



Town of Sterling
FY24 Budget
March 23, 2023



Financial Outlook





WRSD Financial Goals

Budget and Advocate for What Students Need

- Base Recommendations on Data and Best Practices

Be Accountable and Transparent

- Own Mistakes
- Dig Out
- Make Necessary Systemic Changes

Build Trust and Form Healthy Town Partnerships

- Identify Untapped Efficiencies
- Seek Alternative Funding Streams
- Allow Time to Plan



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State of Finances

- FY21 Audit Not Completed
- FY22 Expenditures Estimated Over by 1.65 Million
- FY22 Voted to be Balanced with Revolving Accounts
- FY22 Assessment of HR/Business Practices
- FY23 Poor Budget Development Process
- FY23 Overuse of Revolving Accounts for Funding
- FY23 Budget Freeze Implemented 2/23
- Ongoing Weekly Meetings with DESE, DOR, and Auditor



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Budget Development



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FY24 Budget Development Process

Collaborative, Pragmatic, Transparent

- School Committee Budget Retreat
- School and department funding requests shared with School Committee
- Forecasting FY24 Budget based on actual FY23 expenditures
- Thank you to town officials for communicating realistic budget capacities



FY24 Essential Student Needs

Staffing

- Class Size adjustments per WRSDC Policy
- Inequities between schools

Curriculum

- High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)
 - Elementary ELA identified priority
- Increased departmental support

Facilities

- Security infrastructure needs improvement
- Aging buildings and systems
- History of minimal preventative maintenance



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FY25 and Beyond Student Needs

District Infrastructures in Need of Overhaul

- MTSS Resources and Staff
 - Guidance
 - Health
 - Academic Interventionists
- Special Education
- Expanded Pathways
- Space Limitations
- Major Capital Improvements
 - Roof, Windows, and Boilers
 - ECC and WRHS Projects



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Funding Overview



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WRSD Funding

Our Challenges

- WRSD Per-Pupil Expenditures continue to be among the lowest in the state (#364 out of 398)
- State funding formulas can result in substantial and inconsistent changes to individual towns assessments
 - Minimum local contribution assessments are calculated by the state and outside of our control
- Our member towns have been supportive of our budget requests in recent years, but those district requests did not consistently provide adequate funding or level services



Per Pupil Expenditure

What is Per-Pupil Expenditure (PPE)

- Not a perfect metric but a comparative data point used by the state
- We recognize that many other communities may receive funding from external sources that contribute to their PPE but do not burden district taxpayers
- Not used to build this budget but an important consideration moving forward in terms of building student services



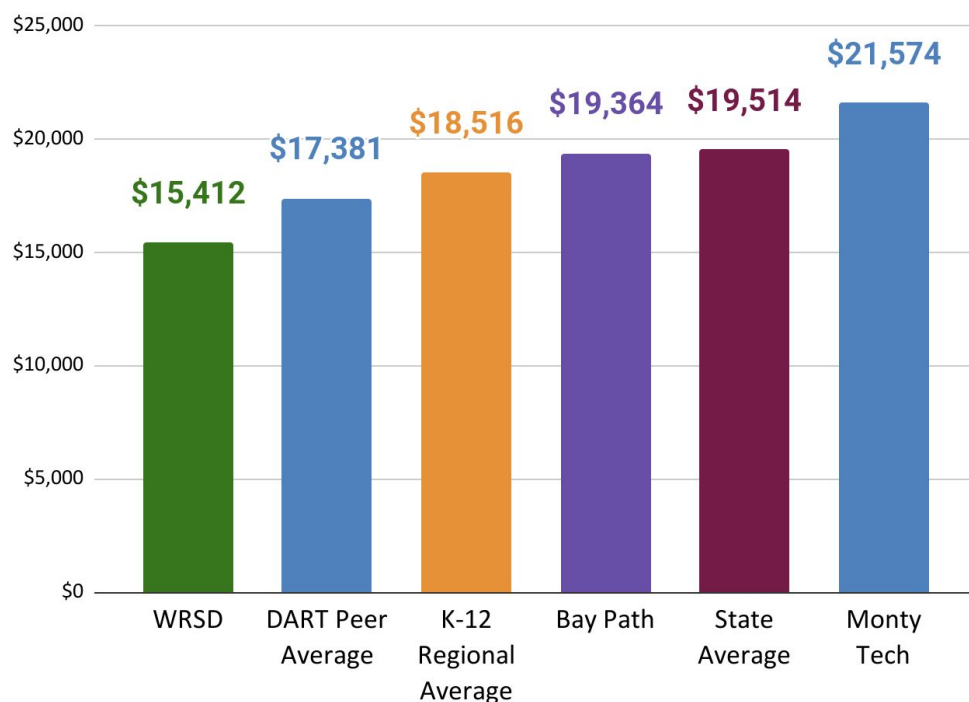
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Per Pupil Expenditure

