

Stoneham School Committee

February 15th, 2024

Agenda

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Setting the context

- Current Realities
- Major Budget Drivers
- Budget Proposal
- Potential for Additional Cuts
 - Methodology and Timeline
- Input/Feedback/Concerns
- Appendixes
 - Cuts Already Proposed (Appendix A)
 - Capital Requests (Appendix B)



FY25 Budget

Major Cost Center Drivers

MAJOR BUDGET DRIVERS



- Unprecedented increase in student service costs
- Onboarding of new High School Building and free standing Preschool
- Contractual salary increases for all union and non-union staff
- Tuition increases planned for FY '25 (4.6% for private tuitions set by MA OSD) – on top of 14% increase last year

MAJOR BUDGET DRIVERS



- Continuing rise in cost of facilities and maintenance
- District Offices Solution
- NRT Bus increase of \$117,000
- Increase of charter assessment \$100,000
- Healthcare costs going up by \$1,000,000
- State Aid Flattened

Historical Operating Budget

	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
School General Fund	\$26,734,742	\$27,734,642	\$28,916,729	\$30,291,726	\$30,126,729	\$30,963,029	\$32,100,420	\$34,396,479
Chapter 70	\$4,059,406	\$4,269,807	\$4,421,709	\$4,421,709	\$5,266,351	\$5,337,631	\$5,737,555	\$7,259,629
Charter School Tuition	\$88,359	\$233,185	\$233,037	\$272,078	\$313,376	\$576,194	\$1,033,232	\$3,405,901
Essex North Shore Agricultural	\$231,243	\$196,223	\$210,000	\$174,000	\$11,000	\$110,000	\$154,541	\$122,430
Minuteman Regional	\$53,892	\$54,684	\$50,000	\$ -	\$ -			
Northeast Vocational	\$970,818	\$1,046,697	\$970,535	\$979,474	\$1,335,229	\$1,375,880	\$1,535,495	\$1,368,936
	\$32,138,460	\$33,535,238	\$34,802,010	\$36,138,987	\$37,052,685	\$38,362,734	\$40,561,243	\$46,553,375

Historical Budget Increases

	Total Dollar Increase	Municipal Increase as a %	State Aid Increase as a %	Total % Increase	Total Budget
FY24	2,196,059	2.1%	4.7%	6.8%	34,296,479
FY23	1,137,391	2.58%	1.2%	3.78%	32,100,420
FY22	836,300	2.5%	0.2%	2.70%	30,963,029
FY21	(164,997)	-3.2%	2.7%	-.5%	30,126,729
FY20	1,374,997	4.53%	0%	4.53%	30,291,726
FY19	1,182,087	4.03%	0.05%	4.08%	28,916,729

Fixed Cost / “Must Have” Increases

OBLIGATIONS	COST OF OBLIGATION	▲ FY24 as a %	
Contractual Obligations	\$1,600,000	4.67%	
Add 2 RISE Classes	\$282,000	0.82%	
Grade 1 Classroom @ CP	\$66,000	0.19%	
Preschool Director	\$57,500	0.17%	
Preschool Special Education Coord.	\$100,000	0.29%	
Preschool Admin Asst.	\$25,000	0.07%	
Preschool Custodian	\$50,000	0.15%	
SPED Tuition Increases	\$500,000	1.46%	
District Offices	\$100,000*	0.29%	*100K in addition to FY24 budget
Building Systems Manager	\$40,000	0.12%	
Increase to Utilities	\$130,000	0.38%	
Total	\$2,950,500	8.61%	

FY25 Budget

Budget Proposal

FY 25 Budget Proposal / Summary

Summary

Cost To Maintain Level Service*

\$2,950,500

8.61%**

Summary

Cost To Maintain Level Service and add back other needs*

\$3,980,848

11.6%

*Reduction of (2) ESSER funded positions

**Any increase below 8.61% will entail a significant reduction from the level of service the district is currently providing through its general fund.

