



*Above All, Care*

# HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT School Administrative Unit 66

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*Frequently Asked Questions  
Hopkinton School District FY 17 Budget  
Budget Committee Public Hearing  
February 3, 2016*

1. *Could you describe the Hopkinton School District budget development process?*

The budget development process begins with a review of the district goals:

1. Ensure student learning
2. Ensure best practice in all aspects of district operations
3. Ensure high school plus (+) for all students\*
4. Raise the bar, close the gap

\*Note: High School Plus is defined as students being able to achieve acceptance into a post secondary academic institution or obtain certification in a specialized area (which includes admittance into military service).

A budget is then created to support the accomplishment of district goals. The formal process begins at the building/department level, with those closest to implementation providing the initial input and then moving up, ultimately to the School Board. Techniques include zero-based budgeting for purchasing and three to five year trend analyses for maintenance areas. The four stages of budget development include teacher, building/department administrator, superintendent, and school board.

2. *What are some of the pressures that impact the development of the school district budget?*

The recent re-evaluation produced a school tax rate among the highest in the state. That situation, combined with large increases in the town budget (road and bridge projects) and the beginning payment on the new fire station, has put pressure to produce a very conservative school district budget.

3. *Has the state downshifting of costs impacted the local budget?*

Yes, the largest example is the funding of the NH Retirements System. The state contribution toward teachers' pension, once funded at 35%, is now zero. This change has increased the local budget by more than \$360,000 (this year alone). The district contribution to the retirement system increased by \$10,567, 35% of which is \$3,698.

4. *What is the area of greatest increase in this budget?*

Special Education is the area of greatest increase: \$144,059. Items of note:

- The Hopkinton School District must comply with the federal law (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and state regulation (The NH Rules for Educating Children with Disabilities)
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams, including administration, teachers, parents/guardians, come together to develop the program that meets the child's needs.
- In the FY17 budget, the major special education increase is in the area of contracted services. These services are necessary to train staff and provide specialized services to students with complex needs.

5. *What role does enrollment play in budget planning and implementation?*

Enrollment is a very important part of the budget development and implementation process as it directly affects staffing levels. The 2016-2017 projected student enrollment has triggered decreases in one classroom teacher at Maple Street School, partial reduction in elementary specials (art, music, physical education), and partial reductions in areas of core instruction at Hopkinton High School. Please note that enrollment decreases do not necessarily trigger a commensurate decrease in staffing (if the decrease is spread throughout a number of grades, for example).

6. *Can you describe additional noteworthy items in the budget?*

- The budget maintains strong programs implemented the past few years: full day kindergarten, numeracy support at the elementary level, technology integration, varied program at the secondary level.
- The stipends supporting the arts have been revised to include voice and choreographer roles for the production of the musical.
- Funds have been allocated to support game day athletic training services at the varsity sport level.
- Funds have been allocated to support the Hopkinton School District share of the cooperative football team with the Hillsboro-Deering School District.
- Funds have been allocated to support the development of reports in the school district's new financial system.

7. *How does revenue impact the Hopkinton School District budget?*

Revenue has a direct impact on the school district's tax rate. A few specifics:

- The Hopkinton School District presently receives approximately \$1.8M in state adequacy aid.
- The largest decrease in revenue is in the area of the refund from HealthTrust for Health, Dental, and Property Liability Insurance (down approximately 119K).
- Overall, revenue for the FY 2017 budget is down \$98,692.
- The School Board has put forth the strategy to utilize \$25K from the health insurance trust and \$100K from a tax rate stabilization fund to reduce the impact of the reduction of revenue.

8. *What are the vital statistics of the school board proposed budget?*

- Total Budget Decrease (Not including other warrant articles): (\$19,522).
- Total Budget Percent Decrease (Not including other warrant articles): -0.11%
- Total Tax Rate Increase Including (Including other warrant articles): 0.26
- Total Tax Rate percent increase: (Including other warrant articles): 1%

Notwithstanding the separate warrant articles for the collective bargained agreements, overall spending is reduced in this budget.

9. *What is the status of collectively bargaining agreements/contracts with the three associations/unions?*

The hope is that two contract proposals (Hopkinton Educational Support Staff and Teamsters) will appear on the warrant at the School District Annual meeting. An update on the timeline for each contract is below:

1. Hopkinton Education Association (Teachers): The HEA is currently in the second year of a four-year contract.
2. Hopkinton Educational Support Staff (Instructional Assistants, Food Service Staff, Library Assistants): HESS is currently in the third year of a three-year contract. The tentatively agreed upon contract will appear as a separate article on the School District Warrant. The community will have the opportunity to vote specifically on the agreement. (Please see the HESS Contract FAQs available on the district website.)

3. Teamsters Local #633 (Custodians): The Teamster Local #633 is currently in the second year of a two-year contract. The tentatively agreed upon contract will appear as a separate article on the School District Warrant. The community will have the opportunity to vote specifically on the agreement. (Please see the Teamster Contract FAQs available on the district website.)

10. Please tell me about the additional articles on the Warrant.

Article	Topic	Summary
III.	School Building Repair and Maintenance Trust Fund	The \$50,000 contribution from the fund balance would restore the reserve level necessary to complete significant facility repairs (boiler replacement, HVAC repairs).
IV.	Replacing School District Vehicles Capital Reserve Fund	The \$10,000 contribution from the fund balance continues the funding level to support the planned replacement of district vehicles.

Additional information is available at the Hopkinton School District website ([www.hopkintonschools.org](http://www.hopkintonschools.org)).

If you have further questions, please feel encouraged to contact:

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