Per-Pupil Expenditure Comparisons

(FY21 - Most recent data available from DESE)



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Per Pupil Expenditure - What If?

Why it Matters

- If WRSD Had Similar PPE to DART Peer Average
 - Additional \$2,000.00 Student
 - Increase WRSD Budget by \$13,618,000
- If WRSD Had Similar PPE to K-12 Regional Peer Average
 - Additional \$3,000 Per Student
 - Increase WRSD Budget by \$20,427,000
- Inadequate Funding Places Students at Risk
 - We do not have an adequate infrastructure to address increased student needs



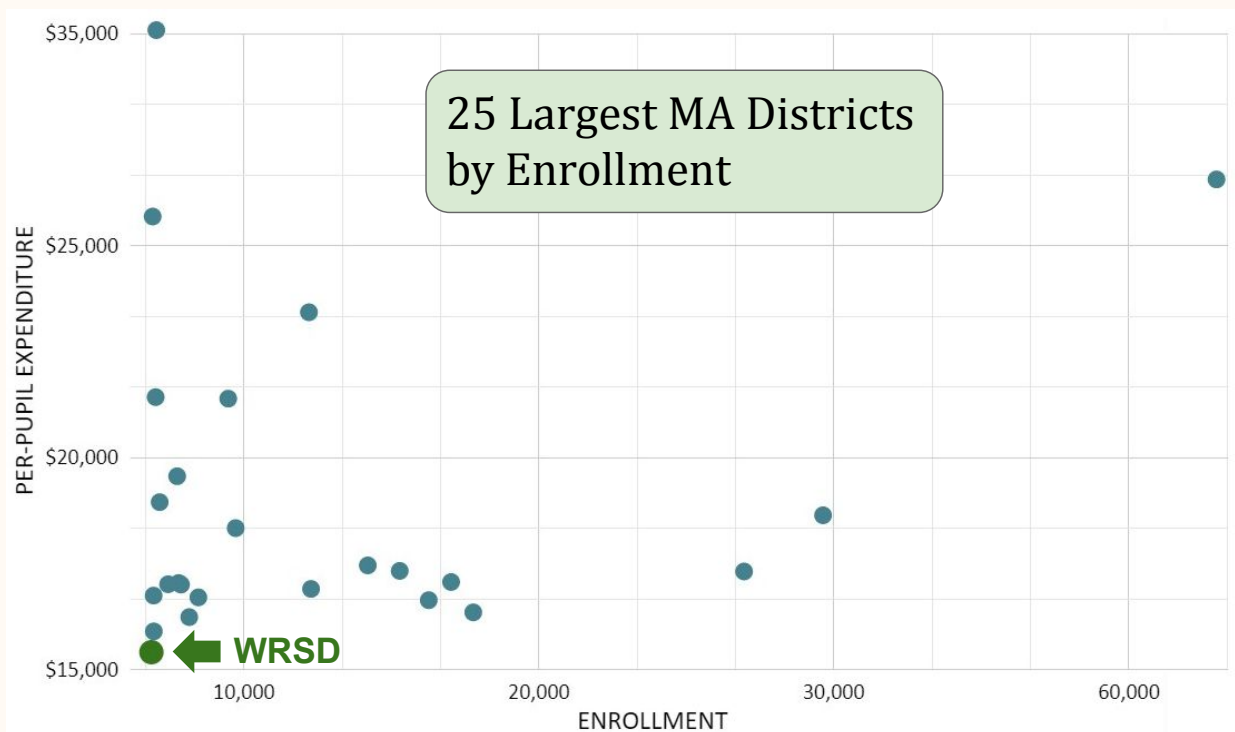
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Large Districts PPE

Per-Pupil Expenditure Comparisons

(FY21 - Most recent data available from DESE)