FY 25 Budget Proposal

- **The budget request is \$ 37,246,979 which is an increase of \$2,950,500 (8.61%) over Fiscal 24 Budget.**
- **This increase includes all fixed costs, step increases, contractual obligations and Out of District Tuition increases.**
- **It also includes required fixed cost increases.**
- **This proposal already includes Superintendent cuts in the amount of \$1,030,348**

Model of Potential Reductions

Municipal Increase %	Amount	Potential Increase in Aid	FY25 Budget	Total % Increase	Additional amount Needed to Cut = Decrease in Services
3%	\$1,028,894	\$0	\$35,325,373	3%	\$1,921,606
3%	\$1,028,894	\$250,000	\$35,575,373	3.7%	\$1,671,606
3%	\$1,028,894	\$500,000	\$35,825,373	4.4%	\$1,421,606
3%	\$1,028,894	\$750,000	\$36,075,373	5.1%	\$1,171,606
3%	\$1,028,894	\$1,000,000	\$36,325,373	5.9%	\$921,606
3%	\$1,028,894	\$1,250,000	\$36,575,373	6.6%	\$671,606
3%	\$1,028,894	\$1,500,000	\$36,825,373	7.3%	\$421,606
Level Service	\$2,950,500			8.61%	Marginal Service Cuts

We are Not Alone!

Rising School Budget Sparks Worries Among Cambridge City Councilors

Brewster Could Face More Than \$1 Million Override: School Increases Largest Contributor To Budget Hikes

- **No relief in sight for Dracut deficit (Lowell Sun)**

Low state aid figures for Gill-Montague prompt budget revisions (Greenfield Recorder)

Hudson schools prepare for tough fiscal year

By Sarah Freedman - February 7, 2024

SCHOOLS

Overflow Crowd Blasts School Budget Cuts



By Dave Copeland

FEB 11, 2024

Why more cash is needed for Braintree school costs (The Patriot Ledger)

Northampton mayor lays out grim budget preview being driven by school spending (Daily Hampshire Gazette)

• After avoiding override, Dartmouth schools plan slash budget increase (Dartmouth Week)

South Hadley School Committee discusses potential FY25 budget challenges

Feb. 13, 2024 | Tyler Garnet

Select Board Sends \$8.4M Override To Voters With A Compact In Tow

Sampling of Other Districts Facing Reductions

[Click Here](#)

FY25 Budget

Reduction Methodology

Budget Reduction Methodology

The approach the district will use to make decisions around reductions is a tiered approach that rests on the following principles:

- **The prioritization of reductions starts with elements that are the furthest away from core teaching and learning, moving inward towards students' core learning experiences.**
- **Consideration is given to the amount of funds the reduction of services yields relative to the impact on students' core learning experiences.**
- **Reductions are distributed across departments and schools in order to avoid the people associated with one department or school having to bear a significantly larger proportion of the loss associated with reduction decisions. This principle articulates that there will be a distribution, not that the distribution will be equal across departments.**
- **The areas that cannot be reduced at all due to legal constraints and/or contractual obligations are salary increases and benefits.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

First Tier: Administrative and Operational Efficiency

- **Professional Development: Reduce costs of professional development, including reduction or elimination of industry experts.**
 - **Impact: We risk losing district-sponsored activities to build capacity of professional staff, which undermines the value of professional learning. This area of the budget is already thin so may not yield much by way of budget reductions.**
- **Transportation: Reduce or eliminate transportation costs and/or reduce transportation to the minimal service required by law.**
 - **Impact: Reducing increases the risk of students arriving at school / home too early or too late, and/or may lead to overcrowding on buses. Reducing to no service may be a burden on families who rely on Stoneham busing to transport their children to school, and pose an access issue to school.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Second Tier: Extracurricular Programs

- **Extracurricular Programs: Eliminate or Reduce by merging programs and/or staff that are supported through the general fund. For the purposes of this reduction, extra-curricular is defined as activities that primarily take place outside courses taken during the school day**
 - **Impact: This eliminates opportunities to participate in enrichment programming for students and leaves their after-school time open.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Third Tier: Educational Programs and Classroom Resources

