

Fiscal Year 2017

Superintendent's Recommended Budget

GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



District Leadership

School Committee Members

- Jeff Kubick, Chairman
- Jon Sjoberg, Vice-chairman
- Alison Manugian, Secretary
- Peter Cronin
- Stephanie Cronin
- Leslie Lathrop
- Jennifer McKenzie

District Administrators

- Kristan Rodriguez, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools
- Katie Novak, Ed.D, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Human Resources
- Jared Stanton, Director of Business and Finance
- Diane Pelletier, Interim Director of Pupil Personnel Services
- Luke Callahan, Director of Technology, Information, and Media Relations
- Steve Byrne, Director of Buildings and Grounds
- Karen Tuomi, Director of Extended Day and Community Services
- Pam Patnode, Director of Food Services



Groton-Dunstable Regional High School

Michael Mastrullo, Principal
Richard Arena, Assistant Principal
Marisa Brisson, Assistant Principal
Michael McCaffrey, Athletic Director

Florence-Roche Elementary School

Liz Garden, Principal
Dianna Fulreader, Assistant Principal

Boutwell Early Childhood Center

Russell Hoyt, Director

Groton-Dunstable Regional Middle School

James Lin, Principal
Michael Lubawski, Assistant Principal
Ann Russo, Assistant Principal

Swallow Union Elementary School

Peter Myerson, Principal

Table of Contents

Supplementary Materials	4
Introduction	5
Superintendent’s Letter of Introduction.....	5
2015-2016 District Improvement Plan	7
Current Enrollment Data for the District	9
Class Sizes	10
Staffing.....	13
FTE Changes	13
Needs Assessment Section #1.....	15
Needs Assessment Section #2	16
Needs Assessment Section #3	17
Needs Assessment Section #4	18
Comparable District Spending	18
School Information.....	23
Boutwell Early Childhood Center	23
Swallow Union Elementary	24
Florence Roche Elementary.....	25
Groton-Dunstable Regional Middle School	26
Groton-Dunstable Regional High School.....	28
District Department Information	31
Curriculum and Instruction Department.....	31
Human Resources Department	37
Business Department.....	38
Food Services Department	39
Pupil Personnel Services Department.....	39
Technology and Information Department	41
Building and Grounds Department.....	42
Peter Twomey Youth Center.....	43
Financial Information	44
Budget Drivers and Assumptions	44
1000 Function: District Leadership and Administration	45
2000 Function: Instructional Services.....	45
3000 Function: Other School Services.....	47
4000 Function: Maintenance.....	48
5000 Function: Fixed Charges	48
7000 Function: Fixed Assets	49
8000 Function: Debt Retirement and Service	49
9000 Function: Programs with Other Districts	50
GDRSD Budget Savings Initiatives	50
General Fund Budget vs. Actual History.....	52
Revenue and Expense Projections	53
Local Aid and Net School Spending (NSS)	57

Assessment History	59
Debt Projections	61
Excess and Deficiency (E&D)	62
Grants	64

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Instructional spending comparison.....	21
Figure 2: Expenditure per pupil guidance counselors	22
Figure 3: SAT mean math score comparability	35
Figure 4: SAT mean writing score comparability	36
Figure 5: SAT mean reading score comparability	36
Figure 6: AP US history performance comparability	37
Figure 7: General fund budget to actual history	53
Figure 8: 10-year federal and state grant history	56
Figure 9: Chapter 70 state aid.....	57
Figure 10: Chapter 70 state aid trends.....	58
Figure 11: Chapter 70 state aid trends	59
Figure 12: Enrollment percentages by town	61
Figure 13: Use of E&D and reserve for expenditure	63

