

# The Pupil Weighting Study

What it is and what it means to Norwich

# The Pupil Weighting Study

- History of Education Funding in VT
- The New Equalized Pupil Weights
- Legislative work
- School Board efforts
- What you can do

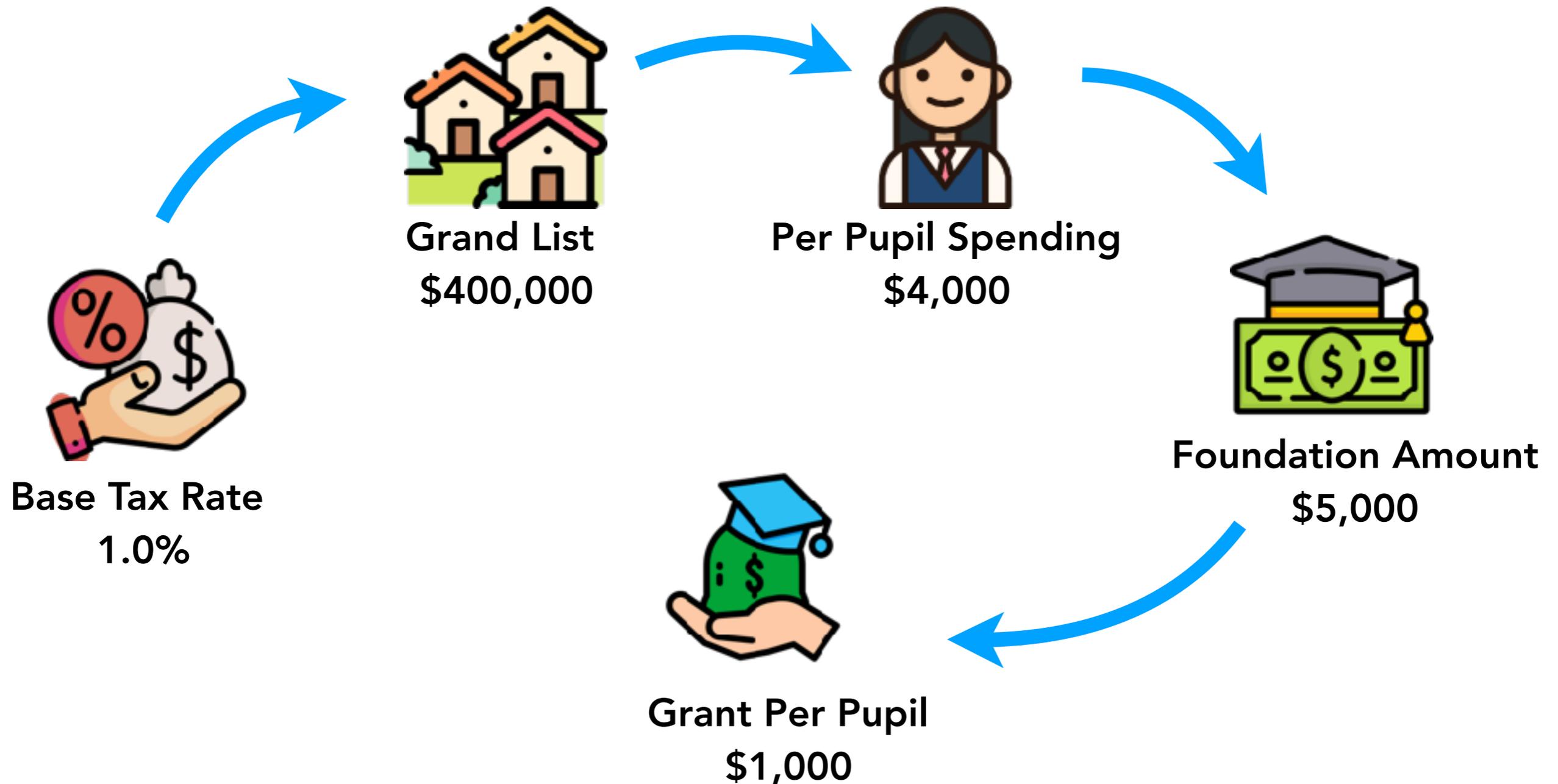
# Vermont Education Funding

**AN ABBREVIATED HISTORY**

## Foundation Funding Formula

- State set a base property tax rate
- State set a foundation amount  
The per-pupil amount needed to provide a minimally adequate education
- State provided grants up to foundation amount

