

Masconomet Regional School District FY17 Proposed Budget Overview



February 10, 2016

School Committee Budget Priorities

- 1) Provide an environment that meets the academic, social and emotional needs to teach every student well
- 2) Improve communication with students, parents and the tri-town communities
- 3) Provide an appropriate educational system to the communities at a good

Provide an environment that meets the academic, social and emotional needs to teach every student well.

Areas of Consideration:

- Staff development on differentiated instruction and tiered intervention
- Horizontal and vertical curriculum development and alignment
- Build capacity to meet the needs of all students
- Co-teaching
- Pathways

Improve communication with students, parents and the tri-town communities.

Areas of Consideration:

- Website and technology development
- Revised budget process
- Strategic planning process

Provide an appropriate educational system to the communities at a good value.

Areas of Consideration

- Manage out-of-district placements
- Revised budget process
- Strategic planning process
- Long-term capital plan

A New Way of Developing Budget

- S.C. Restructures Subcommittees, August 2014
- Budget Subcommittee Appointed
- Budget Subcommittee Charge

The District's budgeting development process was markedly different this year. In August the School Committee reorganized its subcommittees and named a budget subcommittee that is active 12 months of the year and that works more closely with administration during the examination of needs and resources, especially in the months of November, December, and January. This closer collaboration between the School Committee and school administration helps to ensure parallel thinking and more meaningful dialogue between School Committee Town Liaisons and Town officials prior to the release of the proposed budget. Please see the document "FY17 School Committee Budget Priorities" posted to the District Finance and Budget* page. The budget process was accelerated this year to hear department requests in December rather than January. These requests were tightly aligned to the School Committee Budget Goals and the requests were heard directly by the Budget Subcommittee this year where the Committee members could ask questions and request further information. The Subcommittee and the administration were able to view needs from the perspectives of educators and that of elected tax-payer representatives together before the proposed budget was finalized.

Budget Subcommittee Charge

- To review, improve, and execute the budget process to meet the vision, goals, and strategic objectives of the school committee in a transparent and collaborative manner
- To provide ongoing financial oversight, including review of financial reports, audits and warrants and signing of warrants
- To review and make recommendations to the full school committee on major budget changes

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Involvement with Budget Development

- Met early and often with administration
- Heard and discussed department and school-level requests (directly)
- Had further dialogue with senior administration about requests and budget goals

Provided guidance to Superintendent on form and content of Budget Recommendation to the S.C.

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Budget Recommendation Overview

- Budget Recommendation \$31,551,478
- Increase of \$1,021,257
- Percentage Increase v. FY16 Approved 3.35%

The Superintendent's proposed FY17 school budget reflects an increase of \$1,021,257, or a 3.35% increase over the FY16 adopted budget. This budget will support the District's ability to offer the same program and services in FY17 with relatively minor increases in personnel and expenses. No new positions are included in this proposed budget. Increases are recommended for three existing positions; these are Middle School Health Aide from .6 FTE to full-time, five additional work days for the Middle School Nurse, and changing the paraprofessional level Business and Computer Science Aide to a year-round support position. The increases are required to minimally meet increasing healthcare needs of our Middle School students, and in the latter case, to provide a salary and work schedule that enables us to hire a qualified individual to assist faculty and students as we begin the 1:1 computing program in September and as we prepare for mandatory on-line testing with MCAS 2.0. Additionally, the proposal contains a one-year personnel expense for a .6 Math Curriculum Transition Specialist vital to our compliance with changing state curriculum mandates. I am recommending that this one-time expense be funded from Excess and Deficiency. The greatest amount of change in the personnel budget is for contractual wage and benefit obligations.

Only Necessary Increases

- A concerted effort was made throughout the budget development process to add only costs necessary to meet real necessities
- Many requests for needed improvements deferred

This year's proposed budget increase (3.35%), smaller relative to the proposed budget increase last year (6.9%) is the result of a number of factors.

Services for students with disabilities and struggling learners are less urgent this year due to the investment in these services with new personnel in FY16

An increase in Circuit Breaker reimbursement

A smaller increase in Special Education tuition costs

The recognition by the School Committee and administration that FY17 budgets are very challenging for the Towns

A concerted effort was made throughout the budget development process to add only costs necessary to meet real necessities

Additional Salary

- MS Health Aide .6 FTE to Full-Time
- MS Nurse 5 Additional Work Days
- Convert Instructional Aide to Year Round (Digital Learning)
- One-Year Math Curriculum Transition Specialist (E&D)

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Operational Funding of FY 16 Position Restructures

- Director of Digital Learning
- Upgrade Two Business Office Positions

\$126,321

Salary expenses incurred during FY16 for the addition of the Director of Digital Learning position and the restructure of two Business Office positions totaled \$126,321. This expense was funded in FY16 with funds from Excess and Deficiency and the use of other funds within the budget. These costs are funded in the FY17 operational budget. Detail is included in the budget commentary on instructional expenses.