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Town Assessments

- How Final Town Assessments are Determined
 - Town Shares of Minimal Net School Funding
 - Determined by State
 - Absolute Minimum Each Community May Legally Contribute to their School System
 - Student Enrollment by Town
 - Determined by October 2022 SIMS Collection
 - % Share of Budget set by Regional Agreement
 - Discretionary Funding
 - Additional Funds Requested by District



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Funding Acknowledgements

- The Governor's initial budget (2/23/23) includes additional Chapter 70 and Transportation Aid for WRSD
- Minimum Local Contributions have also increased
 - Included in Each Town's Total Assessment
 - Determined by the State
 - Town Shares of Minimal Net School Funding
- Revenues in draft budget currently do not include any Excess and Deficiency funds (E&D)



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District Profile



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District Scope

- Largest Regional PK-12 School District in MA
 - Student enrollment (6,739)
 - Geographic area (155 Square Miles)
- 25th Largest District Enrollment Overall (Out of 398 - Top 6%)
- 13 Schools in Five Towns
- 1,400+ Active Employees (all positions)
 - 569 Teaching Staff Positions (WREA)
 - 1079 Total FTEs
 - 881 District Resident Employees (631 FTEs)



District Enrollment Update

District Enrollment by Town

Overall District	Oct. 2021		Oct. 2022		Enrollment Change	
Town	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Holden	3,231	47.90%	3,235	47.51%	4	0.12%
Paxton	634	9.40%	635	9.33%	1	0.16%
Princeton	417	6.18%	405	5.95%	-12	-2.88%
Rutland	1,550	22.98%	1,628	23.91%	78	5.03%
Sterling	914	13.55%	906	13.31%	-8	-0.88%
Total	6,746	100.00%	6,809	100.00%	63	0.93%



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WRHS Enrollment Update

High School Enrollment by Town

High School	Oct. 2021		Oct. 2022		Enrollment Change	
Town	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Holden	950	46.68%	933	48.10%	-17	-1.79%
Paxton	196	9.79%	192	9.92%	-4	-2.04%
Princeton	107	5.69%	89	5.42%	-18	-16.82%
Rutland	453	24.01%	477	22.94%	24	5.30%
Sterling	269	13.83%	274	13.62%	5	1.86%
Total	1,975	100.00%	1,965	100.00%	-10	-0.51%



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FY24 Draft Budget



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What's Included

- 8 Class Size Adjustments
- 1 English Learner Education (ELE) Teacher
- 2 Counselors
- 1 Curriculum Director
- New K-2 ELA Curriculum Selection and Purchase
- Facilities Improvements
 - ECC Floors
 - Generator ECC/Central Office



Enrollment & Class Size Report Analysis

Proposed FTE Increases

School	Grade	Recommended Max Class Size (WRSDC Pol. 3510)	Projected FY24 Average Class Size	
			Without FTE Increases	With Proposed FTE Increases
Houghton	K	19	24.3	18.3
Naquag	K	19	25.4	21.2
Paxton Center	1	19	30.5	20.3
Dawson (+2)	2	19	24	19.2
Naquag	2	19	24.7	21.1
Davis Hill	3	22	28.3	21.3
Glenwood	3	22	26.2	21.8
Mayo	3	22	24.8	19.8
Houghton	4	22	26	19.5
Davis Hill	5	22	29.7	22.3
Dawson	5	22	31	23.3

Over Recommendation by 15% or MORE	Over Recommendation by LESS than 15%	At or Below Recommendation
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Enrollment & Class Size Report Analysis

Proposed FTE Reductions

School	Grade	Recommended Max Class Size (WRSDC Pol. 3510)	Projected FY24 Average Class Size	
			Without FTE Reductions	With Proposed FTE Reductions
Dawson	K	19	14.4	18
Naquag	1	19	18.2	21.8
Davis Hill	4	22	18.3	24.3
Glenwood	5	22	19.5	23.4

Over Recommendation by 15% or MORE	Over Recommendation by LESS than 15%	At or Below Recommendation
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Class Size FTE Adjustment Summary:

+12.0 FTE positions in Gr. K-5

-4.0 FTE positions in Gr. K-5

+8.0 Net FTE Adjustments in Gr. K-5



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ELE Program Data

English Learner Education (ELE) Teacher (1.0 FTE)

