

**Andover Public Schools**  
**FY24 Preliminary Budget Development Assumptions & Guidelines**  
**School Committee Approved November 17, 2022**

**School Committee Priorities**

The School Committee budget should reflect the priorities that address the needs of Andover students and schools. These priorities should provide direction to administrators and guide staff in developing budget recommendations. In addition, the priorities should guide the School Committee in its deliberations related to the budget planning process.

The budget should reflect the following priorities, in relative order. The School Committee may sometimes choose to fund items addressing lower priorities over items that may be a higher priority. While difficult, such choices must occasionally be made to ensure no priority is neglected. All budget discussions and decisions should utilize data driven dialogue.

1. The District's mission, values and goals;
2. The need for highly qualified staff teaching within the established class size policy;
3. The ongoing refinement of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices;
4. The need to develop and maintain educational resources, technology infrastructure, and school facilities that support student learning and meet District goals.

**School Committee Budget Assumptions**

The budget is developed with certain assumptions and priorities by the School Committee. For example, the budget reflects the assumption that the school district will meet all federal, state and local mandated programs and requirements. Thus, the budget should include sufficient resources and funding to meet contractual obligations, mandated programs, and high school accreditation standards, including but not limited to:

- *Special Education: Federal - IDEA & MA General Law 71B & 603 CMR 28.00*
- *English Language Learners (ELL)*
- *Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*
- *MA Education Reform Act of 1993*
- *Next Gen MCAS*
- *Educator Evaluation System*
- *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*
- *Mandates required by state, federal, local and DESE regarding COVID-19.*

**Budget Operating Guidelines: FTE Changes**

School Committee policy prescribes the process for staffing adjustments and how the Committee and Superintendent make FTE additions or changes after Town Meeting.

*Adopted by the School Committee with a 5-0 vote on August 30, 2018.*

- *The needs of a school system change constantly throughout the school year for a variety of reasons, including personnel actions (e.g., unexpected retirements, long-term leaves), enrollment increases, or educational requirements (including special education needs). As a result, the Superintendent needs the discretion to adjust resources as needs change. The Superintendent can make these adjustments without School Committee approval as long as he/she is not creating an entirely new*

**Andover Public Schools**  
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**School Committee Approved November 17, 2022**

*position, stays within budgetary limits, and does not need to transfer funds between the salary and expense accounts. (See Policies DB, DBJ and GCA.)*

- *To ensure full disclosure on resource adjustments, the Superintendent should provide routine updates on these adjustments at School Committee meetings including, in an appropriate level of detail and with appropriate supporting documentation, a description of those resource adjustments made or to be made, the reasons for those adjustments, and, when resources are added, the source of funding. (See Policy DBJ.)*
- *When a particular resource adjustment may prove controversial, the Superintendent is encouraged to brief the School Committee on that adjustment prior to it taking effect.*

**Guidelines for Budget Requests**

There are two levels of funding requests within the School Committee’s budget: Base Budget requests and Strategic Plan Program Improvement Budget requests.

**Level Service Budget**

The **Level Service Budget** allows us to deliver a varied level of services to the schools from the approved FY2023 budget, including the current school programs, staffing, class sizes, and services as well as contractual increases, compliance requirements and enrollment that affect the level of services that we are delivering today. The level service budget includes:

- A. All program components and staffing included in the FY2022 and FY2023 operating budgets.
- B. Statutory or regulatory mandates and accreditation requirements.
- C. Personnel step, longevity, and collective bargaining increases (including cost of living).
- D. Increases under other existing contracts and for unsettled labor contracts will be made for potential increases and retroactive payments.
- E. In 2019 we publicly bid transportation for regular education, mid-day K, SPED in-district, out-of-district, summer and extracurricular transportation. When calculating the FY2024 transportation costs for these services we will be using contract rates for regular education, and extracurricular transportation, SPED in-district, out-of-district and SPED summer programs. As of FY2021, Transportation for Mid-day K is no longer required.

