

April 30, 2025

SAD #46 Citizens:

The SAD #46 2025-2026 budget process was challenging as the Board of Directors continues to make decisions based on the best interests of our staff and students while also keeping the local tax payer in mind. Despite these challenges, I am confident that through thoughtful deliberations, this proposed budget retains important educational programming for the students while requesting an increase in the total local tax support for education from the residents of SAD #46. Individual communities will see increases in the local tax burden as state school funding impacts each community differently. The School Board Budget Committee has finalized the budget and the SAD #46 Board of Directors has approved the budget proposal for fiscal year 2025-2026. The SAD #46 budget proposal for the 2025-2026 fiscal year is \$16,653,368 resulting in a increase of \$120,873 or 0.73% when compared to the 2024-2025 school district budget. In SAD #46, state funding for schools has decreased by \$204,391 while increased town valuations have resulted in a local required funding increase of \$54,217. These changes along with the School Board approved draft budget for 2025-2026 have resulted in a 3.17% total increase to the local taxpayers of SAD #46.

The 2025-2026 SAD #46 budget includes the addition of one and one-half new programs at Tri-County Technical Center including HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning) and Entrepreneurship and a mentoring position was also added at DRHS. Reductions include a 3/4 English position and a Project Based Science position at Dexter Regional High School, a Grade one position and a Grade 7 position at the Ridge View Community School, and the Cyber Security Program at TCTC.

Each municipality will receive the following adjustment in local school assessments when compared to 2024-2025: Dexter - \$29,142.99 increase or 1.42%; Exeter - \$33,850.40 increase or 5.36%; Garland - \$35,566.35 increase or 5.78%; and Ripley - \$18,148.72 increase or 4.92%. These assessments are calculated based on the town valuations and the student enrollment from each community and are also applied to the debt service, food service, and adult education assessments. The SAD #46 Budget and Finance Committee worked very hard, taking into account the local assessment impact on taxpayers and the need to maintain student programming at the expected level; keeping SAD #46 the great school district that it is.

SAD #46 needs to comply with the Budget Validation Referendum component of the annual school budget enactment. To comply, SAD #46 will need to complete three phases to enact a new budget for 2025-2026. The process is as follows:

1. The SAD #46 Board of Directors unanimously approved a school budget for 2025-2026 at their May 7, 2025, board meeting. SAD #46 will issue a budget newspaper that will be distributed by the Eastern Maine Gazette and will also make it available to the public at the district budget meeting. The published Budget format will be modified this year to save on ever increasing publishing costs. If you would like a more detailed copy of the budget, please contact the Superintendent's Office at 924-6000 ext. 2.

2. SAD #46 will hold a district budget meeting on Thursday, May 29, 2025, at the Ridge View Community School at 6:00 p.m. Residents from the four towns that compose SAD #46 (Dexter, Exeter, Garland, and Ripley) will gather to act on several line items in the budget. A warrant will be posted in obvious locations in each town at least seven days prior to this meeting.
3. There will be a Budget Validation Referendum on Tuesday, June 10, 2025, in each of the four district towns that states, "Do you favor approving the Maine School Administrative District No. 46 budget for the upcoming school year that was adopted at the latest district budget meeting?"

The SAD #46 proposed 2025-2026 School Budget will be in a Cost Center format, the same format as the Fiscal Year 2025 budget.

SAD #46 will deliver complete budget information sheets to each polling location after the District Budget Meeting. These informational sheets will be made available to residents as they enter the polling place on June 10, 2025. Votes from each of the four towns will be added together to signify a total vote. The total vote will be the indicator of whether the budget passed.

This budget approval process is the same process that was utilized for the 2024-2025 budget. SAD #46 residents will need to vote on the school budget twice to enact it. SAD #46 is mandated by law to comply with this process.

Sincerely,

Kevin T. Jordan, Superintendent
AOS #94
SAD #46
Athens School Department
Harmony School Department