# Vermont Education Funding (before 1997)



# Two Town Example



**Smallville**

**\$400,000  
Grand List**

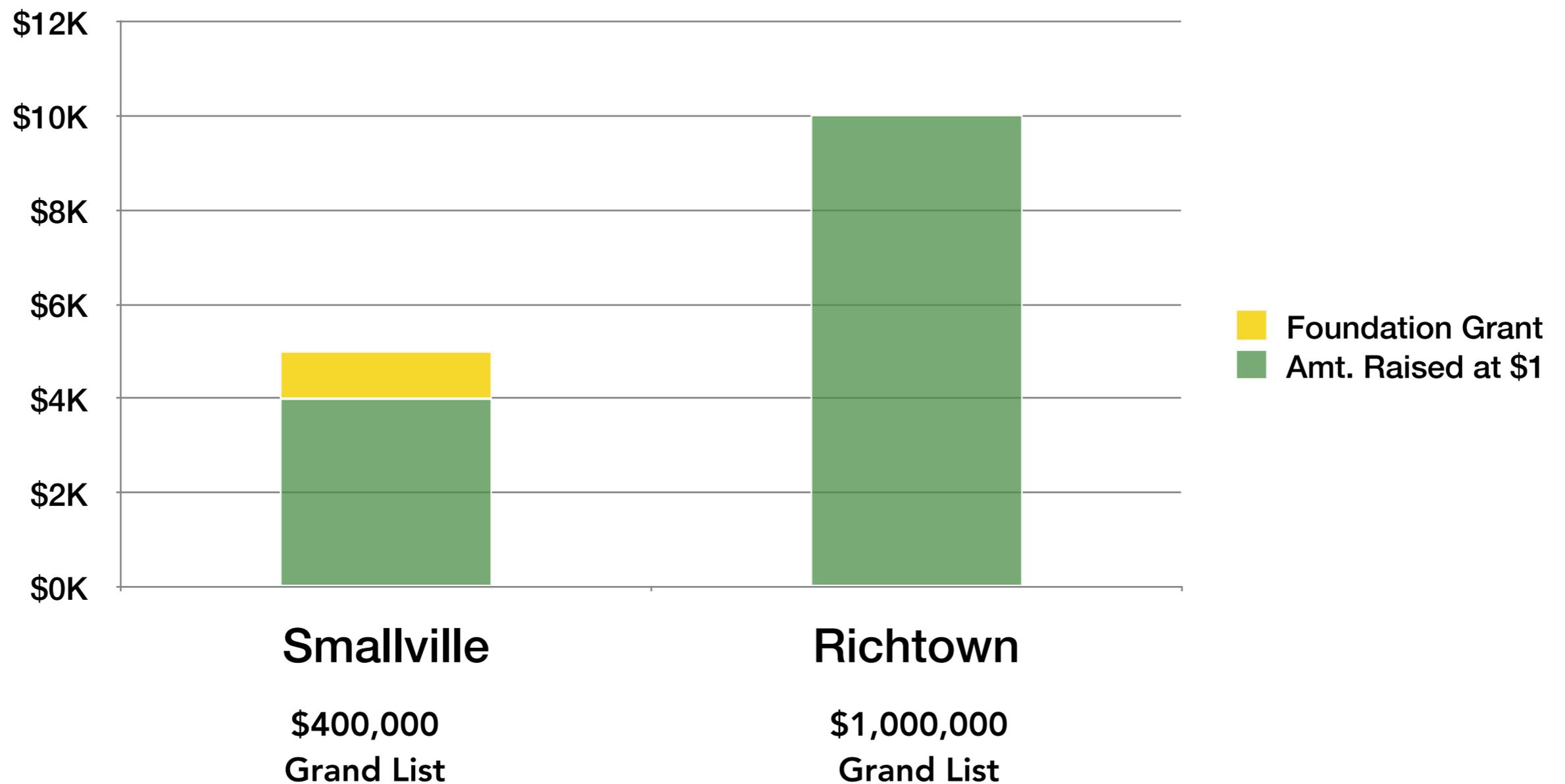
**\$10,000  
Per-Pupil Spending**



