

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff,

It is hard to believe we find ourselves in mid-March, having just moved the clocks forward and with spring right around the corner. I thought it was timely to provide an update as to where we stand in our budget process.

On Wednesday, February 22nd, I had an opportunity to present the district budget to the Board of Education. The budget represents an increase over last year's operating cost of 6.95 percent. I encourage you to take a moment and scroll through the [Superintendent's Budget Presentation](#). In my January communication, I highlighted the budget themes and priorities – these factors helped to frame our budget planning and ultimately our budgetary requests, and they remain the key focus areas as we move forward.

Budget Themes and Priorities for 2023-2024:

- Market-driven increases in operational costs;
- Market-driven increases in contractual obligations;
- Responding to increased enrollment-driven staffing needs in both general education and special education;
- Responding to various facility and maintenance needs;
- Offsetting new staffing needs by reallocating current funding resources.

A summary of the Main Budget Drivers demonstrates that the majority of our budget represents fixed costs which have been impacted significantly by inflationary challenges and market adjustments.

#### Summary of Main Drivers

Contractual Obligations	\$3,010,992	3.91%
Enrollment Driven Staffing	\$ 409,437	0.53%
Market Driven Increases	\$ 482,929	0.63%
Prior Year Deficits	\$ 656,118	0.85%
Insurance	\$1,625,465	2.11%
Offsets	\$ (829,080)	-1.08%
Total	\$5,355,861	6.95%

On February 28th, the Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the budget, moving it forward to the Board of Finance for review and discussion. The Board of Finance presentation took place on March 7th as I had an opportunity to discuss our Board of Education budget with members of the finance board.

At the culmination of the meeting, the Board of Finance members requested that the Board of Education have further discussions regarding the submitted budget to determine if we can reduce our operating costs between \$750,000 and \$800,000, equivalent to about a one percent reduction from the presented 6.95% Board of Education approved budget. The Board of Finance cited concerns over the recent town revaluation and the property tax stresses that many residents would face at the proposed budget level. As directed, our administration is working to prepare information for a budget-reduction discussion that will take place with the Board of Education at a special meeting on March 21st. I will keep you updated as we continue to adjust and refine our budget proposal moving forward.

I thank you for your continued support of our school system and the advocacy you continue to provide.

Regards,

Matt Curtis  
Superintendent of Schools