

HOPKINTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Hopkinton, Massachusetts

School District Budget Proposal
Fiscal Year 2015
2014-2015



PUBLIC HEARING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2014
7:30 PM
Middle School Library

TOWN MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 5, 2014
7:00 PM
Middle School Auditorium

HOPKINTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2014-2015 BUDGET PROPOSAL

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Dear Citizens:

We are pleased to present the FY 15 School Committee Operating Budget and Capital Articles for your consideration. Collaborating with school administrators and town leaders to present a goals-driven, fiscally responsible budget to the voters has been a major goal of our work this year. Our budget process focused on delivering better educational outcomes for all students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12 while maintaining a fiscally responsible expense to the community.

Beginning with honoring collective bargaining agreements, ongoing Strategic Plan priority initiative commitments, projected increases in cost to both regular and Special Education transportation, and projected increases in cost for Special Education services, the School Committee and Administrative Team worked collaboratively and creatively to honor all of these commitments and improve student learning across the district. The proposed FY15 budget is \$37,332,422.00, which represents an increase of \$1,747,038.00 or 4.91% compared to last year's budget. This budget will support the advancement of several Strategic Plan Initiatives through the following decisions:

- Maintains reasonable class size for all grades
- Supports ongoing PreK-12 Strategic Plan priority Initiatives
- Improves services in special education by employing a Co-Teaching Model in Kindergarten through Grade 8
- Provides a Full Day Kindergarten Program for all students
- Implements a Team Teaching Model for all students in Grades 6 through 8
- Supports the 1:1 initiative for all students Grades 9-12
- Maintains all programs and increases extracurricular opportunities
- Addresses key building maintenance projects
- Reduces Transportation, Athletics, Parking fees by 10%

Notably, for a second year, the budget reduces select user fees by 10% - a commitment made by the School Committee to alleviate the growing problem of the cost of education for students' families. In many communities, user fees for basic education services (buses, athletics, etc.) have increased year after year. In Hopkinton, the fees have been reduced.

Finally, this year's proposed capital articles demonstrate the commitment to maintaining and improving our learning facilities by addressing pressing safety, security and maintenance issues.

We are working together to with the Board of Selectmen, the Town Manager, the Chief Financial Officer, the Appropriations Committee, and the Capital Improvements Committee to more effectively communicate program efficiency and cost containment decisions to demonstrate a judicious use of monies from the town, state aid, and revolving account balances. Your investment in the schools has translated into increased student success in the classroom, on stage, in athletics, and in academic competitions. The School Committee, School Administration and Staff and students appreciate your support.

Respectfully submitted,
Hopkinton School Committee

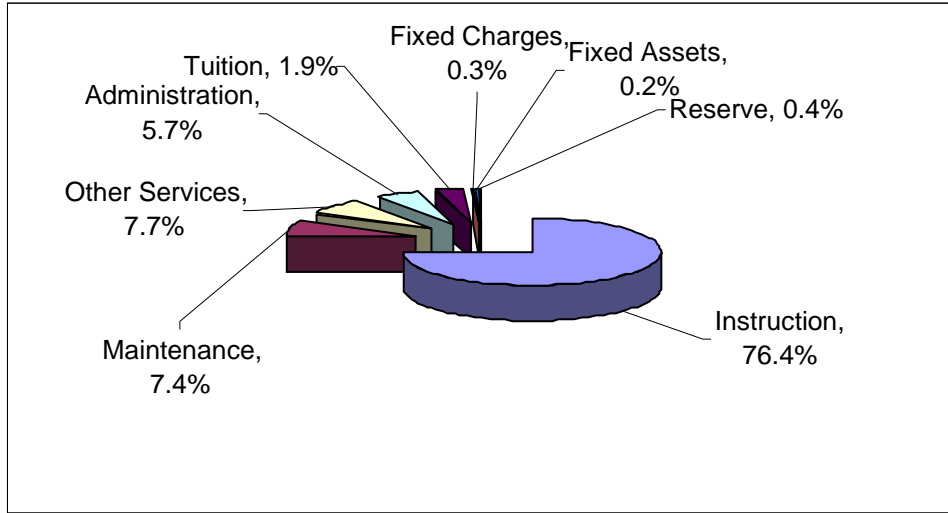
Nancy Alvarez Burdick, Chair
Jonathan Graziano, Vice Chair
Scott Aghababian, Member
Jean Bertschmann, Member

Ellen Scordino, Member

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TOTAL BUDGET BY STATE FUNCTION

The Massachusetts Department of Education requires all school districts to annually report their expenditures by the state functions identified below.