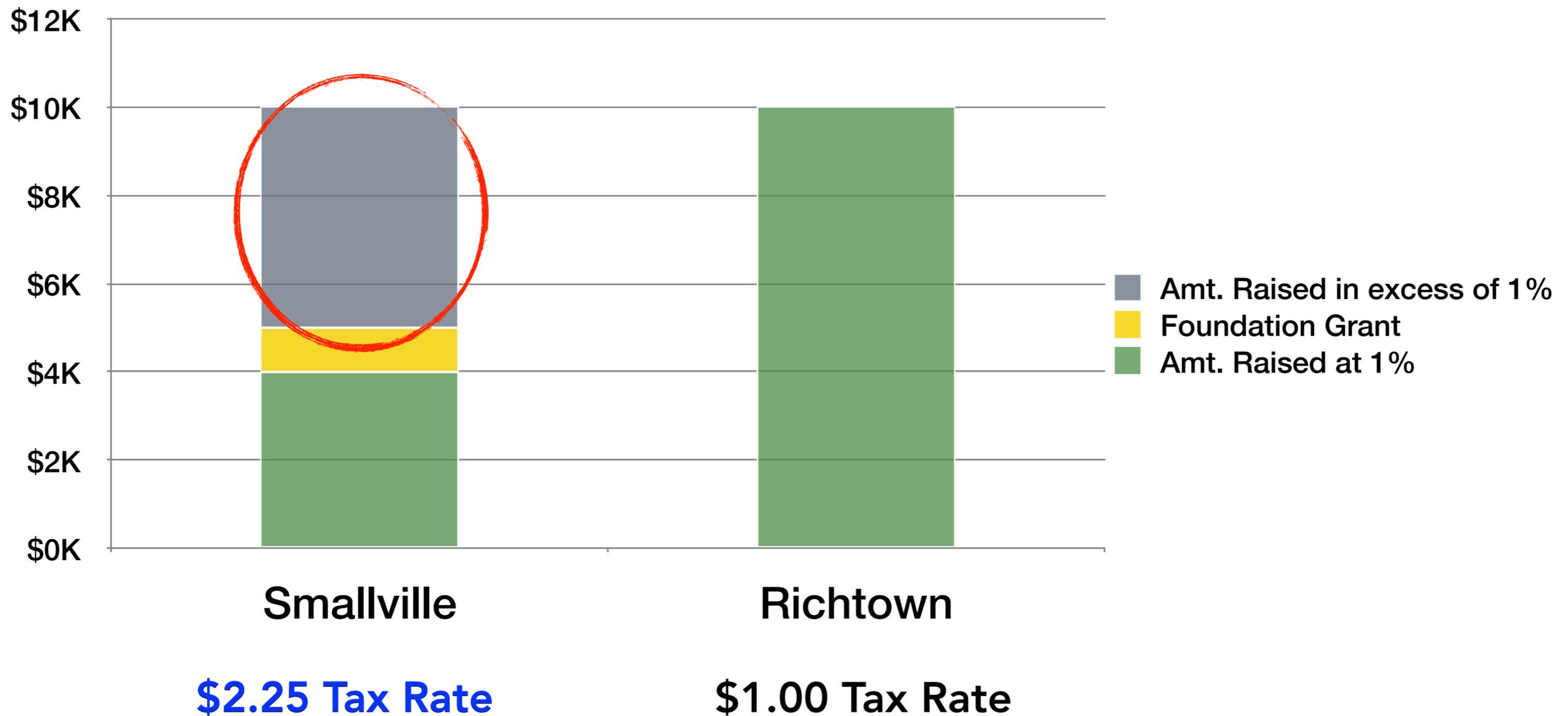
**Richtown**

**\$1,000,000  
Grand List**

# The Foundation Formula



# The Equity Issue



# Brigham v. Vermont

State's method of financing public education:

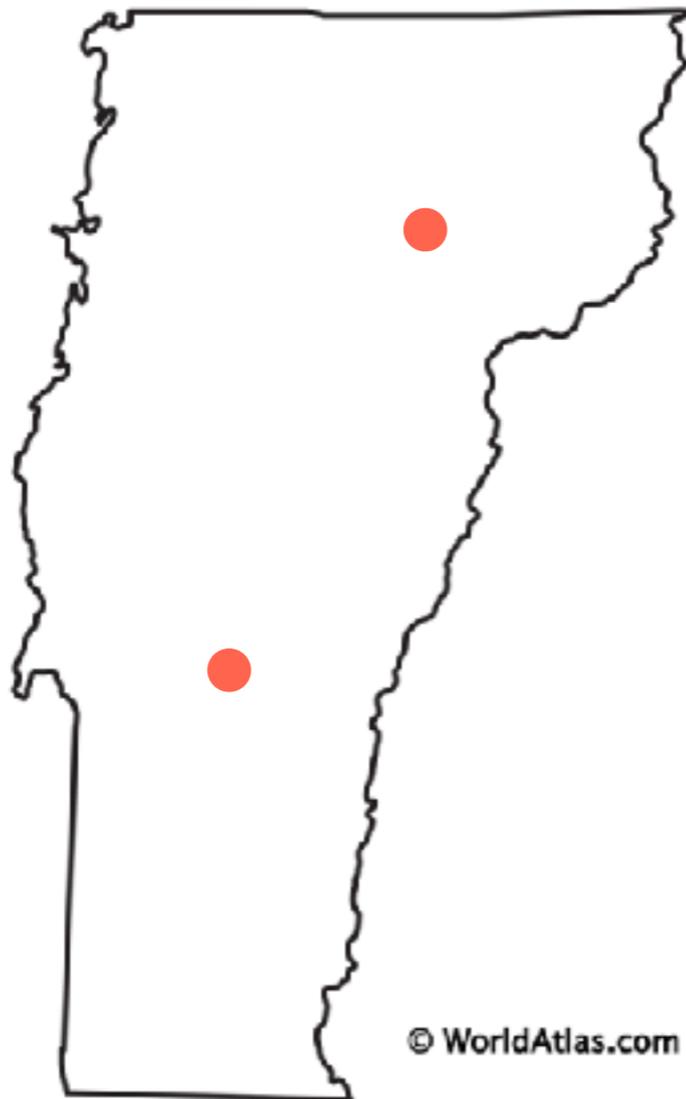
- deprived students of their right to the same educational opportunities as students from wealthier towns
- compels property poor towns to contribute more than their just proportion of money to fund education
- deprives them of ability to raise sufficient money to provide students with educational opportunities afforded to wealthier districts

# Brigham v. Vermont

....deprives children of an equal educational opportunity in violation of the Vermont Constitution

- State's obligation to provide education
- State need to ensure substantial equality of educational opportunity
- Solution resided with the Legislature

# Brigham v. Vermont



## Stannard

Per Pupil spending: \$5,684

Tax on \$85,000 house: **\$2,040**

## Sherburne

Per Pupil spending: \$5,731

Tax on \$85,000 house: **\$247**

# The Equal Educational Opportunity Act

Any two towns that vote to spend the same per pupil will have the same tax rate.

