

PETER SHUMLIN
Governor



State of Vermont
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

November 21, 2011

Dear Local Education Official,

Thank you for devoting your time and energy to providing quality educational opportunities for Vermont students. Recognizing that you and your colleagues are in the process of developing a budget for the next school year, I have asked the Department of Education to provide you with a number of spending indicators by school district that may be helpful in that process. The fact that overall school spending increases have been basically zero over the past two years proves that school boards, administrators, and voters have been diligent in keeping costs in line. That is important because the primary driver determining whether local and statewide education tax rates go up or down is local spending decisions.

With the statewide grand list used in determining the statewide education tax rate for next year continuing to decline, that rate would be expected to increase somewhat. If overall school spending can be held level for another year, that could help keep tax rates and taxes paid level as well. I realize that the data provided may not be perfect, but keep in mind it is just meant to spur questions and dialogue at the local level. I hope you will use this information to carefully scrub your budgets in the coming weeks. The indicators were compiled using existing reports found on the department of education's web site at this address: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/maindata.html>. If you have questions about the data or suggestions for other indicators that should be shared in the future, please feel free to share them with your contacts at the Department of Education.

Together we must ensure our children have access to first class educational opportunities in a manner that is affordable for our citizens. Keep up the great work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Peter Shumlin, consisting of a stylized 'P' and 'S' followed by a horizontal line.

Peter Shumlin
Governor