Tables

Table 1: 2015-2016 District improvement goals.....	7
Table 2: Budget timeline and tasks	8
Table 3: Elementary school enrollment.....	9
Table 4: Secondary school enrollment.....	10
Table 5: Additional student information	10
Table 6: High school classes with over 25 students (September, 2015)	11
Table 7: High school classes with over 25 students semester 1 (September, 2015)	12
Table 8: High School classes with over 25 students semester 2 (February, 2016).....	12
Table 9: Total number FTE's by position	13
Table 10: Needs assessment FTEs	15
Table 11: Comparable district spending, local & DART districts	19
Table 12: Comparable district spending, BIC	20
Table 13: Per pupil expenditures by function	20
Table 14: MCAS percent of students at each achievement level	34
Table 15: PARCC Data.....	34
Table 16: Accountability and PPI trends	35
Table 17: General fund function categories	45
Table 18: 2015-2017 General Fund revenues	54
Table 19: Budget by 1000 function	55
Table 20: FY2007– FY2016 State Aid History	56

Table 21: Town of Groton assessment information FY2007-FY2016..... 60

Table 22: Town of Dunstable assessment information FY2007-FY2016 60

Table 23: Outstanding debt as of 1/1/2016 including New Issue 12/18/2015 62

Table 24: Estimated debt assessments from FY2016-FY2028 62

Table 25: Grant funding trends 64

Table 26: FY2016 Grant accounts salaries 65

Table 27: Revolving funds balances as of 6/30/2015..... 66

Table 28: FY2016-FY2017 revolving accounts salaries 67

Supplementary Materials

Table of Contents

Supplementary Material 1: Assessment Information FY2007-FY2016..... 60

Supplementary Material 2: Assessment Information FY2007-FY2016 60

Supplementary Material 3: Outstanding Debt as of 1/1/2016 62

Supplementary Material 4: Estimated Debt Assessments from FY2016-FY2028 62

Supplementary Material 5: Grant Funding Trends 64

Supplementary Material 6: FY2016 Grant Accounts Salaries 65

Supplementary Material 7: Revolving Funds Balances as of 6/30/2015 66

Supplementary Material 8: FY2016-FY2017 Revolving Accounts Salaries 67

Introduction

Superintendent's Letter of Introduction

February 1, 2016

I am pleased to present the FY2017 Superintendent's Recommended Budget. The budget entails \$40,475,339, which represents an increase of \$4,025,509 from FY2016. I would like to thank the many people who helped contribute to this year's budget. In particular, I would like to thank the school committee and especially the Budget and Finance Subcommittee. In addition, I would like to thank all members of the administrative team who have engaged teachers and staff members in their buildings to bring forward recommended budgets at the school level. Lastly, I would like to thank representatives from both towns who met with us to review our needs.

This year, the district engaged in a comprehensive needs assessment with data current as of November 2015. We learned that in Groton-Dunstable we have wonderful students and a strong staff. In addition, our many successes would not be possible without ongoing support from our entire community. In kind, every organization has areas that can be improved upon and our district is no exception.

Below are five key findings emerged that emerged from the *Needs Assessment*:

1. **We need to reverse declining student performance in core areas caused by the loss of essential staffing and resources.**
2. **We need to restore and improve programs to meet the needs of students in the areas of the arts, library science, physical/behavioral health, technology and engineering, and foreign language.**
3. **We need to provide comprehensive social and emotional support to our students.**
4. **We need to improve performance of students with disabilities while meeting the needs of all learners.**
5. **We need to provide essential support services including kindergarten assistants, technology support staff, nursing staff, custodial and maintenance staff, business office staff, and administrative assistants.**

The school committee voted on January 13, 2016 to have us include the entirety of the *Needs Assessment* in this budget booklet. Major technology and capital needs were not addressed in the *Needs Assessment*. Technology and capital plans will be completed by Spring 2016.

Thus, you will notice references to the *Needs Assessment* throughout the budget booklet. For more information about the positions and costs associated with the *Needs Assessment*, we welcome and encourage you to read the document in its entirety (Appendix H). In the *Needs Assessment* and throughout this budget booklet, you will

see reference to districts for which we compare as local, DART, and best in class (BIC). Local comparisons are those that are in close proximity to our two towns; DART districts are those that the state uses as comparable to our district, using such factors as demographics. BIC districts are those districts that set the standard for which we aspire. BIC districts were chosen by their frequency as top performers on a variety of educational rankings and measures.