Spending decisions local but state is responsible for funding

Created a Statewide Education Property tax rate, State Education Fund

# The Equal Educational Opportunity Act

## Equalized pupils

- Grade level weights for Elementary and Secondary grades
- Economically deprived students
- English language learners

# Tax Rate Calculation

	Marion Cross Budget	\$ 6,621,180
+	Dresden Assessment	\$ 8,348,531
	<hr/>	
=	Total Expenditures	\$ 14,969,711
-	less Revenues	\$ 1,713,532
=	Net Education Spending	\$13,256,179

# Tax Rate Calculation

	Net Education Spending	\$13,256,179
÷	<u>Equalized Pupils</u>	<u>612.60</u>
=	Net Ed. Spending per Eq. Pup	\$ 21,639
÷	<u>Property Yield</u>	<u>\$ 13,472</u>
=	Eq. Homestead Tax Rate	\$ 1.6062
÷	<u>CLA</u>	<u>84.39%</u>
=	Estimated Homestead Tax Rate	\$ 1.9033

**Pupil Weighting Factors Report**  
Act 173 of 2018, Sec. 11

**REPORT**

December 24, 2019

UPDATED: January 18, 2020

Report to the House and Senate  
Committees on Education, the House  
Committee on Ways and Means, and the  
Senate Committee on Finance

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# The Pupil Weighting Factors Report

The cost factors incorporated in the calculation do not reflect current educational circumstances.

The values for the existing weights have weak ties, if any, with evidence describing differences in the costs for educating students with disparate needs or operating schools in different contexts.

# The Pupil Weighting Factors Report

Updated weights for Poverty, English Language Learners  
and Secondary Grade Levels

New weights for small and rural schools

# Impact of Changes to Equalized Pupils

	Net Education Spending	\$5,000,000	→	\$5,000,000
÷	<u>Equalized Pupils</u>	300	→	350
=	Net Ed. Spending per Eq. Pup	\$ 16,667		\$ 14,286

Estimated Homestead Tax Rate      \$ 1.43      →      \$ 1.26

# Task Force on the Implementation of the Pupil Weighting Factors Report



# Task Force on the Implementation of the Pupil Weighting Factors Report

Pupil Weighting

or

Cost Equity Payments

# Norwich Impact



Equalized pupils drops  
from 580.19 to 475.73



~~Tax rate increases 32%  
from \$1.745 to \$2.306~~

Tax rate increases 21%  
from \$1.745 to \$2.120

Cost Equity Payment



# Current Legislative Activity

S.287 has passed the Senate

Adjust and add pupil weights beginning in FY24

Five year transition period

All weights additive and address the following areas:  
poverty, English language learners, enrollment,  
rurality and grade level