**Expenditures - Staff and Programs**

- A. **Staff and Programs** – Budget for services with the understanding that we will consider equal-cost substitutions in the recommended budget with all assumptions clearly defined.
  - 1. **Classroom Teacher** – The district will budget new full-time teachers at M-8 on the FY2023 Salary Scale.
  - 2. **Instructional Assistant** – The district will budget new full-time teaching assistants at Step-1 on the assistant’s FY2023 salary schedule.
  - 3. Budget **contract settlements** for contracts under negotiation, including retroactive payments.
  - 4. **Student Services Summer Programs** –We anticipate continued increased costs for summer programming due to annual increases in teacher salaries, contracted services, and

**Andover Public Schools**  
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**School Committee Approved November 17, 2022**

consultation fees. The Office of Special Educational Programs (OSEP) and DESE require school districts to consider additional IEP services for special education students and recovery support services for all students pursuant to school closures caused by COVID-19. In addition, COVID-19 compensatory services must be considered for all students with special needs as well as other high-need students such as students who are homeless, in DCF custody, or learning English. This requirement has increased the number of students participating in summer programming. It is anticipated these services will continue through the summer of 2023.

- B. **Legal mandates and high school accreditation requirements are met.** – This includes special education, Section 504 and ADA, English Language Learners, MA Ed Reform Act, Next Gen MCAS, NEASC and Educator Evaluation.
- C. **Professional staffing guidelines are met to address** class size policy, enrollment shifts, and legal needs.
- D. **Alternatives that will provide services in more cost-effective ways** e.g. build more in-house capacity to avoid some special education out-of-district costs, reorganize current organizational structure; reduce energy consumption; explore less expensive means of purchasing some products, services, etc..
- E. **Technology** – Budget for special education adaptive technology is not included in the technology CIP. Technology and internet connectivity are a key component to the future of student learning.
- F. **Professional Development**-This work will be provided district-wide as recommended by the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning to support the implementation of high-quality professional development with the goal of improving teacher practice and student outcomes for teachers and administrators in 21st century learning environments. High quality professional development conforms to best practices in research, relates to educators' assignments and professional responsibilities, and conforms to the Massachusetts Standards for Professional Development. (<https://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/standards.html>)
- G. **Textbooks** – The district will fund any *replacement textbooks* (and those needed for enrollment shifts) through the school instruction accounts and/or lost book accounts. Funds for *new textbook adoptions* and the *conversion to digital text* subscriptions are included in the district textbook account. As of FY2020 the school department's operating budget absorbed all related textbook expenditures and, as such, will be included in the FY2024 operating budget.
- H. **General and Instructional Supplies** – General and Instructional Supply line items will be calculated to reflect the most current enrollment numbers and current costs including inflationary pressures when possible.
- I. **Projected PK – 5 Consumables** – Using the most current enrollment numbers, administration will analyze projected consumable costs for literacy, reading, writing, math, science and other curricular areas; for example programs such as “Foundations”, K-5 DIBELS, FOSS Science, and Eureka math<sup>2</sup>v programs. Line-item adjustments will be made as necessary for FY2024 projected costs e.g. change in student performance data.

**Andover Public Schools**  
**FY24 Preliminary Budget Development Assumptions & Guidelines**  
**School Committee Approved November 17, 2022**

J. **User Fees** - A student who is a member of a household that meets income eligibility guidelines may be eligible for family financial assistance including a user fee reduction. Please see the Andover Public Schools website for information related to eligibility.

1. **HS Athletics** –User fees for FY2023 will be set at \$450 per student with a family maximum of \$900; unless otherwise determined by the School Committee.

- a. **2. HS Parking Fees** –At the High School, estimated parking fee revenue will be budgeted at \$59,000. The parking fee will remain at \$200; unless otherwise determined by the School Committee.
- b. **3. MS Extra-curricular Activities** –As part of the FY2023 budget process the School Committee approved the elimination of middle school student activity fees which will continue for the 2023-2024 school year; unless otherwise determined by the School Committee.
- c. **4. Bus Transportation Fees** -Budget bus transportation fee at \$200 with a family maximum of \$400 as adopted as part of the FY2023 budget process; unless otherwise determined by the School Committee.

