at three competitions in Maine and New Hampshire. Our team, *Bucks Wrath*, were silver medalists in all three competitions. At the New England District Championship, they also earned the Quality Award which is an enormous honor to be given at such a large event featuring robots from all over New England.



This year we were able to enjoy more normal activities such as concerts, one act plays, and art shows. Our talented chorus, band and jazz band students performed their annual winter concert and will have one more concert at the end of this year. The jazz band also competed in their annual festival this year. The BHS Drama Club also competed at the regional One Act competition and represented the school extremely well. Finally, we were able to once again have our annual Art Show which showcased the incredibly talented art students. Our Jazz Combo also performed for guests that evening.

Class of 2022 Honors Parts



Valedictorian, Emma Howard, daughter of Richard Howard and Darci Bevan, is from Verona Island. Emma is part of the Bridge Program and the Biomedical program at HCTC. Emma is a member of the BHS Robotics team where she has taken on a very large leadership role amongst her peers. She is a member of the National Honor Society, as well as the National Technical Honor Society. Emma will be studying Electrical Engineering at Worcester Polytechnic Institute next year.



Salutatorian, Emily Keniston is from Bucksport and is the daughter of Jeffrey Keniston and Sally Keniston. Emily has been part of the Early Childhood program at HCTC. She was a member of the BHS Student Council. Emily spent time during the pandemic working at a rehabilitation and living center. Emily plans on studying Education at the University of Maine at Farmington.



First Honors Essayist, Liam Swift is from Bucksport and is the son of Ellen Swift. Liam has been a member of the cross country, indoor and outdoor track teams. He is a very active member of the BHS band. Liam plans on attending the University of Maine in Orono where he will be studying social work.



Second Honors Essayist, Emily Hanscom is the daughter of Mike and Margaret Hanscom and is from Orland. Emily has been a member of the BHS volleyball, cheering and softball teams as well as the president of the National Honor Society. Emily plans on attending the University of Maine in Augusta and studying architecture.



Jennifer Therrien, Aspire Communications Coordinator

Aspire Golden Bucks is a partnership among RSU 25, JMG, and the MELMAC Education Foundation. The vision is to **continue advancing aspirations for RSU 25 students of all ages as they consider and plan for their futures** through application of our three E's: Excite, Explore, Experience.

- Enhancing existing curriculum and creating new opportunities will **EXCITE** students about future opportunities.
- Students will **EXPLORE** a wide-range of careers and post-secondary pathways in RSU 25 communities and beyond.
- Students will gain **EXPERIENCE** by connecting with professionals in their areas of interest.

Aspire Golden Bucks is the second Aspire site, and the first rural district to embark on this partnership. The initiative is locally developed to meet the specific needs of the students and support the advancement of the RSU 25 strategic plan. Funding for the initiative comes from the MELMAC Education Foundation and pays for resources to enhance and expand existing curricula and opportunities and provides support to all grade levels.

2021-22 has been the first full year of implementation. Working directly with teachers, administrators, students, and community shareholders, Aspire Golden Bucks has increased their presence within the district through opportunities that promote future ready skills and traits that are beneficial now, throughout school, and into adulthood.

Elementary Level:

- Aspire Golden Bucks is supporting Miles Lane students' life and career readiness by providing supplemental videos for students that showcase the monthly Miles Lane Character Element and demonstrating how that character element/future ready skill connects to life and work in the RSU 25 community.
- Aspire Golden Bucks is supporting virtual and in-person visits as well as off-site field trips for students to connect with adults working in career fields that connect with existing curricula in order to excite students about the broad range of future career opportunities and show them the relevance of the skills and subjects they are learning.
- For the second year in a row, career-themed books, selected by Jewett and Miles Lane teachers and staff, are being purchased to enhance classroom and library offerings.