Create Education Fund Advisory Committee

# Proposed Transition Period

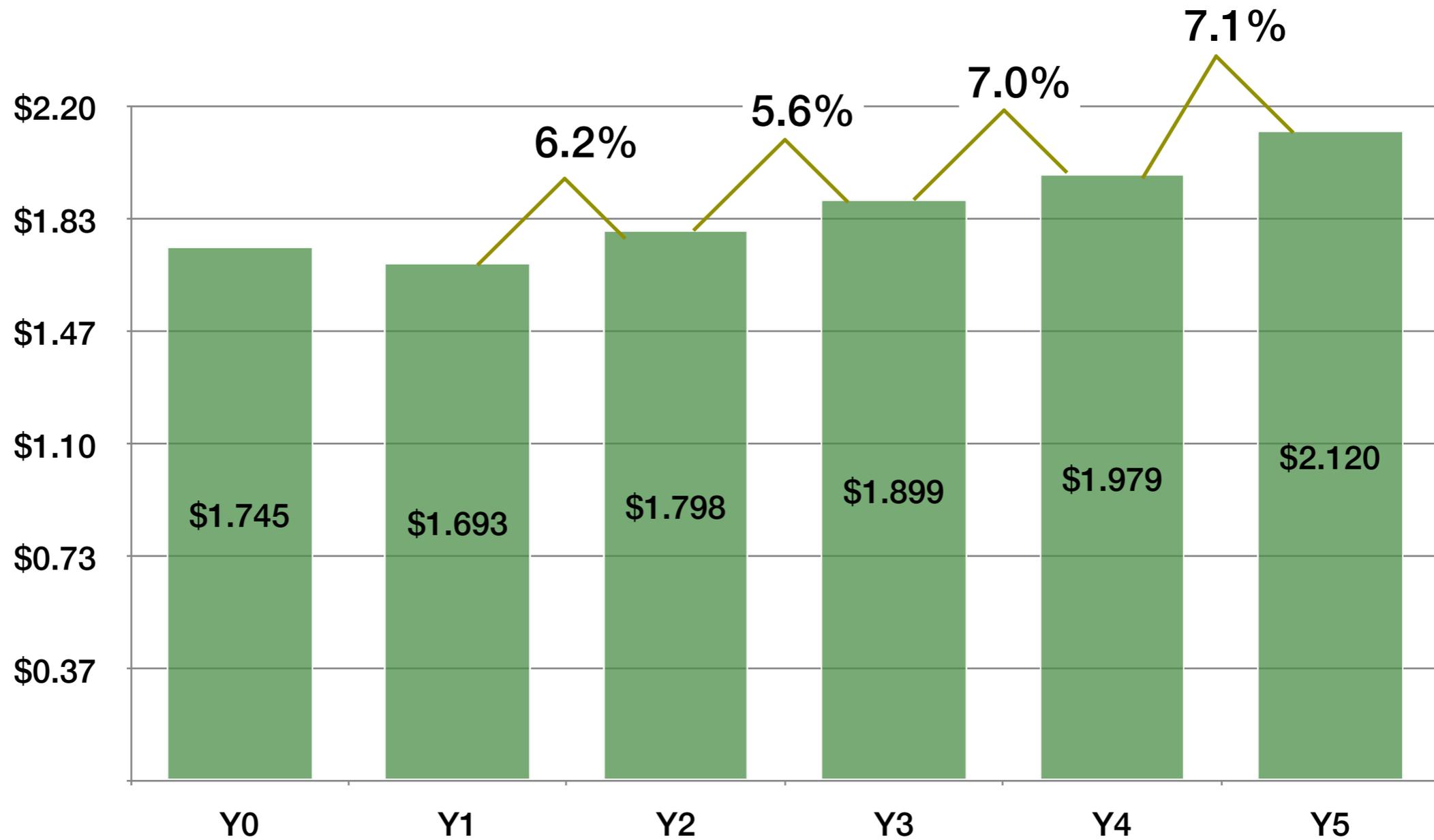
FY24, FY25 & FY 26: average equalized pupil count of current year with the equalized pupil count for the preceding four fiscal years

FY27: average equalized pupil count of current year with the equalized pupil count for the preceding three fiscal years

FY28: average equalized pupil count of current year with the equalized pupil count for the preceding two fiscal years

Suspends Excess Spending Threshold

# Proposed Transition Period



# Norwich Impact

House Site Value	Old Weights	New Weights	Increase
\$200,000	\$3,558	\$4,332	\$773
\$300,000	\$5,338	\$6,498	\$1,160
\$400,000	\$7,117	\$8,664	\$1,547
\$500,000	\$8,896	\$10,830	\$1,934
\$600,000	\$10,675	\$12,995	\$2,320
\$700,000	\$12,454	\$15,161	\$2,707
\$800,000	\$14,233	\$17,327	\$3,094
\$900,000	\$16,013	\$19,493	\$3,481
\$1,000,000	\$17,792	\$21,659	\$3,867