- Not in compliance with DESE recommendations for ELE student service times.
- Many students at the Foundational Level (Level 1 or 2) are not receiving enough service time:
 - Current K-8 ELL staff provide for 387 hours of service time.
 - DESE recommendation requires 473 hours of service for our current 131 students.
 - An additional teacher will help us to close the 86 hour gap in half.
 - ELE staff caseload reassignments will be made, but essentially the new 1.0 FTE will be assigned to Davis Hill and Thomas Prince

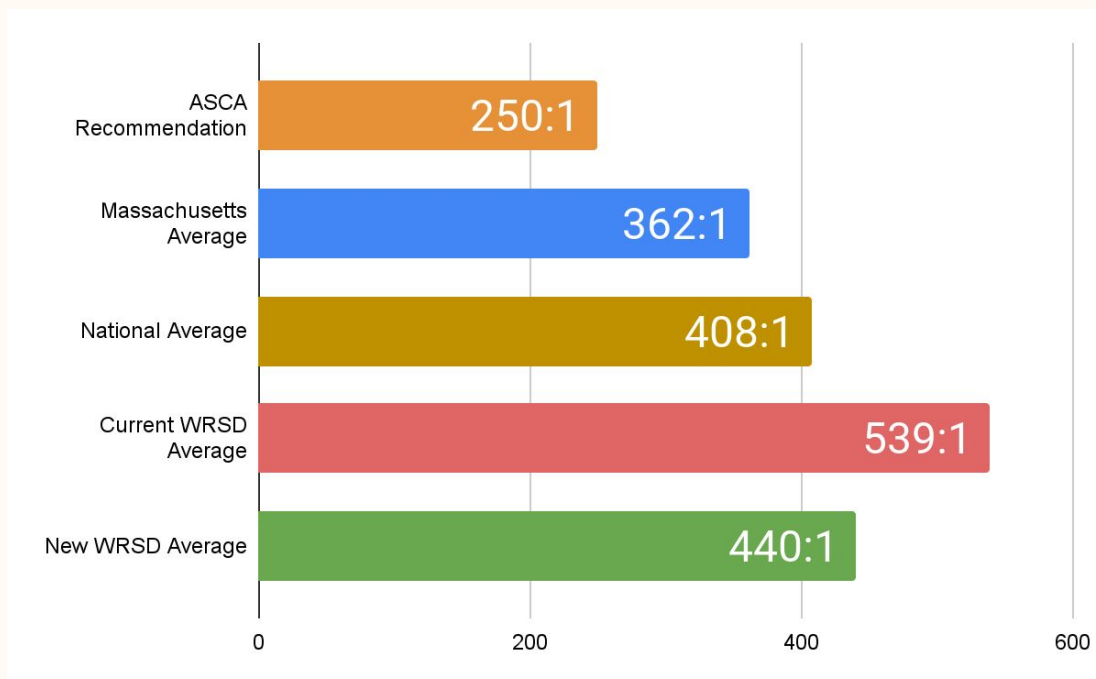


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Counseling Staff Caseloads

School Counselor Ratios (Students to Counselors)



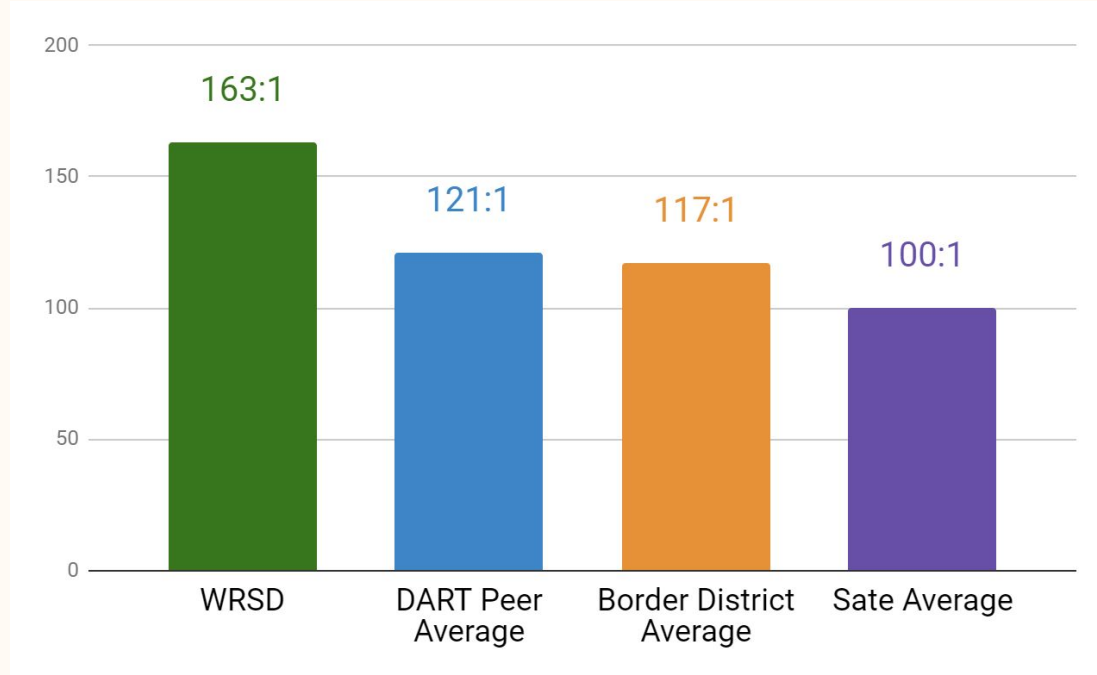
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Administrative Staffing