Additional Non-Salary

- Employee Benefit Costs \$317,358
- Vendor Price Increases
- \$20,000 Increase in Instructional Equipment
- \$10,000 Increase in Stipends
(Mandated Mentor Program)

The increase in non-salary expenses is driven primarily by employee benefit costs which have increased by \$317,358, other vendor price increases, and an increase of \$20,000 in instructional equipment. This increase is necessary to meet cost increases and maintain level service. A \$10,000 expense increase for stipends is needed to comply with a new state-mandated educator mentoring program.

Of Special Note

- \$515,433 Decrease in PPS
(Artifact of change in IDEA, Special Education Grant use)

Increase of \$257,000 in Special Education
Circuit Breaker Reimbursement

Of particular note in non-salary expense lines is the \$514,433 decrease in Student Services. This decrease is the result of moving special education salaries from the IDEA grant to the operational budget, and funding special education transportation with the IDEA grant. New regulations allowed this accounting change that results in savings to the District. Also significant, is an increase of \$257,000 in Circuit Breaker reimbursement.



Revenue Highlights

- Increased State Aid to Education \$75,000
- \$68,500 From E&D for One -ear Math Transition Specialist (one-time funding)
- \$66,000 From Athletic Revolving to Pay AD Salary
- Significant Increases in Fees

The district is anticipating roughly \$75,000 in additional revenue from the state in FY17 based on the recently released Governors' budget. In addition, \$68,500 will be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency account to pay for the Math Curriculum Transition Specialist and we will transfer an additional \$66,000 from the athletic revolving fund to pay for the athletic director's salary, which has been moved into the district operating budget. The Budget Subcommittee reviewed fees for co-curricular programs and building rentals and has moved forward with some significant adjustments to the fees in those areas. Information associated with fees can be viewed in the fee section of this budget document.



Enrollment

- Decrease of 107 Students
- Recent and Continuing Decline
- Significance for Future Planning
- Vision 2025

We project that enrollment will decrease by 107 students, or 5.4% in FY17. The District evaluated whether it could offer the same level of programs and opportunities next year with fewer teachers or support staff. We believe it cannot. Any reduction in regular education sections would result in fewer options for careful placement of academic high-risk students. A diverse curriculum also supports better in-district placements for students with severe special needs. We captured savings this year in special education, at least in great part, as a result of critical positions added last year and by maintaining co-teaching and other strategies that are carried out in the general education classroom. We need to continue to consolidate gains in the provision of special education programming to mitigate future increases in out-of-district placement costs. As we enter our Vision 2025 strategic planning, the District must anticipate declining enrollments over the next decade and plan to adjust staffing as appropriate while ensuring that our mission to provide a quality education is not compromised.