Middle School Level:

- As Bucksport Middle School began implementation of the STARS grant, Aspire Golden Bucks has coordinated expanded opportunities to engage with the community, highlighting student development of future ready skills, and increasing career connections by bringing in guest speakers.



- A Life & Career Carnival-themed family night featured activities and take home resources about discovering career interests, financial literacy, budgeting, and future ready skills along with games, prizes, giveaways, and snacks.
- Per the request of BMS administration and teachers, Aspire created a series of activities that focused on “Skills for Success”. The skills that were 8th grade tour at UMaine highlighted in these activities included time management, goal setting, note taking, and more.

High School Level:

- Aspire is working directly with the existing MELMAC Team at BHS to expand awareness of post-secondary opportunities and help high school students navigate the numerous options and decisions they have upon graduation.
- Four Aspire activities at BHS this year have included hosting an online scavenger hunt contest where high school juniors can explore resources and compete to win prizes; the creation of opportunities for students to learn from adults in the career fields that they are interested in through individually scheduled virtual chats with professionals; participating in an online virtual career fair; and hosting a series of college and career field trips.



Community Engagement:

With the goals of increasing awareness amongst school buildings, and within the four communities, Aspire Golden Bucks is publishing monthly newsletters and social media posts. The content features projects, presentations, activities, and upcoming events in the district. The newsletters and Facebook and Instagram pages are being used to share links to aspiration-related resources that can be accessed both in and outside of school. Additionally, staff, student, and community member aspirational timelines are being created and shared as a way to demonstrate multiple career pathways.

For more information visit: rsu.25.org/aspire Social: (Facebook/Instagram) search “aspiregoldenbucks”



Twenty Twenty Three (2023) is going to be exciting! We have new healthcare, technology, and computer credentialed pathways available to our community. Our staff is ready and available to assist with your college and career transition needs. We can assist you in preparing for college, career, and work training. We have tutoring available for community members already on the job.

Maybe you need a Math or English brush up to take the next employer offered training or to go after that promotion you want? We have staff and opportunities available to assist you with the transition. Technology is moving fast and becoming an essential part of most workplaces. What used to be advanced training are now considered basic knowledge. We can assist you in obtaining those skills. Math has become even more important to careers and where would we be without the ability to communicate effectively? Meet with our staff and explore how we can assist you in updating current skills and learning new ones. We are here to help adult students get where they want to be. With us, students have onsite, hybrid, and remote options to ease childcare and transportation barriers. We work with you to explore the resources available at our site and in our community to develop an individualized plan for your successful achievement of college and career goals.

Through career exploration tools, advising, academic offerings, partner connections and workforce training, our program provides a safe, encouraging learning environment. Our program is open year-round so that, with the help of our friendly, knowledgeable, certified staff, students can make a personal connection and achieve their academic and career goals. Perhaps you or someone you know needs a diploma? We have two pathways available to our students to obtain a diploma certificate. Students can work on credits to complete a traditional diploma or they can prepare for the HiSET which is Maine's accepted high school equivalency test. Not quite ready? Our teachers can help you complete the basic education needed to enter the diploma or college and career transitions programs. We also offer English Language Acquisition classes for students whose first language is not English. Our program works with community partners to assist students, including English Language Learners, in their goals to become more active community members. Our site also assists high school students with Credit Recovery on an as needed basis.

Last but definitely not least, our Enrichment program is back. Tried and true classes are returning along with fresh, new offerings. Intro to Ceramics classes will be available in the new pottery room, Alcohol Ink painting and Monster Make-up, Hunter Safety, Maine Driving Dynamics, and many more.

Watch our website at www.rsu25.maineadulted.org for new classes posting throughout the year as we set schedules and finalize details for each semester. You can check the site for detailed class information, location, and dates as well as register. You can also drop in and register on site or via mail.

Contact us at adulted@rsu25.org or 207.469.2129 with questions or to make an appointment to meet with a member of our staff.

We look forward to serving you, our community, in the coming year.

We're here for you – let's make it happen!