# Income Based Education Funding

H.388 - House Ways and Means

S.212 - Senate Finance

Unlikely these bills will be finalized by end of session

# What is the School Board Doing?

Closely watching the legislative process

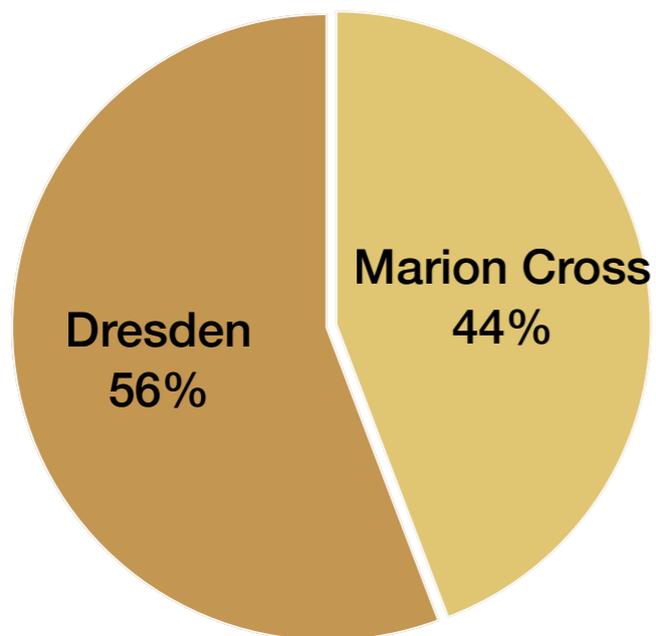
Updates at each school board meeting

Chair Candon testified in Senate Finance

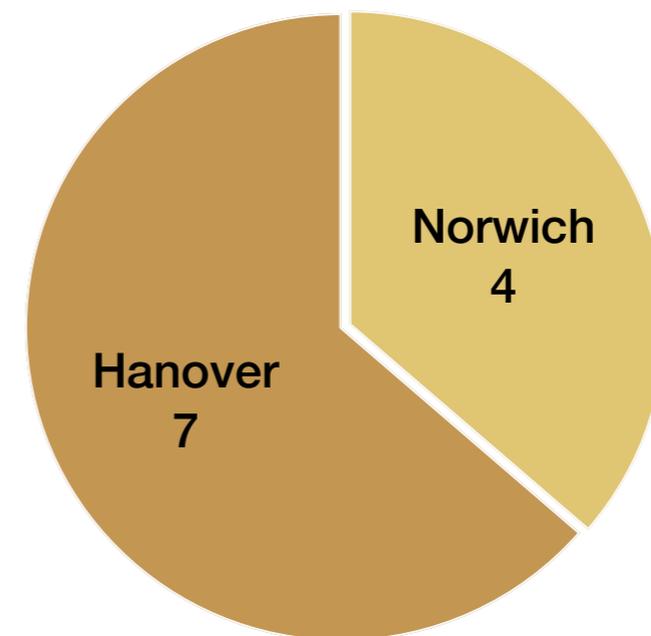
Implications for budgeting

# The Dresden Compact

## Total Education Spending



## The Dresden School Board



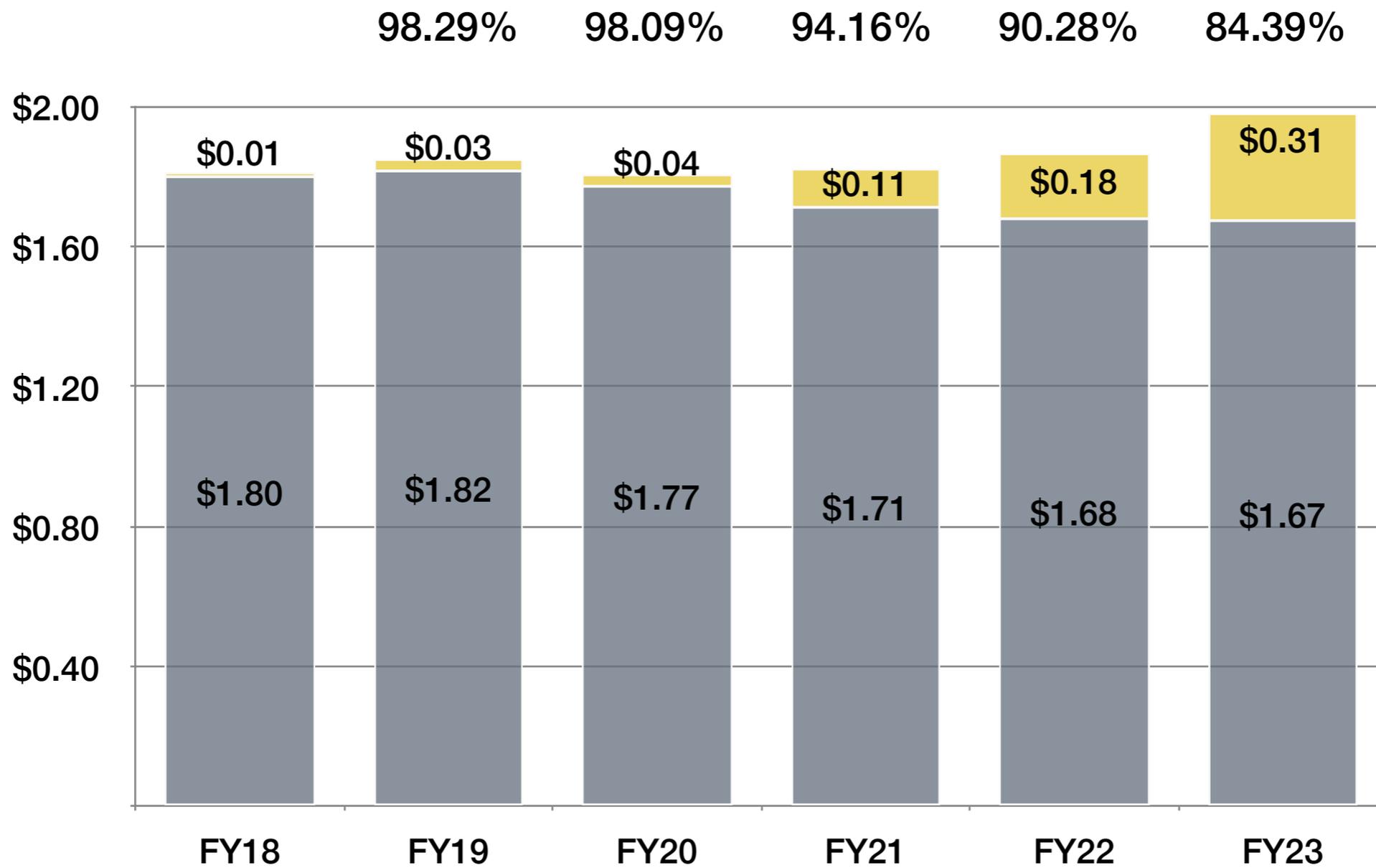
# Scenarios for Budget Cutting

Cut the Marion Cross Budget

Cut the Dresden Budget

Increase Revenues

# Impact of the CLA on Tax Rates



# What can we do?

## short term

stay informed

contact legislators

## long term

address equalized  
pupil numbers

consider affordable  
housing options

consider growth of  
grand list, business



Norwich School District

<https://www.sau70.org/norwichweightingstudy>



Norwich School District

# Additional Info

# The Vermont Constitution

## Chapter 1, Article 7

That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community, and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single person, family, or set of persons, who are a part only of that community; and that the community hath an indubitable, unalienable, and indefeasible right, to reform or alter government, in such manner as shall be, by that community, judged most conducive to the public weal.