Enrollment Trends

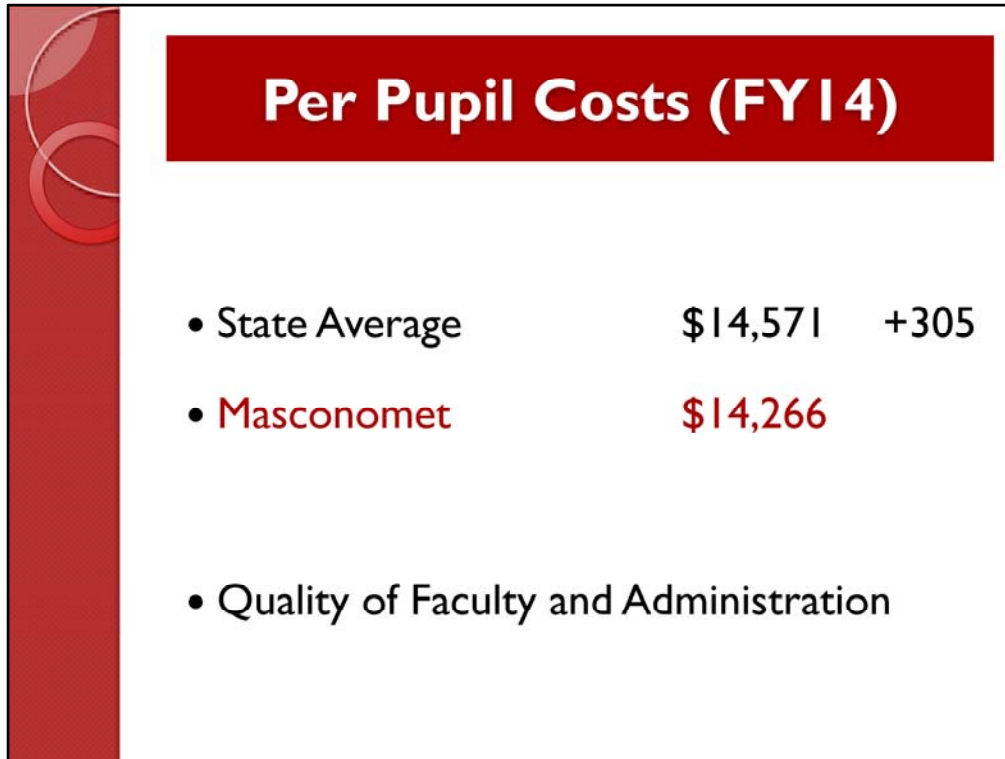
School Year Beginning	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Grade 7	367	339	336	330	332	316
Grade 8	397	374	344	332	326	328
Grade 9	332	375	343	309	289	283
Grade 10	349	327	378	338	305	283
Grade 11	309	352	332	372	341	306
Grade 12	338	315	349	325	369	337
SP-Beyond 12	6	5	6	5	10	12
Masconomet Total	2098	2087	2088	2011	1972	1865
Percentage Change	-1.1%	-0.5%	0.0%	-3.7%	-1.9%	-5.4%

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Quality Markers

- Level I District, High School, and Middle School
- MS is Mass. Commendation School
- MCAS Highest Ever
- MCAS 10th Grade @ 97th Percentile

I was proud to announce in December that for the first time in over a decade that Masconomet is a Level I district under the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Accountability System. Both schools are now Level I. The Middle School closed a persistent learning achievement gap between all students and students with disabilities. Many excellent school districts have failed to achieve, or failed to sustain this status. It is only with the support of our community and the commitment of our administration and staff that Masconomet can offer outstanding curriculum and instruction to its students on a per pupil average below most districts in the state. While MCAS tests do not measure all students learning, they are the only district-to-district test comparisons that can be used fairly. Masco's scores were higher this year than ever and higher than ever in comparison to peer districts. Masco 10th graders scored at the 96th percentile on the high stakes MCAS tests. As a relative new-comer to the District, I can tell you that Masconomet offers incredible value to its constituent towns.



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Preliminary Town Assessments

BOXFORD	FY16	FY17	Change	Percent
Operating Assessment	\$ 9,331,427	\$ 9,538,339	\$ 206,911	2.2%
Debt Assessment	\$ 415,601	\$ 407,639	\$ (7,962)	-1.9%
Total Assessment	\$ 9,747,028	\$ 9,945,978	\$ 198,949	

MIDDLETON	FY16	FY17	Change	Percent
Operating Assessment	\$ 8,583,962	\$ 9,119,495	\$ 535,533	6.2%
Debt Assessment	\$ 382,050	\$ 387,861	\$ 5,812	1.5%
Total Assessment	\$ 8,966,012	\$ 9,507,357	\$ 541,345	

TOPSFIELD	FY16	FY17	Change	Percent
Operating Assessment	\$ 6,632,904	\$ 6,741,400	\$ 108,497	1.6%
Debt Assessment	\$ 290,596	\$ 286,226	\$ (4,370)	-1.5%
Total Assessment	\$ 6,923,500	\$ 7,027,627	\$ 104,127	



Summary

- Defers Program Improvement Needs
- Maintains Current Level of Quality and Student Opportunities
- Reasonable and Responsible

I strongly believe that this proposed budget is as frugal as it can be without diminishing programs and opportunities for students. In light of the District's concern for fiscal conditions in FY17 and ongoing strategic planning for future needs, many budget requests that should be implemented sooner were deferred for at least a year.



Capital Plan Update

- Facility Assessment Study
- Progress Update
- Consideration of Town Warrant Article
(Telephone and Time-Keeping Systems)

A comprehensive facilities assessment will guide a capital plan update in July-August 2016. The Superintendent is recommending that the School Committee consider a Town warrant Article for the replacement of our telephone and time-keeping systems. The systems are out-of-date, function poorly, and are not fully integrated. This is a safety and a communications issue.



Thank you !