



Preparing ALL Learners For A Changing World

RSU 29

CARES

Pre-K Through Community Education

# BUDGET

## 2026 - 2027

District Budget Meeting  
Monday, May 11, 2026  
HMHS Auditorium 6:00 pm

*Joe Fagnant*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

Jeannie Tapley  
Board Chair - Monticello

Sue McLaughlin  
Board Vice Chair - Houlton

Christopher Cain - Littleton  
Michael Carlos - Houlton  
Kelly Johnson - Houlton  
Jennifer Johnston - Monticello  
Mark Lipscombe - Houlton  
Christian Lively - Hammond

Gary Lovell - Houlton  
Cassandra Nightingale - Houlton  
Thomas Schools - Littleton  
Theresa Shannon - Houlton  
Jon Solomon - Houlton





Preparing ALL Learners For A Changing World

**RSU 29**

**CARES**

Pre-K Through Community Education



*Joe Fagnant, Superintendent of Schools*  
7 Bird Street, PO Box 190, Houlton, Maine 04730  
(207) 532-6555 FAX (207) 532-7950  
[joe.fagnant@rsu29.org](mailto:joe.fagnant@rsu29.org)

Dear RSU 29 Families and Community,

RSU 29 truly appreciates the support our towns have provided for education. The RSU 29 School Board diligently worked through some challenges these past years and understands that we must continue to be fiscally responsible to our taxpayers while still providing educational opportunities for our amazing students.

**2026-2027 RSU 29 School Budget highlights to be Voted on May 11, 2026**

- The budget was set at \$18,451,935 which is a 3.77% increase over last year with no cuts to personnel or student programs. This represents flat funding of equipment, supplies, and adult education warrants.
- There was approximately a 3% increase of salaries for staff to meet state laws and negotiated contracts.
- State funding was provided at \$12,599,555.09 (81% from the state which is extremely helpful).
- Required local is set by the state at \$2,943,208.93 and the Board is seeking additional local funding of \$1,690,606.18.

The School Board understands that additional local funds will be part of our normal budget process due to the state funding formula. For many years RSU 29 has not asked for additional funding, and for a few years, gave money back to the towns. We hope that in the future, **LD 2226: An Act to Amend the Essential Programs and Services School Funding Formula**, will assist small rural communities like ours in 2028.

To keep up with funding challenges, the district has applied for grants such as **School Revolving Renovation Funds** which will assist with fixing and repairing our buildings. We need your support on June 9th to pass the required referendum to receive funding from the state. The total project is \$1,949,453 with 70% of the project paid by the state in a forgiven loan. The remaining 30% is already built into FY27 and planned for subsequent budgets by RSU 29, representing a payment of \$58,483 a year for the next ten years as a 0% interest loan. This will help remove asbestos at Houlton Elementary School and Houlton Middle High School, while addressing insulation needs to deter future freeze ups of sprinklers and HVAC systems at the Southside School.

**You are invited to the District Budget Meeting: May 11, 2026 held at 6pm at Houlton Middle High School Auditorium.** This is when the budget is approved by the registered voters of Hammond, Houlton, Littleton, and Monticello. Together we can make a huge difference in the lives of our students and citizens of RSU 29. Education is the pathway for transformation and we need your support more than ever to continue the work in our communities.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Fagnant, Superintendent

***Communication . Accountability . Respect . Excellence . Service***

***Hammond ~ Houlton ~ Littleton ~ Monticello***

**7 Bird Street, PO Box 190, Houlton, Maine 04730 ~ (207) 532-6555 FAX (207) 532-7950**  
*RSU29 does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, ancestry or national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs and activities.*

**WARRANT TO CALL  
REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 29 BUDGET MEETING  
(20-A M.R.S. § 1485)**

TO: Alfredo Casillas, a resident of Regional School Unit No. 29 (the “Regional School Unit”) composed of the Towns of Hammond, Houlton, Littleton, and Monticello, State of Maine.

In the name of the State of Maine, you are hereby required to notify the voters of each of the municipalities within the Regional School Unit, namely, the Towns of Hammond, Houlton, Littleton, and Monticello, that a Regional School Unit Budget Meeting will be held at Houlton Middle and High School, 7 Bird Street, Houlton, Maine at 6:00 p.m. on May 11, 2026 for the purpose of determining the Budget Meeting Articles set forth below.