- **Curriculum Purchases: Delay new curriculum purchases and implementation.**
 - **Impact: This area has not been funded well, so this is about delaying the district's ability to provide high-quality curriculum materials to teachers in order to support academic achievement.**
- **Instructional Materials and Supplies: Reduce materials and supplies for instruction and support services.**
 - **Impact: This removes needed resources that help facilitate learning and supports for students.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Third Tier: Educational Programs and Classroom Resources

- **Technology: Delay upgrades of administrative technology systems and/or reduce classroom tech resources and/or administrative technology systems.**
 - **Impact: This removes instructional technology to support teaching and learning and will likely lead to degraded accessibility and security.**
- **High School Courses: Merge sections of low-enrollment elective courses and reduce singleton and advanced course options.**
 - **Impact: This would result in fewer course options available to students to explore interests and to engage in advanced coursework.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Fourth Tier: Human Resources

- **Staffing Group A: Leadership / Administrative and Other Positions**
 - **Temporary/Seasonal Staff: Reduce temporary or seasonal staffing positions that are supported through the general fund (overtime, summer help, etc.), & Summer School.**
 - **Impact: This would result in fewer enrichment and support opportunities for students. Mandated programs (e.g. Extended School Year) can only to the extent that the reductions do not comprise mandated services.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Fourth Tier: Human Resources

- **Leadership / Administrative Roles: Reduce leadership roles at the district and building/department levels.**
 - **Impact: The system as a whole is weakened, as work is either not done or put on those who already have a full workload. A reduction in supervision of students may impact health and safety. A reduction in curricular support may have a negative impact on educational programming.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Fourth Tier: Human Resources

- **Staffing Group B: Support Staff**
 - **Clerical Staff: Reduce clerical staff who do not handle critical functions related to student and staff health and safety.**
 - **Impact: The system as a whole is weakened, as work is either not done or put on those who already have a full workload.**
 - **Support Staff: Reduce positions such lunch monitors, aides not directly attached to special education, and other support roles.**
 - **Impact: Reduced supervision and services of students may infringe on their health, safety and academic development.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Fourth Tier: Human Resources

- Staffing Group C: Professional Staff Positions that are not Classroom Teachers

Budget Reduction Methodology

Fourth Tier: Human Resources

- **Staffing Group D: Instructional Staff**
 - **Secondary Teachers: Reduce 5 - 12 teaching positions for elective courses.**
 - **Impact: Fewer course options available to students to explore interests and to engage in advanced coursework. The instability of positions may lead to attrition of staff. High attrition rates create additional burdens at the building level and district level to manage the filling and deployment of positions, which provide less time to support teaching and learning by leaders. Staff morale and school culture will be negatively impacted for students and employees**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Fourth Tier: Human Resources

- **Staffing Group D: Instructional Staff**
 - **Classroom Teachers: Reduce elective/specialist teachers in grades 5 - 8 and consolidate classes in the grade levels where that occurs.**
 - **Impact: Class sizes will increase, which means teachers have less time to give to individual students. This has a notable negative impact on learning for students who struggle. The instability of positions may lead to attrition of staff. High attrition rates create additional burdens at the building level and district level to manage the filling and deployment of positions, which provide less time to support teaching and learning by leaders. Staff morale and school culture will be negatively impacted for students and employees.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Fourth Tier: Human Resources

- **Staffing Group D: Instructional Staff**
 - **ELE and Student Services: Reduce staff that provide mandated services for students with disabilities and English language learners.**
 - **Impact: Staff caseloads increase for special education and ELE staff, impacting what we are able to provide for services. Reduction in staff could lead to more out-of-district placements for students with disabilities due to limited capacity to meet the needs of students with in-district staff.**

Budget Reduction Methodology

Fifth Tier: (Long Term Plan, FY26 and beyond) School or District Re-Configuration