Groton-Dunstable is currently engaged in a Future Search process to help us refine our vision, mission, and district strategy. This process was kicked off at the end of January with a community meeting that helped provide the framework to revise our mission and vision statements as well as develop core values statements. The vision work will help us define our extended long-term work while the *Needs Assessment* will help define the development of a three-year strategy starting in FY2017.

I hope this booklet provides clarity and sufficient scope to our budget requests. I welcome all questions and comments in this process or about this document.

Most Sincerely,

Kristan Rodriguez, Ph.D.

2015-2016 District Improvement Plan

While we work on our current and future needs, the district continues to engage in improvement efforts. As a result of the *Superintendent’s Report of Entry Findings*, and steered by the district’s strategy committee, we created this year’s district improvement plan. These goals guide our work this year and provide a foundation from which school improvement and educator goals build upon.

Table 1: 2015-2016 District improvement goals

SMART Goal	
1	As measured by a completed plan in the spring of 2016, the district will create a Multi-Tiered System of Support GD model inclusive of Standards-based instruction and assessment, Universal Design for Learning, and Growth Mindset.
2	As measured by a completed ELA PK-12 scope and sequence in spring of 2016, the district will align the curriculum in all grades to the MA Frameworks to ensure a strong structure for ELA instruction.
3	By June 2016, the district will research the PBIS structure and develop initial programming to support social/emotional learning.
4	By the spring of 2016, the district will create a long-range district strategy with corresponding annual district improvement plans, and develop multi-year district technology and capital plans, as evidenced by the publication and public sharing of these plans.
5	By the spring of 2016, the district will provide a series of ten community outreach efforts surrounding the district strategy and budget, inclusive of but not limited to multi-board meetings and regional agreement meetings, as evidenced by meeting artifacts.
6	By the spring of 2016, school district representatives will increase their exposure/visibility/involvement in the community by attendance at at least five community events/meetings for local businesses/organizations, as evidenced by a list of these meetings.
7	By June of 2016, the district will implement a new website, student data management system, and create direct community messages regarding district strategy work, as measured by summaries of said work in emails and blog entries.
8	By the spring of 2016, the district will provide high quality professional development that is consistently evaluated by participant feedback with results shared with teachers, para-educators and administrators and utilized to drive professional development offerings for the following year.
9	By December of 2015, power elements will be presented to staff to focus observations, professional development, and evidence submission in our educator evaluation framework, as measured by the elements section of the new GD educator evaluation website.

Budget Process and Timeline

Formulating the General Fund operating budget for Groton-Dunstable Regional Schools is an extensive process that requires the completion of multiple phases and collaboration with various stakeholders.

Table 2: Budget timeline and tasks

FY 17 BUDGET TIMELINE & TASKS	Dates
Schools/departments receive non salary line item budgets	8/18/2015
Principals are sent Oct. 1 enrollment	10/19/2015
Schools/Departments submit non salary line item budgets	10/30/2015
Principals/directors present program priorities	12/11/2015
Central office present program priorities	12/11/2015
Budget development meetings with town officials	1/6-7/2016
School Committee meeting: FY2017 goals/priorities	1/13/2015
Governor's house budget released/initial revenue projection	1/27/2016
Deadline to place ads in newspapers for public hearing (10 business days)	1/27/2016
Superintendent budget booklet available to the public	2/5/2016
Budget Presentation at School Committee/Public Hearing	2/10/2016
School Committee adopts budget	3/9/2016
Assessments sent to the towns	3/16/2016
Groton town meeting	4/25/2016
Dunstable town meeting	5/9/2016

Informational Overview

Current Enrollment Data for the District

Below is an accurate snapshot of current enrollment data. We ran this report for data as of February 1, 2016. This data reflects grade level enrollment by school, school choice, foreign exchange student numbers, tuitioned in students, public school choice in and out, vocational school enrollment and private school enrollment.