Ratio of Students to School and District Administrators

(FY21 - Most recent data available from DESE)



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Unfulfilled Requests

- Central Tree
 - SPED Teacher
 - Health Teacher
- Chocksett
 - Assistant Principal
 - Spanish Teacher
- Davis Hill
 - Related Arts teacher
 - Building sub
 - .5 Custodian
- Dawson
 - Related Arts Teacher
 - Literacy Interventionist
 - Building Sub
- ECC
 - Assistant Principal
 - .4 School Psychologist
 - Building Sub
- Glenwood
 - Librarian
- Houghton
 - ABA
 - SPED Teacher
 - .2 SLPA
- Mayo
 - Librarian
 - Building Sub
 - .5 Custodian
- Mountview
 - Counselor
 - .2 Strings Teacher
 - P. E. Teacher
 - Building Sub
- Naquag
 - SPED Teacher
 - Building Sub
- Paxton
 - 2 ABA-PA's
 - 1 SPED/Wilson Teacher
 - Building Sub
- Thomas Prince
 - Literacy Interventionist
 - .5 EL Teacher
 - Librarian
 - .5 Clerical Support
 - Building Sub
- WRHS
 - Additional Nurse
 - Adjustment Counselor
 - Art Teacher
- District
 - Float Nurse
 - Additional Building Subs
 - Elementary Counselors
 - Health Teachers
 - WRHS Capital Improvements
 - Post Grad Teacher



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FY24 Assessment Calculations

Net School Spending and Other Revenues

	Holden	Paxton	Princeton	Rutland	Sterling	Total
Net School Spending Revenue						
Required Local Contribution	22,192,218	4,860,250	4,009,651	8,718,417	9,320,886	49,101,422
Chapter 70 Aid						35,851,035
Chapter 70 Minimum Aid (@ \$30 per capita)						0
Total Net School Spending Revenue	22,192,218	4,860,250	4,009,651	8,718,417	9,320,886	84,952,457
Other Revenue						
Chapter 71 Transportation Reimbursement						2,044,820
Charter Tuition Reimbursement						227,398
Medicaid Reimbursement						750,000
Interest						50,000
Miscellaneous						225,000
Excess & Deficiency						0
Total Other Revenue	0	0	0	0	0	3,297,218



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FY24 Assessment Calculations

Total Assessments

Operating Budget Assessment Percentages:	Holden	Paxton	Princeton	Rutland	Sterling	Total
	47.5107%	9.3259%	5.9480%	23.9095%	13.3059%	100.00%
Non-Discretionary Assessments						
Transportation (net of Ch. 71 Reimbursement)	3,040,331	596,788	380,628	1,530,030	851,479	6,399,256
Debt Service	1,073,661	220,647	103,356	548,660	314,879	2,261,203
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Non-Discretionary Assessments	4,113,992	817,435	483,984	2,078,690	1,166,358	8,660,459
Total Operating Budget						116,208,797
LESS: NSS, Other, & Non-Discretionary Assessments						96,910,134
Amount Needed to Balance Budget						19,298,663
Discretionary Assessments	9,168,930	1,799,774	1,147,884	4,614,214	2,567,861	19,298,663
Total Assessment	35,475,140	7,477,459	5,641,519	15,411,321	13,055,104	77,060,544



