

HOPKINTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE



Mr. Norman Khumalo
Town Manager
Town of Hopkinton
18 Main Street
Hopkinton, MA 01748

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

Dear Mr. Khumalo:

Collaborating with town leaders to present an FY15 goals-driven, fiscally responsible budget to the voters at the Annual Town Meeting is our goal. We charged the Superintendent with preparing a fiscally responsible recommendation that addresses the educational needs of all students - Pre Kindergarten through High School. The Superintendent completed that task and we have united behind that recommendation. We are preparing to move forward with you through the next steps in the budget development process with the goal of having you unite behind this recommendation too.

At the January 30, 2014 Special Meeting of the School Committee, we voted to support the Superintendent's budget recommendation of \$37,332,422 which represents a 4.91% increase over the FY14 budget. The Superintendent built this recommendation on the following requests from the Board of Selectmen: Level fund all operational expenses; Identify strategic initiatives (and their impact); Identify incremental contractual labor costs; Provide detailed backup; Identify additional programs efficiencies & cost containment measures. We support this recommendation and believe that we can prove to you and the community how this budget complies with those requests and meets the needs of all learners.

Beginning by honoring collective bargaining agreement commitments, 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, was the first order in the budget development process. The Superintendent and her Administrative team then worked collaboratively and creatively to honor all of these commitments and improve student learning across the district through a total budget recommendation.

The recommended FY15 budget request provides for the following:

- Maintains reasonable class size
- Reduces fees for Transportation, Athletics, Parking fees by 10%
- Supports ongoing PK-12 Strategic Plan priority initiatives
- Improves services in special education
- Continues alignment to the State Frameworks (including the Common Core Standards) through access to a tuition-free full-day Kindergarten program.
- Fully implements a team-based schedule at the middle school
- Maintains all programs and increases extracurricular opportunities
- Supports the 1:1 initiative at the high school
- Addresses key building maintenance concerns

We look forward to working with the Board of Selectmen to identify sources of funding for the recommended budget. Over the next months, we will continue to work to make sure that the budget number only goes down (if possible) from here. Motivating our administrators to be on the lookout for additional cost savings and potential refined cost projections are intended to demonstrate to the community that we are working to bring them the most accurate budget projection possible. We are committed to working together to reach a final budget amount that is supportable by available revenues and preserves the educational experience for our students to the greatest extent possible, and preserves other essential town services.

Regards,

Hopkinton School Committee

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