Table 3: Elementary school enrollment

Boutwell	Groton	Dunstable	Other	Total
PK	59	6	0	65
Florence Roche	Groton	Dunstable	Other	Total
K (Part Time)	37	0	0	37
K (Full Day)	44	0	0	44
1	94	0	0	94
2	96	0	0	96
3	102	0	0	102
4	135	0	0	135
Total	508	0	0	508
Swallow Union	Groton	Dunstable	Other	Total
K (Part Time)	5	12	0	17
K (Full Day)	6	15	0	21
1	27	38	0	65
2	22	31	0	53
3	20	41	0	61
4	21	36	3	60
Total	101	173	3	277

Table 4: Secondary school enrollment

Middle School	Groton	Dunstable	Other	Total
5	140	31	6	177
6	134	54	4	192
7	155	40	4	199
8	170	36	3	209
Total	599	161	17	777
High School	Groton	Dunstable	Other	Total
9	158	42	3	203
10	149	61	5	215
11	142	58	7	207
12	160	45	12	217
Special population	2	1	0	3
Total	611	207	27	845
Out of District	Groton	Dunstable	Other	Total
Special population	15	4	0	21

Table 5: Additional student information

Classification	Total students
School Choice IN	47
Public School Choice OUT	25
Charter School Choice OUT	45
Tuitioned-In (Boutwell Pre-School Tuition)	38
Full Day Kindergarten	130
Foreign Exchange	13
Vocational/Technical	44
Private Choice	263
Home School	17

Class Sizes

The district has reformulated the way we represent class sizes. In the past, we provided averages of student to staff ratios. This could be deceiving as many classes are much larger than a mean average defined by dividing the amount of students we have with teachers we employ. This is so because students are not equally divided by staff based on specific course selection, in particular at the secondary level. As part of the *Needs Assessment*, we ran actual sections in our new student management database, and updated to include the spring semester.

Below is a table that reflects classes this school year that have over the recommended ceiling (25 students). As you can see, in the middle school, 11 core classes and 33 Integrated Arts classes currently have over 25 students in them. At the high school, this year (including both semesters), there are 52 core classes and 25 classes in areas such of PE/Health/Art/Chorus/Transitions (college prep including college essay writing) that have class sizes over 25.

Table 6: High school classes with over 25 students (September, 2015)

Course	Students	Course	Students
French 7	28	Art 5	28
French 8	30	Art 5	30
French 8	27	Band 7	30
Language Arts 6	26	Band 8	28
PreAlgebra 1	26	Chorus 6	26
PreAlgebra 1	28	Chorus 6	28
Science 6	26	Chorus 7	35
Science 6	27	Chorus 7	30
Science 6	27	Chorus 8	36
Social Studies 6	27	Chorus 8	36
Spanish 7	26	Chorus/Music	32
Visual Arts 7	29	Chorus/Music	30
Music 6	28	Chorus/Music	31
Music 7	30	Chorus/Music	33
Music 7	29	Communication/ Drama 6	27
Music 7	26	Communication/Drama 7	29
PE/Wellness 5	30	Drama	27
PE/Wellness 5	28	Drama	26
PE/Wellness 6	26	Drama	29
PE/Wellness 6	33	Fine Arts 8	31
PE/Wellness 7	30	Fine Arts 8	29
PE/Wellness 7	32	Visual Arts 6	29

Table 7: High school classes with over 25 students semester 1 (September, 2015)

Course	Students	Course	Students
English 9	30	Algebra IA	29
English 9	27	Algebra IB	26
English 9	28	Geometry	30
English 10	27	Geometry	30
English 11	27	Algebra II	27
English 12	30	Algebra II	30
English 12	30	PreCalculus	30
English 12	31	Introduction to Statistics	29
Writing and Grammar	26	Biology II	26
US History I	27	Molecular Bio	29
US History II	28	Transitions I	29
US History II	26	Transitions I	30
US History II	33	Transitions I	33
Latin I	30	Studio Art I	27
Spanish III Honors	26	Foundations of Health	31
Psychology	31	Photography I	26
Marketing / Entrepreneurship	29	Chorus S1	34
Sociology	29	Physical Education I	26
		Physical Education I	29

Table 8: High School classes with over 25 students semester 2 (February, 2016)