Instruction: Includes all the instructional salaries of teachers, principals, curriculum directors, and the special education supervisor, as well as professional development costs, textbooks, instructional equipment, library services, guidance, psychological services, supplies and materials, substitutes, tuition reimbursement, and conference expenses.

Maintenance: Custodial services, utilities, maintenance of buildings and grounds, and extraordinary maintenance. It includes all related salaries, equipment supplies, materials, tools, travel expenses, and contracted services.

Other Services: Attendance, health, student transportation, athletics, and other co-curricular activities. Includes all related salaries, equipment, supplies, contracted services, and uniforms.

Administration: Includes general administration, administrative support, administrative technology, legal services, all related salaries, supplies, travel expenses, dues and subscriptions.

Tuitions: Tuition/payments to other public schools in Massachusetts, private schools and collaboratives for Special Education, and vocational services.

Reserve: Unallocated funds to cover potential costs for the unemployment benefits for new employees, salary increases, and emergency repairs.

Fixed Charges: Insurance programs, rental of land and/or buildings and crossing guards.

Fixed Assets: Acquisition of land or existing buildings, improvements in grounds, construction of, or additions to buildings, and remodeling of buildings.

2014-2015 Budget	
Instruction	\$28,537,549
Other Services	\$2,854,882
Maintenance	\$2,756,312
Administration	\$2,143,420
Tuitions	\$719,577
Reserve	\$146,088
Fixed Charges	\$108,698
Fixed Assets	\$65,896
Total	\$37,332,422

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BUDGET INCREASES BY PROGRAM AREAS

The FY 15 Budget can be summarized by examining eight major program areas. As indicated in the table below, the Proposed FY 15 Budget reflects an increase of \$1,747,038 or 4.91% over FY 13.

Budget Areas	FY 15 Increase	Percentage of Total Increase
Regular Education	\$1,336,477	3.76%
Technology	\$429,690	1.21%
Buildings and Grounds	\$145,728	0.41%
Athletics	\$61,384	0.17%
Occupational Day (Vocational)	\$25,000	0.07%
Central Office	-\$2,986	-0.01%
Professional Development	-\$24,919	-0.07%
Special Education	-\$223,336	-0.63%
Total	\$1,747,038	4.91%

Regular Education **Total: \$1,336,477** **Percentage of Total Increase: 3.76%**

The regular education budget includes increases reflecting contractual obligations including teacher lane changes, which result from the attainment of defined educational milestones, as well as for teacher steps, which reflect the passage of time. A net of 4.8 FTE positions (after various reductions) have been added to maintain appropriate class-size and provide opportunities for differentiated instruction for students. Additional positions include 3.0 FTE at the Middle School, and 3.9 FTE at the Kindergarten level. There have also been increases of 1.0 FTE General Ed paraprofessionals at the High School and 0.5 FTE for Kindergarten. All of these additional positions have been partially offset by a reduction of 2.0 FTE Curriculum Coordinators. Textbooks, instructional materials, and supplies were slightly increased for FY15 to fund elementary spelling, and secondary history, math, and environmental science. Savings from teacher retirements have been used to offset some of these additional costs.

Technology **Total: \$429,690** **Percentage of Total Increase: 1.21%**

The technology budget includes an additional 0.2 FTE for a technician to provide support when equipment needs installation and repair. The budget also includes funding to continue a multi-year replacement of aging classroom computer equipment and interactive projectors along with associated implementation costs. Funding is also provided for needed network infrastructure upgrades.

