



## Needham Public Schools Office of the Superintendent

***A school and community partnership that creates excited learners, inspires excellence, fosters integrity.***

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December 6, 2016

To: Needham School Committee  
From: Daniel E. Gutekanst, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
Re: FY18 Budget Proposal

### **Introduction**

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Enclosed, please find the proposed FY 2017/18 operating budget for the Needham Public Schools. The proposed plan totals \$68,817,743 and represents a \$3,627,829 (5.57%) increase over the current budget year.

This budget proposal outlines the resources the schools need to support an excellent educational program for our students, one that is consistent with the District's core values of Scholarship, Citizenship, Community, and Personal Growth.

The FY18 budget plan was developed to address contracted salary increases, growing special education costs, expanded student enrollment, and targeted program improvements.

Several key budget "drivers" are impacting the proposed FY18 budget plan. Among them:

- **Contractual Salary Increases.** Negotiated contracts for all existing employees account for \$2.0 million, over half of the total requested increase. In order to recruit, support, and retain a talented faculty and staff, we must provide reasonable yet competitive salaries for our staff, teachers, and school leaders.
- **Enrollment, Class Size, Program support.** While overall enrollment is projected to increase only slightly next year, there remains a need to ensure that class sizes stay within acceptable School Committee policy guidelines. I propose a net increase of 10.12 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) teachers at the elementary and secondary levels to keep class sizes steady and provide for special education programming and support. I also propose 13.87 net new FTE paraprofessionals and administrative support staff to ensure student needs are addressed and to provide ongoing support and training for the professional staff.

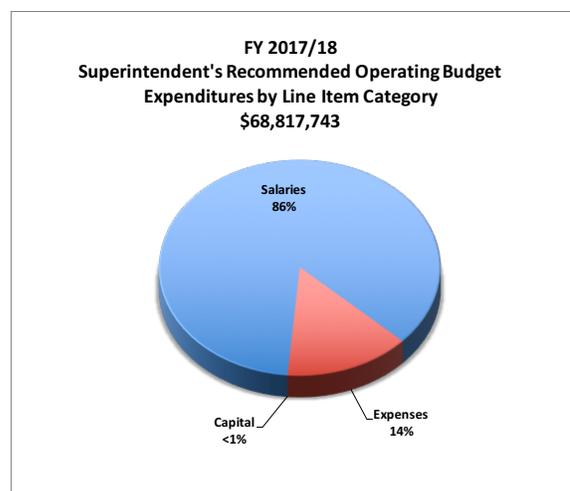
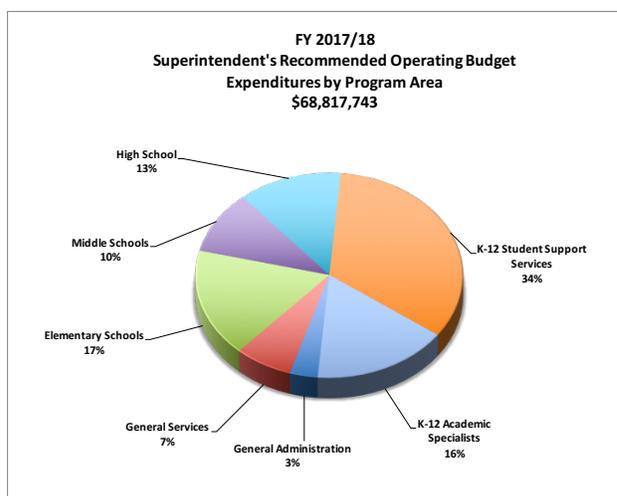
## FY18 Superintendent's Preliminary Budget

- **Increased Special Education Costs.** Increases in the number of special education students being served, special education tuition, and other mandated costs total approximately \$0.81 million of the new funds requested.
- **Targeted Program Improvements.** Unlike the FY17 budget plan, in which we were unable to include any significant increases for program development, for FY18 I am proposing \$517,914 in new funding for teaching, learning, and infrastructure improvements. Some of these recommendations include: A Pollard math intervention teacher (\$60,820), increased interdisciplinary support (\$19,043), elementary and high school instructional technology teachers (\$90,011), Science Center staff (\$21,751), administrative support at High Rock and in Human Resources (\$105,897), and upgraded technology supplies, software, and services (\$76,177). Additionally, I propose an increase to purchase Chromebooks (\$20,000) for the incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders as the Personalized Learning Initiative moves into the high school. The budget plan also includes a recommendation for increased funding for substitutes (\$48,344) in order to fill significant vacancies that exist.

I recognize that we have developed a plan that seeks more funding than the Town's projections for new revenue initially support. At this early date, we also are uncertain what possible adjustments to state funding may mean to the Town and School budgets. But we also are obligated to share with the School Committee and the community what resources are minimally required to meet student needs. This preliminary budget plan has been carefully considered and reflects the School Committee and community's high expectations for its young people. Additional details about the budget plan follow.

### FY18 Budget Summary

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## *FY18 Superintendent's Preliminary Budget*

### **FY18 Budget Development Process and Priorities**

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The FY18 budget development process began earlier in the school year, when the School Committee identified budget priorities to guide the administration in the budget planning process. These included:

- The District's values and goals
- The need for highly qualified staff, teaching within established student/teacher ratio guidelines.
- The ongoing refinement of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices; and
- The need to develop and maintain educational resources and a technology infrastructure that supports student learning and meets District goals.

Administrators developed budget requests in the Fall and submitted them for consideration and discussion in November. The Central Office Administration then met with principals and program directors to review and discuss budget requests in light of the School Committee's identified priorities and district goals. Finally, the Superintendent consulted with the Town Manager and the School Committee and Finance Committee budget liaisons to understand Town and School needs as they relate to the overall budget planning process.

### **Capital Priorities for FY18**

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The FY18 capital budget request totals \$1,394,629 and includes \$654,901 in technology and equipment replacement requests, and \$739,728 in facility-related requests. The facility requests include \$210,000 to develop walking trails behind the new Hillside School on Central Avenue, \$414,728 to design additional classroom space at Needham High School, \$65,000 to study the possibility of phasing improvements to the Pollard Middle School and \$50,000 to assess facility needs associated with the planned implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten.

The technology and equipment replacement requests include:

- \$463,500 for school technology;
- \$45,000 for school furniture;
- \$46,790 for copier replacement; and
- \$99,611 for school vehicle replacement.

### **Next Steps**

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The School administration is eager to discuss this preliminary budget request with the School Committee and members of the community. Additional meetings and deadlines include:

## *FY18 Superintendent's Preliminary Budget*

- December 6th and subsequent meetings in January: School Committee reviews the Superintendent's budget request
- December 7th: School Committee and Finance Committee liaisons budget workshop
- December and January: Finance Committee liaisons meet with School Committee liaisons and Central Office staff to review and discuss requests.
- January 3<sup>rd</sup>: Town Manager consults with School Committee about budget plan.
- January 17<sup>th</sup>: School Committee holds public hearing on the budget plan.
- January 23<sup>rd</sup>: The Finance Committee reviews the School budget proposal.
- January 24<sup>th</sup>: The School Committee votes budget plan and sends budget to Town Manager and Finance Committee.

I look forward to presenting the budget plan to the School Committee, Finance Committee, and other Town boards and community members in the weeks ahead. We will have thoughtful and sometimes challenging discussions, and I know our focus will be on ensuring a reasonable and appropriate level of funding is available to support the community's greatest assets: Its schools and the young people they serve.