Course	Students	Course	Students
AP Biology	29	Psychology	26
AP Lang and Composition	27	Creative Writing Workshop	27
AP U.S. History	29	Creative Writing Workshop	27
Biology I	26	Team Sports & Group Fitness	29
Biology II	27	Team Sports & Group Fitness	31
Biology II	28	Senior Project	30
Calculus	27	Physical Education I	40
Geometry	26	Physical Education I	27
Geometry	30	Physical Education I	31
Introduction to Statistics	26	Physical Education I	31
Introduction to Statistics	26	Physical Education II	30
Latin I	30	Foundations of Health	27
Latin II Honors	27	Foundations of Health	30
English 12	28	Foundations of Health	35
English 12	26	Design I	27
US History I	30	Design I	26
US History I	28	Design I	29
US History I	26	Chamber Chorus	27
World History II	28	Chorus S2	49
Writing and Grammar	26		
Writing and Grammar	29		

Staffing

FTE Changes

The items in this section include those funded by the general fund, grants, and revolving accounts. It is important to note that the budget drivers section (later on in this booklet) includes only those positions that are funded through the general fund.

Table 9: Total number FTE's by position

Position	FY2016 Budgeted	FY2016 Actuals (2/1/16)	FY2017 Budgeted
A. Central Office Administrators	6	5.6	6
B. School Administrators	13	13	13
C. Teachers	183.23	187.53	208.22
D. Para-educators	74.17	84.17	81.67
E. Administrative Assistants	14.88	14.88	15.76
F. Food Service	16.92	16.42	16.78
G. Custodian/Maintenance	21	21	24
H. Support Staff-non Union	12.67	14.44	23
I. Guidance	10	10	12
J. Nursing Assistant	0	0	.5
K. Nurse	5.9	5.9	6.6
Total:	357.77	372.94	407.53

*Note that we do not count the District Treasurer or the Transportation Coordinator as FTE's because these are stipended positions, however, the cost for these positions are articulated in the section titled "1000 Function: District Leadership and Administration." Similarly, all *Needs Assessment* stipended positions are not reflected in the FTE chart below, but are accounted for in our by function budget section. The FTE's also do not include contracted service providers (such as the part time consulting special educator at Boutwell that is part of the *Needs Assessment*), but are similarly reflected in budgeted amounts.

Below is a description of all the differences between the FY2016 FTE amounts in the FY2016 adopted budget and the FY2017 FTE's, which includes FY2016 actuals and the additions from the *Needs Assessment*.

FY2016 Budgeted to FY2016 Actual

Below is a summary of all changes from what was budgeted in FY2016 to FY2016 actuals. It is the difference in positions we budgeted for last winter and what our actual staffing is to date.

- Central Office Administrators (Difference -.4 FTE)
 - FY2016's budget accounted for a 1.0 Director of Pupil Personnel Services. A .6 FTE Interim Director currently fills this position. When the position becomes permanent in FY2017, it will return to a 1.0 FTE.
- Teachers (Difference +4.3 FTE)
 - We added a 1.0 high school English teacher position to address class size. We added .67 FTE at the high school in the special education department. At the middle school, our speech and language therapist was increased from a .6 to 1.0 (+.0.4) to service additional students who qualified for services and align to the recommended caseload size. At the middle school we changed a reading tutor position (.67) to a reading specialist position (.5) (-.17) to better align with the new schedule. We also created a new Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC) at Swallow Union to provide in-district programming for students with identified social and emotional disabilities. This resulted in the addition to 2.0 FTE special education teachers to run this program. At Swallow Union, we reduced the 1.0 reading tutor position to a .4 position and added a .5 reading specialist position (-0.1), to provide more comprehensive Tier II services. We also added an additional .5FTE at Swallow Union to support reorganization in the removal of the multi-age model.
- Para-educators (Difference +10.0 FTE)
 - We added 10.0FTE para-educators as defined by individualized education plans or developing programs (such as the TLC program).
- Food service (Difference -.14 FTE)
 - We reduced the food service .5 based on based on reorganization within the department. Currently, some of that service is being filled in by a substitute (a .36FTE). We will permanently add this position for FY2017 which results in an overall decrease of-.14 FTE.
- Support staff non-union (Difference +1.77 FTE)
 - We eliminated the contracted HR Specialist position. This was a contracted service provider so her salary was accounted for but she was not counted in our FTE's. Currently, the assistant superintendent is taking on that role with no additional compensation. In addition, we hired a .44 HR Clerk and used a portion of the savings from the HR Specialist to fund this position. In order to authentically manage out of district coordination, we added a .33 FTE to the high school team chairperson role. We added a 1.0 FTE behavior specialist in January 2016 as a contracted service so the salary was accounted for but she was not counted in our FTE's. This year, that position transitioned into a district position and thus is counted in our FTE's.

