



# RCTA Newsletter

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## Title 1 What YOU Should Know and Why

Everyone is aware that Title 1 has been around for a very long time (since the early 1960s). All of us have known of its existence and always thought the money was used to help mostly with reading and in some instances math. That fact has changed over the years and Title 1 money has been used for much more than that.

The New Hampshire Department of Education formulates grants to school districts through Title I. It provides opportunities for children to acquire the knowledge and skills to meet the State proficiency standards.

While all this sounds really good, one must realize in order to be a participating school in the Title 1 program, 40% or more of students must be eligible for the free or reduced breakfast and lunch program. Maple Street 80.67%; School Street 70.66%; Wm. Allen 50.34%; Chamberlain 44.19%; East Rochester 43.85%; McClelland 40.97% and Rochester Middle School 39.90%

Number wise there are 4608 students (12/09), 1705 fall into the poverty category.

According to the NH Department of Education website the final allocation to Rochester for the 2009-2010 school year was \$1,478,609.11. Again, as a taxpayer, I am glad that we are able to help families that are going through hard times and parents know that their child(ren) will have a hot meal on any given day.

There are FOUR contracts up for negotiation this year, teacher's, custodians, cafeteria, and administration. Like every year they will be looking for a raise. Ask yourself...How many taxpayers received a raise this past year or the year before that? How many taxpayers have lost their job and are barely hanging on? How many taxpayers would rather feed their families than have their tax rate go up or maybe even stay up if and when the housing market turns?

As a community, 47% of our tax base is derived from those families living in mobile homes. This means low-income and fixed income households. These families have no such thing as disposable income and cannot afford another drain on their wallet, as a community we must stand up for one another. Everyone would like a raise, but there is no money left in Rochester.

The time has come to tighten the belts in the School Department. The School Department is a big business and hence needs to run responsibly. Relying on federal money to solve their budget woes is not the way to run a business. As we have learned there is no money this year and it is time the School Department got their house in order and start streamlining not bulking up.

### ASSESSING

Anybody who wishes to file a tax abatement must file before **March 1, 2010**. Call the assessing office or stop in and fill out the necessary paperwork. This is a

FREE service. If you miss the filing date and may have been eligible for an abatement you will not get it for the tax year of 2009. Consideration can be made if it is determined that you have overpaid for tax year 2010 which is April 2010 to March 31, 2011. Go to the City website for further information and applicable phone numbers.  
[http://www.rochesternh.net/Public\\_Documents/RochesterNH\\_Assessing/index](http://www.rochesternh.net/Public_Documents/RochesterNH_Assessing/index).

# What YOU Should Know and Why Credits needed to Graduate

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There has been much said about Rochester's dropout rate. As of March 9, 2009 the dropout rate was 21.2%. This has been a concern for many years, but it seems The School District has very little in the way of ideas on how to handle it. They did; however; come up with the Bud Carlson Alternative School, which was changed to the Bud Carlson Academy two years ago. This is a school for students who dropped out of Spaulding for any number or reasons, but realized they needed a diploma to get through life. Much has been said about Bud Carlson, but always in the negative. So I went searching for an answer concerning the negativity. While it is true that the students at Bud Carlson take 6 less credits than their counterparts at Spaulding they are required to take all the core curricula. Students at Bud Carlson must pass all of their courses with a 70 and higher, I believe at Spaulding it is 60.

## Graduation Requirements according to New Hampshire's Department of Education, [www.ed.state.nh.us](http://www.ed.state.nh.us):

Arts Education	0.5 unit
Computer Education	0.5 unit
Health Education	0.75 unit
Industry Arts or Technology	4 units
English	4 units
Mathematics	2 units
Physical Education	1 units
Science	2 units
Social Studies	2 units
Open Electives	7 units
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.75</b>

It is strongly advised for students to consider the core requirement as the absolute minimum required to graduate (23.75) and students are strongly encouraged to take more challenging or Advanced Placement (AP) courses. New

Hampshire is one of the top nine states in the nation in proportion of public high schools offering AP courses where students are allowed the opportunity to earn college credit. The majority, 88 percent, of New Hampshire's public high schools offer these courses.

This Rule states that local school boards shall require a program of studies that shall be offered for each high school that includes credit courses or equivalent study and other educational experiences and instructional activities as specified in ED 306.27(e). The Rule has increased the number of credits required for graduation from a minimum of **19 ¾ to 20 credits**. The required subjects have also been amended: Required Subjects and Credits for High School Graduation, effective for the Graduating Class of 2009, (Freshmen Class of 2005).

Required Subjects	Credits
Arts education	½ credit
Information and communications technologies	½ credit or demonstrate proficiency
English	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits, including algebra credit that can be earned through a sequential, integrated, or applied program.
Physical sciences	1 credit
Biological sciences	1 credit
US and NH history	1 credit
US and NH government/civics	½ credit
Economics	½ credit
World history, global studies, or geography	½ credit
Health education	½ credit
Physical education	1 credits
Open electives	6 credits

<b>Totals</b>	<b>20 credits</b>
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So while our School Department requires our Spaulding High School students to acquire 26 credits, the minimum requirement for graduation is 20 credits. We are affording at risk students an opportunity to get their much needed education and have not lowered standards as a sign of progress. We are following State guidelines.

The real problem lies in the high school where we are truly dumbing down are students. There is a total lack of accountability. New initiatives at the state level are considering refining/redefining mandates. Students can no longer get credit for just showing up for class, no more moving students on if they have not grasped the material. Sounds to me like we are heading back to the good old days, when students actually had to repeat...what a concept.