- **Reconfiguration: Reconfiguration of schools and/or grade levels may be needed to accommodate a large number of teaching staff being reduced.**
 - **Impact: This may lead to a disruption and loss for families who are connected to schools. There potentially could be an additional cost for school bus services if students are assigned to a school further from their homes.**
 - **Impact: This would be a loss to the neighbors in which their current “home school” school is situated, as connections between the school and those families would be severed. There potential could be an additional cost for school bus services if students are assigned to a school further from their homes. If, at any point, enrollment increases to the point where the space at the other schools becomes compromised, the process to solve a new issue would be significant.**

FY25 Budget

Input / Feedback

Questions

Concerns

FY25 Budget

Appendix A

Cuts Already Proposed

(\$1,030,348)

FY 25 Budget Proposal / Additional Needs

Superintendent Cuts

Note that all cuts listed were asks / adds to FY24 Budget

RH: (1) Reading Teacher	\$41,000
RH: Take out Interventionist	-\$26,000
Elementary Health Curriculum	\$10,000
Elem. Literacy Curriculum	\$60,000
The Hill for Literacy Prof. Dev.	\$40,000
Elem STEM Supplies	\$3,000
Elem ELL Supplies	\$1,500

FY 25 Budget Proposal / Additional Needs

Superintendent Cuts

Note that all cuts listed were asks / adds to FY24 Budget

BCBA Prek (28 students)	\$80,000
PreK SLP (67 students)	\$90,000
PreK (3) ABA's at SHS	\$135,000
PreK (1) ABA @ CP	\$45,000
PreK Curriculum	\$5,000
PreK Prof. Dev.	\$5,000
Dist. Technology Expenses	\$26,000

FY 25 Budget Proposal / Additional Needs

Superintendent Cuts

Note that all cuts listed were asks / adds to FY24 Budget

Athletics Transportation	\$20,000
SCMS Health Supplies	\$1,200
Elem PE Supplies	\$1,700
Gen Ed. Summer School	Not Budgeted
ESSER Funded Positions	\$138,000

FY 25 Budget Proposal / Additional Needs

Superintendent Cuts

Note that all cuts listed were asks / adds to FY24 Budget

Legal Increase	\$25,000
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Emergency Preparedness	\$50,000
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School Resource Officer (proposed add)	\$80,000
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Professional Development Increase	\$20,000
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Next Steps

- **January 25th, 2024 – School Committee Vote on Budget (Amount)**
 - **Governor’s Budget / Forecasted Revenues and State Aid**
- **February 6th: Capital Improvement Recommendations Due to Select Board**
- **February 20th: T.A. Proposed Budget to F.A.B. and S.B.**
- **Select Board Ratification and submission to F.A.B.**
- **April 4th: F.A.B. Recommendation due**
- **May, 2024 – Town Meeting, budget Approval**

FY25 Budget

Appendix B

Capital Requests

Capital Requests

2024-2025

\$500,000.00 South School-Site Rehab – Park Lot / Traffic Flow, Play Area/Basketball Courts (3 years on list)

\$789,000 South School Roof*

***Assuming Robin Hood can be replaced using federal grant in partnership with SOLECT – several years on list**

\$200,000.00 Playground Upgrade – Robin Hood (4 years on list)

\$45,000 HVAC Facilities Van – New request

\$1,534,000.00 Total Request

Capital Requests

2025-2026

\$100,000 Chimneys Old Central School – New Request

**\$90,000.00 Motorized Shades School Gym – Central – six
years on list**

**\$200,000.00 Playground Upgrade – Colonial Park – 3 years
on list**

\$390,000.00 Total Request

Capital Requests

2026-2027

**\$720,000.00 CP Roof restoration / replacement –
(replacement 1.7m) - 2 years on list**

**\$100,000.00 Elementary Furniture Upgrade 3 years on
list**

\$820,000.00 Total Request

Capital Requests

2027-2028

\$100,000 Chimneys Old Central School

\$100,000.00 Total Requested

Capital Requests

2028-2029

\$60,000.00 Replacement of Athletic/Mini Bus

**\$200,000.00 Elementary School outside Painting – All
Elementary Schools – 2 years on list**

\$260,000.00 Total Requested