Needs Assessment Positions

Below are the additional FTE's as a result of the *Needs Assessment*. Please refer to Appendix H to see the *Needs Assessment Report* to see more narrative and rationale for each position.

Table 10: Needs assessment FTEs

Swallow Union	Florence Roche	Middle School	High School	District
1.0 Special Ed. Co-Teacher	1.0 Special Ed. Co-Teacher	1.0 Literacy Teacher/Specialist	.333 Mandarin Teacher	1.0 Elementary Adjustment Counselor
.5 Reading Specialist	1.0 Reading Specialist	.4 Mandarin Teacher	1.0 Math Teacher	1.0 Elementary Literacy Coordinator
.4 Math Specialist	.6 Math Specialist	1.0 Math Teacher/Specialist	1.0 ELA Teacher	.6 School Psychologist
.2 Speech Language Pathologist	.4 Speech Language Pathologist	1.0 Library/Media Specialist	1.0 Social Studies Teacher	1.0 Business Clerk
.4 Tech Integration Specialist	.5 Nursing Assistant	.5 Reading Specialist	1.0 Guidance Counselor	2.0 Network Technicians
.5 Library/Media Specialist	.6 Technology Integration Specialist	1.0 Special Ed. Co-Teacher	.67 Music Teacher	K-12 PBH Coordinator Stipend
1.0 Specialist Area Teacher	1.0 Library/Media Specialist	.33 Music Teacher	.67 Art Teacher	K-12 Fine Arts Coordinator Stipend
.5 Kindergarten Assistant	1.5 Specialist Area Teacher	Increase MSS Admin. Assistant to 261 Days	.333 Theater Teacher	1-12 Foreign Language Coordinator Stipend
	1.0 Kindergarten Assistant	.38 Records Secretary	.166 Videography Teacher	1.0 Maintenance
			1.0 Content Area Coordinator Coverage	2.0 Custodians
			.7 Registered Nurse	.5 ELL Teacher
			.5 Athletic Dept. Secretary	4.56 Lunch Aids

Needs Assessment Section #1

Section 1 is organized around direct instructional services in Tier I (instruction to all), Tier II (targeted small group instruction), and Tier III (individualized intervention). They include areas related to high-class sizes, achievement gaps, and the most needed area for social/emotional support.

- In order to close the achievement gap in the elementary and middle schools, we are requesting 3.0 co-teaching positions. This will allow co-teaching models to be in all three schools.
- 1.0 FTE for K-4 Literacy Coordinator whose responsibility it will be to develop, align and implement literacy curriculum across the district to address the gap in literacy scores against other major subject areas and provide coaching to staff. This will allow the existing 2.0 reading specialists to no longer have to take a coaching role so they can provide direct service delivery to students in Tiers II and III. An additional 1.0 reading specialist will be hired to replace the current reading tutor at FR (at minimal cost to the district) and the Swallow Union reading tutor position will be shifted to a .5 reading specialist position. Thus, Florence Roche will have 2.0 Reading Specialists and Swallow Union will have 1.5 Reading Specialists.
- 1.0 Math specialist at the elementary schools to provide direct services to students who have enrichment or acceleration support needs (Tier II needs). The intent is to help close the achievement gap and support those students who are accelerated far beyond grade level.
- 3.73 FTE teachers/specialists at the MS. This will reduce class sizes in specialist blocks, allow for much needed intervention and acceleration support (Tier II) support the co-teaching model at the middle school, help refine the MS schedule additional time, and allow for new specialist classes at the middle school along with a new language option (Mandarin) at the 7th and 8th grade level.
- Increase of .5 Reading Specialist at the middle school level to provide direct service to students (Tiers II and III) to close the achievement gap.
- 3.333 FTE teachers at the HS. This will reduce class sizes in Math, ELA, and SS classes, and offer an additional language at the HS.
- 1.0 Adjustment Counselor to provide direct instruction to elementary level students to address the increasing amount of students who have social and emotional needs, and come more in line with state ratios for guidance support.