**ARTICLE 1A:** To elect a moderator to preside at the meeting.

**ARTICLES 1 THROUGH 11**  
**AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES IN COST CENTER CATEGORIES**

**ARTICLE 1:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Regular Instruction.  
**School Board Recommends \$6,836,448.00**

**ARTICLE 2:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Special Education.  
**School Board Recommends \$4,342,731.00**

**ARTICLE 3:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Career and Technical Education. **School Board Recommends \$0.00**

**ARTICLE 4:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Other Instruction.  
**School Board Recommends \$535,569.00**

**ARTICLE 5:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Student and Staff Support. **School Board Recommends \$1,889,266.00**

**ARTICLE 6:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for System Administration. **School Board Recommends \$738,437.00**

**ARTICLE 7:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for School Administration. **School Board Recommends \$638,710.00**

**ARTICLE 8:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Transportation and Buses. **School Board Recommends \$1,187,992.00**

**ARTICLE 9:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Facilities Maintenance. **School Board Recommends \$2,222,782.00**

**ARTICLE 10:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for Debt Service and Other Commitments. **School Board Recommends \$60,000.00**

**ARTICLE 11:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will be authorized to expend for All Other Expenditures. **School Board Recommends \$0.00**

**ARTICLES 12 AND 13**  
**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 20A, section 15688.

**Recommended amounts set forth below:**

<b>Total Appropriated (by municipality):</b>		<b>Total Raised (and Regional School Unit assessments by municipality):</b>	
Town of Hammond	\$ 124,342.11	Town of Hammond	\$ 55,979.59
Town of Houlton	\$ 12,241,480.94	Town of Houlton	\$ 2,111,230.00
Town of Littleton	\$ 1,851,143.19	Town of Littleton	\$ 409,262.50
Town of Monticello	\$ 1,325,797.78	Town of Monticello	\$ 366,736.84
<b>Total Appropriated (sum of above)</b>	<b>\$ 15,542,764.02</b>	<b>Total Raised (sum of above)</b>	<b>\$ 2,943,208.93</b>

*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: (Written ballot required.)** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will raise and appropriate in additional local funds (**Recommend \$1,690,606.18**), which exceeds the State's Essential Programs and Services allocation model by (**Recommend \$1,690,606.18**) as required to fund the budget recommended by the School Board.

The School Board Recommends **\$1,690,606.18**, which exceeds the State's Essential Programs and Services allocation model by **\$1,690,606.18**. The School Board gives the following reasons for exceeding the State's Essential Programs and Services funding model: These additional funds are needed to fund expenses that are not covered by the State's Essential Programs and Services funding model. This model does not fully cover the costs of regular classroom instruction, special education instruction, extracurricular and co-curricular student activities, district administration and leadership, student transportation and school technology.

*Explanation: The additional local funds are those locally raised funds over and above the Regional School Unit's local contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act and local amounts raised for the annual payment on non-state funded debt service that will help achieve the Regional School Unit budget for educational programs.*

**ARTICLE 14 SUMMARIZES THE PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET**

**ARTICLE 14:** To see what sum the Regional School Unit will authorize the School Board to expend for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2027 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, local funds for non-state-funded school construction debt service, 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 \$18,451,935.00**

**ARTICLE 15**

**AUTHORIZES THE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM AND RAISES THE LOCAL SHARE**

**ARTICLE 15:** To see if the Regional School Unit will appropriate **\$332,716.06** for adult education and raise **\$85,000.00** 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.

**ARTICLE 16 AUTHORIZES EXPENDITURES 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 and other program purposes, provided that such grants, programs or other sources do not require the expenditure of other funds not previously appropriated?

**ARTICLE 17 AUTHORIZES THE CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION BUDGET**

**ARTICLE 17:** Shall the regional career and technical education operating budget as approved by the cooperative board for the year beginning July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, be approved in the amount of **\$3,259,370.72**?

**ARTICLE 18 AUTHORIZES THE ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET FOR THE CAREER AND TECHNICAL REGION AND RAISES THE LOCAL SHARE**

**ARTICLE 18:** Shall the Region Two School of Applied Technology approve a budget for adult education in the amount of **\$64,933.11** for the year beginning July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 with authorization to expend any additional, incidental, or miscellaneous receipts in the interest and for the well-being of its adult education program, and shall Regional School Unit No. 29 raise **\$12,532.50** as its share of the adult education budget for Region Two School of Applied Technology?

**ARTICLE 19 AUTHORIZES FUND TRANSFERS TO THE FACILITIES RESERVE ACCOUNT AND AUTHORIZES EXPENDITURES**

**ARTICLE 19:** Shall the School Board be authorized to transfer up to **\$30,000.00** to the Facilities Reserve Fund from available year-end fund balances, and to expend from said Reserve Fund as needed in the discretion of the School Board?

**ARTICLE 20 AUTHORIZES FUND TRANSFERS TO  
THE SPECIAL EDUCATION RESERVE ACCOUNT AND AUTHORIZES EXPENDITURES**

**ARTICLE 20:** Shall the School Board be authorized to transfer up to **\$30,000.00** to the Special Education Reserve Fund from available year-end fund balances, and to expend from said Reserve Fund as needed in the discretion of the School Board?