**Contractual Obligations – Transportation**

- A. **Regular Education Transportation** - In June of 2019 the district awarded a three-year transportation contract with a two-year option to extend. The FY2024 regular education transportation budget will be based upon that contract, with approval of the School Committee, to exercise year two of a two-year option to extend.
- B. **McKinney-Vento Homeless Act** - Over the past few years the cost to transport homeless students has varied between \$15,000 and \$65,000. Based on the historical costs and uncertainty of this line item the recommendation is to continue to fund Homeless transportation at \$65,000.
- C. **Foster Care Students - Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** - In a memorandum dated January 18, 2018, the Commissioner of Education provided an update on Massachusetts' efforts to ensure educational access and stability for children in foster care as required by the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the 2008 Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections Act). The goal was to help school districts implement ESSA by providing joint guidance that supplements the US Department of Education's Non-Regulatory Guidance.

During the FY2020 school year we incurred an unbudgeted expense of \$12,496 related to Foster Care transportation. In FY2021 the District created a new account for Foster Care Transportation and funded the account at \$20,000. Prior to the establishment of the account, transportation of foster care students was funded out of the regular transportation budget. The FY2024 recommendation is to continue funding this line item at \$20,000.

During the FY2024 budget process the District will be working with the Executive Office of

**Andover Public Schools**  
**FY24 Preliminary Budget Development Assumptions & Guidelines**  
**School Committee Approved November 17, 2022**

Health and Human Services (EOHHS), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to allow the District to complete transportation claiming under the Every Student Succeeds Act - Title IV-E. By entering into the MoU and a subsequent Town Meeting article, the District will become eligible for a reimbursement of a portion of these funds to help offset the FY2025 budget.

- D. **Special Education Out-of-District & Summer Transportation** - In 2019 we publicly bid transportation for SPED Out-of-District and summer transportation. The FY2024 SPED Out-of-District & Summer Transportation budget will be based upon that contract, with approval of the School Committee, to exercise year two of a two-year option to extend
- E. **Special Education In-District & Summer Transportation** - In 2019 we publicly bid transportation for SPED In-District and summer transportation. The term of this contract was negotiated as a five-year agreement. When determining the FY2024 transportation costs, it will be based upon the year five rates.
- F. **Extracurricular, Field Trips and Athletic Transportation** - In June of 2019 the district awarded a three-year transportation contract with a two-year option to extend. The FY2024 budget for Extracurricular, Field Trips and Athletic transportation will be based upon that contract, with approval of the School Committee, to exercise year two of a two-year option to extend.

**Contractual Obligations – FY24 Salary Projections**

- A. **Collective bargaining contracts-** For the FY2024 year, the collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) are under various states of settlement. The union representing Teachers, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists and Nurses, Instructional Assistants and Administrators will be under active negotiations. Wage reopeners are included in the CBA's for employees in the Custodians, Food Services, and Administrative Assistants unions. Personnel expenses will be budgeted to include a reasonable pay increase for these employees in FY2024, as determined by School Committee bargaining strategy. Bargaining agreements will be budgeted at a reasonable increase plus retroactive payments.
- B. **Individual contracts and non union employees** - A modest increase will be built into the budget for these individual positions.
- C. **Substitute Teacher Pay – Per the School Committee approved rate for the 2022-2023 school year the rates budgeted shall be:**
  - Substitute Teachers who are retired Andover Teachers, the rate is \$120/day
  - Substitute Teachers who have a minimum of a bachelor's degree, the rate is \$105/Day
  - Substitute teachers who have not completed a bachelor's degree, the rate is \$90/Day
  - If the district employs building-based substitute teachers, the rate is \$130/day.

**Andover Public Schools**  
**FY24 Preliminary Budget Development Assumptions & Guidelines**  
**School Committee Approved November 17, 2022**

- D. **Substitute Nurse Pay** - In an attempt to continue to be competitive with industry pay scales, the substitute nurse pay for RN's will continue at \$400/day.