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Appropriations Defined

- **Salaries & Stipends**
Salaries, stipends and substitute budgets for all departments
- **Benefits & Insurance**
Employee and non-employee benefits and insurances
- **Instructional Support**
Equipment, technology, classroom supplies, materials, and services
- **Operations & Maintenance**
Custodial, maintenance, grounds. and utility expenses
- **Pupil Services**
General fund expenses for athletics, health services and student activities
- **Special Ed Tuitions**
Fees for students attending specialized programs outside of the district
- **Other Operating Costs**
Non-discretionary operating expenses including school choice tuition
- **Transportation**
Regular Ed and Special Ed in-district and out-of-district busing and vans
- **Debt Service**
Principal and interest payments on construction bonds



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FY24 Budget by Line

A preliminary line-by-line budget was provided on 3/8/23

OBJ / ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	FY22		FY23		FY24	
	REVISED BUDGET	ANTICIPATED ACTUAL	APPROVED BUDGET	ACTUAL TO DATE 2/22/23	DRAFT BUDGET	CHANGE VS FY23 BUDGET
501018				617,276	983,324	83,590
501028						(1,142,073)
501031						
501038 568008 T	499,554	479,975	899,125	694,620	920,760	21,635
501041 568018 T	331,615	313,878	358,144	468,646	400,790	42,646
501042 568028 T	1,261,762	1,146,894	1,237,467	1,144,036	1,353,334	115,867
501058 568038	228,301	180,172	248,848	179,128	200,000	(48,848)
501071 568048	759	2,940	759	3,543	3,500	2,741
501072 568058	360,072	335,912	364,626	354,725	354,725	(9,901)
501078 56810	5,252	5,673	5,252	1,901	5,673	421
501082 56812	155,274	181,226	155,274	273,259	273,260	117,986
501084 56814	29,601	13,146	25,047	10,317	13,146	(11,901)
501086 56816	37,410	7,788	37,410	2,025	7,788	(29,622)
501088 56818	10,185	1,944	10,185	6,239	6,240	(3,945)
501121 5681	69,654	80,162	75,923	99,109	100,000	24,077
50206 5681	440,270	1,063,008	440,270	725,055	725,000	284,730
50206 5681	219,005	228,066	219,005	255,059	255,060	36,055
50206 5681	0	0	275,000	275,000	275,000	0
50206 5681	23,406	15,003	23,406	9,939	15,000	(8,406)
50206 5681	60,000	50,000	60,000	50,000	50,000	(10,000)
50206 5681	3,732,120	4,105,788	4,435,741	4,552,601	4,959,276	523,535
Total Operations & Maintenance						



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FY24 Budget by Appropriation

Appropriation	FY23 Budget	FY24 Proposed	\$ Diff +/-	% Diff
Salaries & Stipends	\$68,605,250	\$71,256,493	\$2,651,243	3.86%
Benefits & Insurance	\$19,103,693	\$21,111,295	\$2,007,602	10.51%
Instructional Support	\$2,998,720	\$3,892,590	\$893,870	29.81%
Operations & Maintenance	\$4,435,742	\$4,959,276	\$523,534	11.80%
Pupil Services	\$52,058	\$67,551	\$15,493	29.76%
Special Ed Tuitions	\$2,766,699	\$2,563,570	(\$203,129)	-7.34%
Other Operating Costs	\$1,507,582	\$1,652,745	\$145,163	9.63%
Transportation	\$7,339,487	\$8,444,077	\$1,104,590	15.05%
Debt Service	\$2,277,150	\$2,261,200	(\$15,950)	-0.70%
Total General Fund	\$109,086,381	\$116,208,797	\$7,122,416	6.53%