**ARTICLE 21 AUTHORIZES CONTINGENCY FUND TRANSFERS**

**ARTICLE 21:** Shall the Regional School Unit authorize the School Board to transfer the RSUs unallocated balances in excess of 5% of the prior fiscal year's budget, as determined by audit, for periods of emergency pursuant to the section 1482-B(3) of Title 20-A to the established contingency fund; and shall the RSU delegate authority to the School Board to expend sums in the contingency fund when the School Board determines by public vote that an emergency need exists, and to transfer sums in the contingency fund to the RSUs general fund for use in school operating budgets approved by RSU 29 voters?

**ARTICLE 22 AUTHORIZES TRANSFERS OF APPROPRIATIONS AMONG COST CENTERS**

**ARTICLE 22:** Shall the School Board of the Regional School Unit be authorized to transfer amounts exceeding 5% of the total appropriation for any cost center to another cost center or among other cost centers for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, provided that transfers shall not be permitted to increase the authorized total school budget?

**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?

Given under our hand this day, April 6, 2026 at Houlton, Maine.

Christopher B. Cain

Kelly R. Johnson

Cassandra Wingate

Chris Sibley

Thomas Schoob

Jessie Tapley

Susan McLaughlin

[Signature]

[Signature]  
Medical Clerk

Jennifer D. Johnston

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

A majority of the School Board of Regional School Unit No. 29

A true copy of the Warrant, attest: [Signature]  
Alfredo Casillas, Resident, Regional School Unit No. 29

**Motion:** I move that the Vote entitled, "Vote to Call and Approve the Warrants for the Budget Meeting and the Budget Validation Referendum and to Authorize the Notice of Amounts Adopted," be approved in form presented to this meeting and that a copy of said Vote be included with the minutes of this meeting.

**VOTE TO CALL AND APPROVE THE WARRANTS FOR THE BUDGET MEETING**

VOTED: That the warrant for the Regional School Unit No. 29 (the "Regional School Unit") Budget Meeting presented to the meeting be approved and that a Regional School Unit budget meeting be called for May 11, 2026 for the purpose of voting on the annual budget for the Regional School Unit for the 2026-2027 fiscal year; and

That the Budget Meeting Warrant shall be signed by a majority of the School Board members, and that their signatures may be made electronically, by execution of counterparts, or in person following this meeting.

A true copy as adopted by a majority of the School Board, attest:

Joseph A. Fagnant  
Joseph A. Fagnant, Secretary



Preparing ALL Learners For A Changing World

**RSU 29**  
— CARES —

Pre-K Through Community Education

**FY26-27 Proposed Budget**

	Budget Comparison			
	25-26 Budget	26-27 Proposed Budget	Difference	% Variance
<b>Cost Center 1 - Regular Instruction</b>				
Regular Instruction programs	\$ 6,375,187	\$ 6,448,254	\$73,067	1.15%
RSU29 TLC Program (Alternative Ed)	\$ 16,057	\$ 5,328	(\$10,729)	-66.82%
HHS RSC Alt. Ed.	\$ 274,595	\$ 301,646	\$27,051	9.85%
Gifted/Talented	\$ 97,761	\$ 81,220	(\$16,541)	-16.92%
<b>COST CENTER 1 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 6,763,600</b>	<b>\$ 6,836,448</b>	<b>\$ 72,848</b>	<b>1.08%</b>
<b>Cost Center 2 - Special Education</b>				
Regular Special Education	\$ 1,622,232	\$ 1,676,458	\$54,226	3.34%
Developmental Therapy/Out of District Tuition	\$ 1,460,954	\$ 1,709,810	\$248,856	17.03%
Administrative/Director/Maine Care Seed	\$ 411,527	\$ 406,700	(\$4,827)	-1.17%
Occupational Therapy	\$ 77,500	\$ 105,500	\$28,000	36.13%
Speech/Hearing	\$ 53,750	\$ 187,150	\$133,400	248.19%
Physical Therapy	\$ 21,000	\$ 28,500	\$7,500	35.71%
Psych Services/other	\$ 106,294	\$ 98,436	(\$7,858)	-7.39%
Transportation - Special Services	\$ 106,503	\$ 130,178	\$23,675	22.23%
<b>COST CENTER 2 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 3,859,760</b>	<b>\$ 4,342,731</b>	<b>\$ 482,971</b>	<b>12.51%</b>
<b>Cost Center 3 - Career &amp; Technical Education</b>				
Region II School of Applied Technology	N/A		N/A	N/A
<b>Cost Center 4 - Other Instruction</b>				
Non-Athletic Co-Curricular	\$ 115,110	\$ 116,906	\$1,796	1.56%
Athletic Co-Curricular	\$ 398,288	\$ 418,662	\$20,374	5.12%
<b>COST CENTER 4 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 513,398</b>	<b>\$ 535,569</b>	<b>\$ 22,171</b>	<b>4.32%</b>
<b>Cost Center 5 - Student &amp; Staff Instructional Support</b>				
Guidance	\$ 681,531.00	\$ 714,658.16	\$33,127	4.86%
Student Success Coordinator	\$ 85,544.00	\$ 85,600.12	\$56	0.07%
Nurse/Health	\$ 267,408.00	\$ 273,932.59	\$6,525	2.44%
Curriculum	\$ 153,296.00	\$ 161,924.48	\$8,628	5.63%
Library	\$ 214,311.00	\$ 225,309.38	\$10,998	5.13%
Technology	\$ 508,302.00	\$ 427,841.48	(\$80,461)	-15.83%
<b>COST CENTER 5 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,910,392</b>	<b>\$ 1,889,266</b>	<b>(\$21,126)</b>	<b>-1.11%</b>
<b>Cost Center 6 - System Administration</b>				
School Directors	\$ 73,533	\$ 67,000	(\$6,533)	-8.88%
Superintendent's Office	\$ 693,848	\$ 671,410	(\$22,438)	-3.23%
<b>COST CENTER 6 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 767,381</b>	<b>\$ 738,437</b>	<b>(\$28,944)</b>	<b>-3.77%</b>
<b>Cost Center 7 - School Administration</b>				
Houlton Elementay School	\$ 197,198	\$ 200,724	\$3,526	1.79%
Houlton Southside School	\$ 170,408	\$ 181,359	\$10,951	6.43%
Houlton Middle School	\$ 97,586	\$ 109,787	\$12,201	12.50%
Houlton High School	\$ 153,189	\$ 146,841	(\$6,348)	-4.14%
<b>COST CENTER 7 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 618,381</b>	<b>\$ 638,710</b>	<b>\$ 20,329</b>	<b>3.29%</b>
<b>Cost Center 8 - Transportation</b>				
Transportation	\$ 1,147,179	\$ 1,187,992	\$40,813	3.56%
<b>COST CENTER 8 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,147,179</b>	<b>\$ 1,187,992</b>	<b>\$ 40,813</b>	<b>3.56%</b>
<b>Cost Center 9 - Maintenance/Facilities</b>				
Houlton Elementay School	\$ 454,108	\$ 436,190	(\$17,918)	-3.95%
Houlton Southside School	\$ 498,838	\$ 479,878	(\$18,960)	-3.80%
Houlton Middle School	\$ 383,812	\$ 383,163	(\$649)	-0.17%
Houlton High School	\$ 575,495	\$ 600,647	\$25,152	4.37%
HHS Maintenance - (Capital Improvements)	\$ 288,832	\$ 322,904	\$34,072	11.80%
<b>COST CENTER 9 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2,201,085</b>	<b>\$ 2,222,782</b>	<b>\$ 21,697</b>	<b>0.99%</b>
<b>Cost Center 10 - Debt Service</b>				
Debt Service	\$ -	\$ 60,000	\$60,000	
<b>COST CENTER 10 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 60,000</b>	<b>\$ 60,000</b>	<b>0.00%</b>

**Cost Center 11 - All Other Expenditures**

Food Service Contingency Fund	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	Not used
<b>COST CENTER 11 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>Not used</b>

<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>17,781,177</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>18,451,935</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>670,758</b>	<b>3.77%</b>
---------------------	-----------	-------------------	-----------	-------------------	-----------	----------------	--------------

Cost Center	25-26 Proposed Budget	26-27 Proposed Budget	Difference	% of Budget
Cost Center 1 - Regular Instruction	\$6,763,600	\$6,836,448	\$72,848	37.05%
Cost Center 2 - Special Education	\$3,859,760	\$4,342,731	\$482,970	23.54%
Cost Center 3 - Career & Technical Education (CTE)	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
Cost Center 4 - Other Instruction	\$513,398	\$535,569	\$22,170	2.90%
Cost Center 5 - Student & Staff Support	\$1,910,392	\$1,889,266	(\$21,125)	10.24%
Cost Center 6 - System Administration	\$767,382	\$738,437	(\$28,945)	4.00%
Cost Center 7 - School Administration	\$618,381	\$638,710	\$20,329	3.46%
Cost Center 8 - Transportation & Buses	\$1,147,179	\$1,187,992	\$40,813	6.44%
Cost Center 9 - Facilities & Maintenance	\$2,201,085	\$2,222,782	\$21,698	12.05%
Cost Center 10 - Debt Service	\$0	\$60,000	\$60,000	0.33%
Cost Center 11 - All Other Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
	<b>\$17,781,177</b>	<b>\$18,451,935</b>	<b>\$670,758</b>	<b>100.00%</b>