Needs Assessment Section #2

Section 2 is also prioritized based on direct services to students. It focuses primarily on direct services to students in non-core subject areas, additional social/emotional supports, and nursing.

- .6 FTE to provide assessment support and meeting support for speech and language students. This allows the existing SLPs to provide more direct Tier III instruction. The numbers are increasing based on in-district special education program development.
- In order to address the social emotional needs of students and align with recommended guidelines, we need to add a .6 FTE School Psychologist. In addition, a 1.0 Guidance Counselor at the HS is needed to meet the MASCA recommendations, offer a Freshman support and orientation program to enhance

transition to the HS, and allow other counselors to focus more on matriculation efforts.

- To replace past cuts in our fine arts department, to increase fine and performing arts opportunities for students, and to reduce class sizes in certain offerings, we would need a .67 Music Teacher, .67 Art Teacher, .333 Theater Teacher, and a .166 Videography Teacher at the high school.
- In order to meet the needs of nurse visits and state recommended levels, we will need an additional .5 Nursing Assistant at FR and a .7 Registered Nurse at the HS.
- At the HS, if a distributed leadership model pilot is successful, we will add an additional 1.0 of 3 partial FTE's to cover core academic classes in departments who were not part of the pilot. This will allow all of our content area coordinators one period off each, to help monitor their departments and to support the educator evaluation framework (if bargained to do so).

Needs Assessment Section #3

Section 3 is focused primarily on an updated elementary schedule, and non-direct service to students needs such as clerical supports, network technicians, curriculum stipends, maintenance, and custodians.

- In order to revise the elementary schedule to offer enhanced programs, and restore cuts to previous department staff, we would need 2.5 Additional Elementary Specialists, a 1.0 Technology Integration Specialist, and a 1.5 Library Media Specialist at the Elementary level.
- In order to offer essential functions, we need to restore the Middle School South administrative assistant role to a full year (261 days) and restore the records secretary role (.38 FTE) at the middle school that was previously cut. In addition, in order to account for the actual hours work to support the growing athletic program in our district, the district needs to add a .5 Athletic Department Secretary.
- In order to provide programmatic alignment, we will need to restore the stipends for a K-12 PBH Coordinator, K-12 Fine Arts Coordinator, and a 1-12 Foreign Language Coordinator.
- In order to restore the Business office position that was cut, we need to add a 1.0 Business clerk. This clerk position will have many functions but one of their primary functions will be to oversee the benefits management to ensure that appropriate monitoring and compliance occurs.
- 2.0 Network Technicians. One of these positions replaces one recently cut network staffer who moved to a data specialist role and whose position was not replaced. These positions are necessary to maintain all of the new infrastructure, hardware, and software that is needed in a 21st century learning environment.
- In order to properly maintain our buildings and grounds, we need to restore the 1.0 Maintenance and 2.0 Custodians that were reduced in past budget cuts.

Needs Assessment Section #4

Section 4 are positions that replace prior staffing losses of essential services or replace job functions to meet the needs of our special education and ELL students.

- In FY2010, reductions in paraprofessionals resulted in the loss of all Kindergarten classroom assistants. Currently, we are requesting 1.5 kindergarten aids for the existing half-day kindergarten sections, but this number may be adjusted if the district moves to a full day kindergarten model in the future. We need to assess the need for full day kindergarten in the next few years.
- Currently, our ELL student population's needs are being met. Based on recent changes in the state requirements for service provision and our enrollment trends, we anticipate the need to increase our staffing in this department. Specifically, the state is now requiring that districts screen all preschool students at Boutwell who have a home language other than English. Another policy change at the state level is that we are now required to screen all of our high school foreign exchange students. If they qualify for services we are required to provide services unless they opt-out of services. Thus, we must enhance language requirements for incoming foreign exchange students or provide additional staffing to support them. Therefore, we are requested a .5 FTE ELL teacher.
- In order to support the use of para-educators in the classrooms, as well as implications of limited staff due to the reconfiguration needed to move from an inclusion model to an enhanced co-teaching model (grades 1-8), the district needs to consider the implications of providing alternative coverage for lunch and recess. The restructuring model will decrease the number of available para-educators to cover lunch supervision of students. Based on the necessary lunches and ratios, the district is planning for 12 lunch aides to work 3 hours a day. These are non-benefited positions. This is equivalent to 4.56 FTE's.