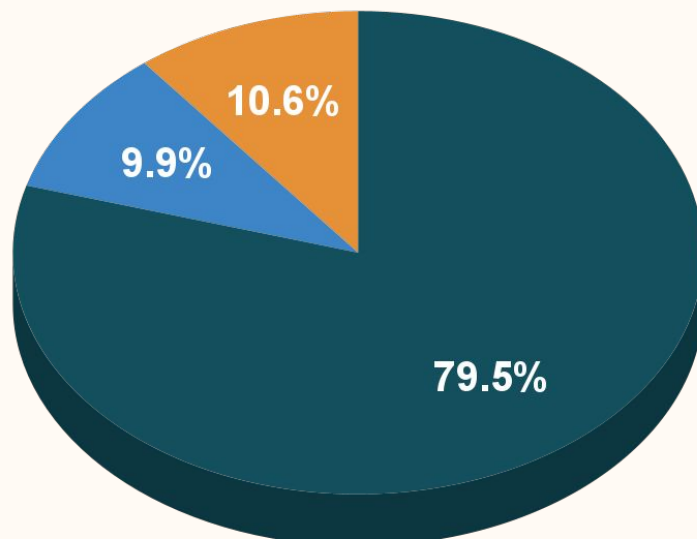


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FY24 Budget by Category

- **Salaries and Benefits**
 - Salaries & Stipends
 - Benefits & Insurance
- **Instruction and Operations**
 - Instructional Support
 - Operations & Maintenance
 - Pupil Services
 - Special Ed Tuitions
- **Fixed Costs**
 - Other Operating Costs
 - Transportation
 - Debt Service



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Revenues



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FY24 State & Local Revenues

Revenue Source	FY23 Budget	FY24 Proposed	\$Diff +/-	% Diff +/-
Ch. 70 Aid	\$32,435,516	\$35,851,035	\$3,415,519	10.53%
Ch. 71 Transportation	\$1,852,071	\$2,044,820	\$192,749	10.41%
Charter Tuition Aid	\$133,280	\$227,398	\$94,118	70.62%
Total State Aid	\$34,420,867	\$38,123,253	\$3,702,386	10.76%
Medicaid	\$625,000	\$750,000	\$125,000	20.00%
Interest	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	0.00%
Misc. Revenue	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$0	0.00%
Excess & Deficiency	\$850,000	\$0	(\$850,000)	-100.00%
Total Local Revenue	\$1,750,000	\$1,025,000	(\$725,000)	-41.43%



FY24 Minimum Local Contribution

	FY23	FY24	\$ Change	% Change
Holden	\$21,404,782	\$22,192,218	\$787,436	3.68%
Paxton	\$4,733,160	\$4,860,250	\$127,090	2.69%
Princeton	\$3,836,083	\$4,009,651	\$173,568	4.52%
Rutland	\$8,123,913	\$8,718,417	\$594,504	7.32%
Sterling	\$8,936,125	\$9,320,886	\$384,761	4.31%
Total MLC	\$47,034,063	\$49,101,422	\$2,067,359	4.40%



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FY24 Town Assessments

Revenue Source	FY23 Budget	FY24 Proposed	\$Diff +/-	% Diff +/-
Holden Total	\$33,806,436	\$35,475,140	\$1,668,704	4.94%
Paxton Total	\$7,177,576	\$7,477,459	\$299,883	4.18%
Princeton Total	\$5,418,740	\$5,641,519	\$222,779	4.11%
Rutland Total	\$14,068,152	\$15,411,321	\$1,343,169	9.55%
Sterling Total	\$12,444,610	\$13,055,104	\$610,494	4.91%
Total Towns	\$72,915,514	\$77,060,543	\$4,145,029	5.68%



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Reasons Behind Increase

- Accurate Reflection of Actual Expenditures
 - Estimated Over Expenditures in 2022
 - Poor Budget Development Process in Prior Years
- Increased Operating Costs
 - Utilities
 - Health Insurance
 - Facilities
- More Accurate Definition of Level Services
 - Unable to Add Positions FY23



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Sterling Capital Improvement Requests

School Security Improvements

- Access Control
 - Entry door controls
 - Key fobs
 - Alarm system
- Surveillance
 - Indoor/Outdoor cameras
 - Cloud recording
- Cost Estimates
 - Houghton: \$59,315
 - Chocksett: \$55,721



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FY24 Budget Calendar

- Governor's Budget - February 23, 2023
- Business/Finance Sub and Town Officials meeting on first draft budget - February 27, 2023
- Annual Budget Hearing - March 6, 2023
- School Committee budget approval - March 9, 2023
- Meetings with town officials - March/April, 2023
- Town Meetings (tentative dates):
 - Holden - May 15, 2023
 - Paxton - June 5, 2023
 - Princeton - May 9, 2023
 - Rutland - May 6, 2023
 - Sterling - May 1, 2023