# The Vermont Constitution

## Chapter 2, Section 68

Laws for the encouragement of virtue and prevention of vice and immorality ought to be constantly kept in force, and duly executed; and a competent number of schools ought to be maintained in each town unless the general assembly permits other provisions for the convenient instruction of youth. All religious societies, or bodies of people that may be united or incorporated for the advancement of religion and learning, or for other pious and charitable purposes, shall be encouraged and protected in the enjoyment of the privileges, immunities, and estates, which they in justice ought to enjoy, under such regulations as the general assembly of this state shall direct.

# The Pupil Weighting Factors Report

Cost Factor	Measure	Weight Value		
		Existing Weight	New weight w/o SWD	New weight w/ SWD
Student Needs	Poverty Rate	0.25	3.14	2.97
	% ELLs	0.20	0.57	1.58
<b>Context</b>				
Enrollment	< 100 Students		0.24	0.26
	101 - 250		0.12	0.12
Population Density	< 36 Persons per Square Mile		0.23	0.23
	36 to < 55		0.17	0.17
	55 to < 100		0.11	0.11
Grade Range	% Middle School Grades Enrollment		1.23	1.23
	% Secondary Grades Enrollment	1.13	1.13	1.20
	Pre-Kindergarten	0.46		

# Impact of the CLA on Tax Rates