**Fixed Costs: Utilities**

- A. **Natural Gas** – In consultation with Sustainability, Plant & Facilities the FY2024 natural gas budget for all schools will reflect a 5% increase over FY2023.
- B. **Oil/Generator Fuel** – In consultation with Sustainability, Plant & Facilities the FY2024 oil/generator fuel budget for all schools will reflect a 5% increase over FY2023.
- C. **Electricity** – In consultation with Sustainability, Plant & Facilities the FY2024 electricity budget for all schools will reflect a 13% increase over FY2023.

**Custodial Supplies & Materials**

- A. The budget will use historical data and current trends for costs increases.

**Unfunded Mandates –**

- A. **English Language Learners** – This is budgeted based on known students at the time of budget submittal. The regulations require all teachers to utilize the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment standards. Each student has unique needs that must be addressed according to these standards. Providing sufficient dollars for staffing, professional development, resources, and programmatic needs ensures that the department is equipped to offer a high-quality English Language Learning Program. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education expects that the district will adhere to guidelines outlined in the August, 2016, *Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement and Reclassification of English Learners*.
- B. **MA Ed Reform Act** – This is budgeted using known students needing MCAS support and remediation or Educational Proficiency Plans (EPP-high school only) at the time of budget submittal. (MGL c.71).
- C. **DESE Proportionate Share Services for Students with Disabilities** - Effective in 2019 DESE has advised that annually, all districts with private schools or home-schooled students within their geographic boundaries must calculate proportionate share, demonstrate upon request that they have spent the required amount of IDEA grant funds on eligible students who are privately enrolled and educated in the district, and submit the Proportionate Share Forms for both the 240 and 262 grants to DESE.

Districts are required to conduct a variety of activities related to provision of proportionate share special education services for students who are privately enrolled. These activities include consultation, child find, evaluation and determination of eligibility, determination of the proportionate share amount, expenditure of the proportionate share, development of services plans, and provision of services either directly or through contracts.

Massachusetts defines this population more broadly than the Federal IDEA regulations require. As a result, our obligations for IDEA set-asides are double what they would be under Federal regulations. Student Services is currently working through each individual case.

**Andover Public Schools**  
**FY24 Preliminary Budget Development Assumptions & Guidelines**  
**School Committee Approved November 17, 2022**

**Revenue Items**

- A. **State Aid: Chapter 70**- FY2023 Chapter 70 revenue is \$12,167,131, an increase of \$330,000 over FY2022. The Governor is expected to release his FY2024 proposal on January 2023.
- B. **State Aid: SPED Circuit Breaker** - The final Circuit Breaker (CB) reimbursement for FY2022 and projected FY2023 totaled \$2,449,611 and \$2,019,743 respectively. It's important to note that in addition to reimbursement for SPED instruction and tuition expenses, the total reimbursement included SPED transportation reimbursement.

**Tuition Based Programs**

- A. **Special Needs Tuition** – The district offers a SPED vocational program called Transitional Opportunities Program or TOPs for identified students ages 18-22. Andover and North Andover currently have students enrolled. A Memorandum of Agreement allows the parties to share the annual staffing and operating costs at a 50/50 split.

Out of district tuitions for special education private school students will be increased at the inflationary rate as approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Operational Services Division (OSD). Current projections which are still under review by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and in discussion with various professional organizations including the Massachusetts Associations of School Superintendents (MASS) is 14% Private school tuitions will also be subject to program reconstruction rates as approved by OSD.

- B. **Early Childhood Tuition: Preschool Peer Partner** – For FY2024 the per student tuition will be set at:
  - a. 5 days \$5,265 FD/\$4,265 HD
  - b. 4 days \$4,538 FD/\$3,538 HD
  - c. 3 days \$4,115 FD/\$3,115 HD
  - d. 2 days \$2,350 HD/ FD not an option unless otherwise approved by the School Committee.