Building and Grounds **Total: \$145,728** **Percentage of Total Increase: 0.41%**

To keep up with ever increasing maintenance requests for all facilities, the buildings and grounds budget includes funding for an additional 1.0 FTE maintenance worker and a 0.5 FTE custodian. To meet the goal of properly maintaining all school buildings, this budget will fund extraordinary maintenance projects valued at \$198K at all five schools, as well as contractual obligations for the maintenance and custodial staff. It should be noted that investments in energy conservation initiatives have resulted in an electricity usage reduction of 21% since 2009.

Athletics **Total: \$61,384** **Percentage of Total Increase: 0.17%**
 The athletic budget has increased as a result of contractual payroll and other obligations, including the establishment of a girls' hockey team. The athletic budget maintains all existing Middle & High School teams and coaches. The FY15 budget continues to include funding for pre- and post-concussion testing. The School Committee has again reduced the athletic fee by 10% to \$120 per sport. In FY15, the fee and gate receipts offset 21.5% of the athletic budget compared to 24.5% in FY14.

Occupational Day (Vocational) **Total: \$25,000** **Percentage of Total Increase: 0.07%**
 The occupational day budget funds tuition for vocational students who attend Norfolk County Agricultural School. Under state law, the school district must pay the tuition cost for students who attend vocational schools to pursue a program that is not available at the Joseph P. Keefe Technical School. The FY15 budget has been increased to reflect the fact there are currently three students attending, which is one student more than was budgeted in FY14.

Central Office **Total: -\$2,986** **Percentage of Total Increase: -0.01%**
 Although the overall Central Office budget is slightly decreased, it provides additional funds for school safety initiatives (radios, etc.) and adds one additional bus to serve the district. This area of the budget includes funding for a 0.2 FTE benefits coordinator who will also provide a payroll processing backup function. These increases have been offset via budget reductions in various salary accounts, including employee longevity and in the teacher intents offset account. It should also be noted that the School Committee has reduced the bus transportation fee by an additional 10% for FY15.

Professional Development **Total: -\$24,919** **Percentage of Total Increase: 0.07%**
 Although the system-wide professional development budget has been reduced in FY15, each school's professional development has been increased slightly to support principals in meeting the goals of their schools and the individual needs of teachers. Going forward, the plan is to conduct more in-district training, which is more cost-effective. The tuition reimbursement budget has been reduced to reflect recent actual spending. Grant funding also provides funding for professional development opportunities.

Special Education **Total: -\$223,336** **Percentage of Total Increase: - 0.63%**
 Much of the decrease in the special education budget results from a reduction in the number of pupils requiring out-of-district placements overall. Compared to FY14, the FY15 budget supports 3 fewer students due to circumstances such as graduation, age-attainment, or return to established programs at HPS. The transportation and tuition budgets for students who will continue out-of-district have been adjusted to reflect expected price adjustments. As in the regular education budget, increases in the SPED budget area reflect contractual obligations including teacher lane changes resulting from the attainment of defined educational milestones, as well as teacher steps. This budget also reflects an addition of 1.4 FTE professional services including an American Sign Language teacher (0.4 FTE), a Learning Specialist at the Hopkins School (0.5 FTE), and staff for an afternoon SPED program. In terms of personnel counts, these additions are offset by a reduction in other special education support staff. There is a net decrease of 8.0 FTE in the SPED personnel budget.

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q. How does this proposed budget advance the goals of the School District to provide superior educational outcomes for our students?

- A. The proposed budget:
- Maintains reasonable class size
 - Supports Strategic Plan initiatives through
 - Curriculum improvements
 - Technology initiatives
 - Interventions for students
 - Enhances special education services
 - Maintains all current curricula and extra-curricular programs
 - Retains fees with some decreases (Transportation, Parking, Athletics)
 - Addresses key maintenance projects
 - Meets the state mandate for supervision & evaluation

Q. How will class sizes change in the proposed budget?

- A. Class size will remain reasonable throughout the district. Class size will range from 21-24 students at the elementary levels, and 18 - 22 at the Middle School. Class sizes in math and the related arts areas may vary depending on eventual student groupings. At the High School, the percentage of classes with over 25 students will be approximately 19%.

Q. How does the proposed budget support technology initiatives in the classroom?

- A. The proposed budget includes purchases of additional technology equipment to be used in classroom instruction (laptops and iPads) to meet the ever-growing demand of teachers to leverage technology tools to enhance lessons.

Q. How does the proposed budget support a robust supervision and evaluation system?

- A. The proposed budget supports building a supervision and evaluation system that ensures the continued improvement of teachers and administrators. For the past year, teachers and administrators have worked together to develop a system that guarantees improvement of instruction through focused goal-setting, significantly increased classroom visits, collaborative work between teachers and high quality standards of instruction. This increased emphasis on supervision and evaluation will increase student performance and ensure consistency of instruction.

Q. What new fee increases are included in the proposed budget?

- A. There are no new fees in the proposed budget. The School Committee is committed to finding alternatives to user fees for educational services and, toward that effort, has decreased fees for transportation, athletics, and parking by 10% for the second year in a row.

Q. How does per pupil spending in Hopkinton compare with other communities in the State?

- A. Hopkinton residents get tremendous value for the money they invest in education. Based on the latest figures released by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Office of School Finance, Hopkinton's total per pupil expenditure for FY 13 was \$13,004 while the state average was \$13,999, a difference of \$995.

Q. What other state and federal funds support the operating budget?

- A. The school district actively seeks state and federal grants to supplement the operating budget. During FY14, the school district received \$801,383 in grant funds, which includes a \$20,000 transition grant for full-day kindergarten. By moving to a tuition-free full-day kindergarten program, the district will qualify to apply for more substantial full-day kindergarten grants and increased state aid. As a result of claims filed by the schools, the town should also receive approximately \$62K in Medicaid reimbursement.

Q. Are there other sources of financial support for the Hopkinton Public Schools?

A. Yes. The school district is extremely fortunate to receive substantial funding from the HPTA, the Hopkinton Education Foundation, the Hopkinton Music Association, the Hopkinton Basketball Association, the Trustees of the School Fund of Hopkinton, the Boston Athletic Association, the 26.2 Foundation, the Hopkinton Boosters, and EMC. These groups remain our most active school partners and generously donate funds, time, and services. Approximately \$300,000 is given annually by all of our community partners to support public education.

Q. Why is the School Committee recommending a required full day program?

A. The changes in the 2011 Massachusetts Frameworks are significant, making it no longer possible to effectively meet the state requirements in a half-day option.

Q. Why are you recommending a tuition-free option?

A. Our current kindergarten program results in a discrepancy in educational opportunities. Unless we offer a tuition-free Full Day Kindergarten, we must also offer a half-day program which we have determined will not allow us to adequately meet the required state standards. Additionally there will be families who cannot afford to participate. In Hopkinton, we pride ourselves on providing the very best educational experience for ALL students. Our youngest learners deserve the strongest early childhood learning experience we can provide.

Q. What is the incremental cost of Full Day Kindergarten compared with the required Half-Day?

A. The incremental cost in FY15 budget is \$180,234 based on one-time offsets that include FDK tuition reserve, foundation reserve, technology deferral, and supplies reduction. Projected ongoing savings (Ch. 70, transportation, reduced support services) will reduce the incremental cost even further in FY16 (\$64,329) and FY17 (\$2,951).

Q. Why not wait until we have a solution for Center School?

A. The educational benefits of a Full Day Kindergarten program that is aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts standards are too compelling to ignore. Our recommendations about instructional programs should not be dictated by space. Consistent with decisions we have made when faced with space restrictions in other grade levels, we must seek creative solutions to enhance the instructional program.

Q. Why are you recommending funding a program that is not mandated?

A. Consistent with our belief in providing a well-rounded educational program, we include many opportunities for students in Hopkinton that are not mandated.

- Athletics \$766,846
- Co-Curricular Activities \$130,070
- Maintain optimal Class Size
- Transportation \$286,060 (Grades K-6 who reside 2 or more miles from the school that they attend)

Q. When will there be a clearly articulated Technology plan that aligns with the budget request?

A. The technology plan will be completed by May of this year and will be aligned with the Strategic plan. Decisions regarding devices, maintenance, professional development and infrastructure priorities will be made based on this plan.

HOPKINTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Hopkinton, Massachusetts

School District
Warrant Articles
2014-2015



Q. Why is the School Committee bringing forward as part of Article 19 a request to fund the purchase of two trucks for the Buildings & Ground Department?

- A. The Buildings & Grounds Department is requesting one utility-body pickup truck (with plow) to replace a 2001 similarly-equipped truck. This item has been scheduled for replacement on our ten-year capital plan since FY11. In addition, the Buildings & Grounds Department is requesting one pick-up truck (with snow-plow equipment) for the Director of Buildings & Grounds who currently uses his personal vehicle for all school-related functions, including plowing. The total request is \$90,000.

Q. Why is the School Committee bringing forward as part of Article 19 a request to fund the replacement of ceiling tiles at the Hopkins School?

- A. Over time, the ceiling tiles throughout the Hopkins School have bowed as a result of the humidity from the plenum space above them. The fact that they measure 2 feet by 4 feet contributes to this problem. The tiles were installed as part of the Hopkins School building project. It is likely that the Building Committee chose this size as a cost-saving measure as it required less frame and labor to install. The bowed tiles are pressing against the sprinkler escutcheons (shields), thus blocking the sprinkler head and preventing proper water distribution. We are requesting funds to fund a solution. The total request is \$203,000.

Q. Why is the School Committee bringing forward as part of Article 19 a request to fund Middle School Auditorium Upgrades?

- A. The Middle School Auditorium now serves as the major production center for the Middle and High School drama performances, concerts, musicals, and assemblies. The Auditorium is also used throughout the year for town meetings, community productions, and other community events. The result of this varied level of activity is that the facility requires occasional upkeep. This project will provide funding to paint the walls, ceiling and stage floor, as well as to re-carpet the floor. The total request is \$32,000.

Q. Why is the School Committee bringing forward as part of Article 19 a request to fund engineering design services for a future upgrade of the Middle School Auditorium fire alarm system?

- A. The existing Middle School fire alarm system is not a Class A system in which each device has a separate wire to the electrical panel. This makes system troubleshooting very labor intensive. In addition, the existing fire alarm system wiring is not the appropriate gauge for carrying information without causing ground faults. At this point, we are requesting funds to engineer & design a system upgrade, including a construction cost estimate for replacing the system with wire upgrades. The total request is \$25,000. There will be a future capital request to undertake the construction.

Q. Why are the School Committee and the Town Manager bringing forward as part of Article 19 a request to fund Joint Information Technology?

- A. Last year, funding was provided to install a new Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone system at the Middle School and Central Office. This is the same system used at Town offices and operates over the town-owned fiber network, thus providing better connectivity between the School and Town departments. The request this year is to continue the system upgrade at the Elmwood and Center Schools. The total request is \$100,000. VoIP will expand to all school buildings in future years.

Q. Why is the School Committee bringing forward Article 21 to fund engineering evaluation studies of the existing conditions of the roofs at the Hopkins & High Schools?

- A. The roofs at the Hopkins and High Schools are now entering the phases of their useful lives in which future replacements need to be planned for. To begin that process, the School Department is requesting funding for the purpose of conducting engineering evaluation services related to the existing conditions and remaining life-potential of the roofing systems at the Hopkins and High Schools. Such evaluation will provide options and alternatives for roof replacement, including cost estimates to be used when applying for potential future MSBA funding. The requested amount to do this work is \$30,000, which would be paid for through borrowing. There will be a future capital request to undertake the construction.

Q. Why is the School Committee bringing forward Article 22 to fund school safety upgrades at all school buildings?

- A. The School Safety Committee is comprised of two dozen Hopkinton individuals including Public Health & Safety, Youth Services, clergy, a physician, and several School Department staff. The fruits of their work include a 3-year Safety Plan, which was implemented last summer with the installation of updated monitoring systems in all school buildings. Funding is requested to continue this work via the installation of additional monitoring, security, and access equipment throughout the District. It should be noted that the School Department has also included additional funding in its operating budget to purchase ongoing safety training, materials, and equipment, including two-way radios. The requested amount to do this work is \$152,400 which would be paid for through borrowing.