Comparable District Spending

When conducting our needs assessment, we did a review of data using the state department's most recently reported "Total Expenditure Per Pupil" (2014). When compared to the state average of \$14,518, our district spends \$1,430 less than the state average. We also did a comparison to local and DART districts. DART districts are those that the state defines as comparable districts to ours.

The most recently reported information (2014) showed that our expenditures data falls \$249 per pupil below the mean for spending when compared to local and DART districts and the second lowest regional district in spending in the cohort.

When compared to best in class (BIC) districts, the disparity increases with \$2,772 per pupil less than the mean.

Table 11: Comparable district spending, local & DART districts

School District	2014 Per Pupil Expenditure
Chelmsford	\$12,436
Tyngsboro	\$12,471
Westford	\$12,529
Medway	\$12,627
Duxbury	\$12,712
Mendon-Upton	\$13,055
Medfield	\$13,075
Groton-Dunstable	\$13,088
North Middlesex	\$13,147
Scituate	\$13,308
King Philip	\$13,433
Lynnfield	\$13,448
Ayer-Shirley	\$13,548
Littleton	\$13,679
Norwell	\$14,047
Acton-Boxboro	\$14,937
Hamilton-Wenham	\$15,187
Mean expenditure	\$13,337

Table 12: Comparable district spending, BIC

School District	2014 Per Pupil Expenditure
Westford	\$12,529
Winchester	\$12,579
Belmont	\$12,799
Medfield	\$13,075
Groton-Dunstable	\$13,088
Hopkinton	\$13,106
Littleton	\$13,679
Sharon	\$15,021
Concord	\$16,457
Lexington	\$17,496
Carlisle	\$17,704
Sherborn	\$18,378
Lincoln	\$19,923
Dover	\$21,336
Weston	\$21,652
Mean expenditure	\$15,921

Table 13: Per pupil expenditures by function

Function	2013				2014			
	Total Exp	% of Total	Per Pupil	Per Pupil (State)	Total Exp	% of Total	Per Pupil	Per Pupil (State)
Administration	\$1,112,809	3.18%	\$426	\$483	\$1,238,270	3.50%	\$476	\$500
Instructional Leadership	\$1,736,024	4.96%	\$665	\$883	\$1,804,153	5.10%	\$693	\$935
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	\$12,390,551	35.40%	\$4,745	\$5,291	\$12,880,376	36.39%	\$4,949	\$5,441
Other Teaching Services	\$3,397,018	9.71%	\$1,301	\$1,089	\$2,873,240	8.12%	\$1,104	\$1,137
Professional Development	\$448,944	1.28%	\$172	\$225	\$362,489	1.02%	\$139	\$217
Instructional Materials, Equipment and Technology	\$539,368	1.54%	\$207	\$410	\$321,957	0.91%	\$124	\$432
Guidance, Counseling and Testing	\$832,139	2.38%	\$319	\$403	\$904,278	2.55%	\$347	\$421
Pupil Services	\$3,247,875	9.28%	\$1,244	\$1,292	\$3,219,904	9.10%	\$1,237	\$1,376
Operations and Maintenance	\$2,380,514	6.80%	\$912	\$1,066	\$2,296,129	6.49%	\$882	\$1,103
Insurance, Retirement Programs and Other	\$5,514,103	15.75%	\$2,112	\$2,367	\$6,168,177	17.43%	\$2,370	\$2,434
Payments To Out-Of-District Schools	\$3,402,332	9.72%	\$30,136	\$21,500	\$3,326,017	9.40%	\$32,672	\$21,839
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$35,001,677	100.00%	\$12,849	\$14,022	\$35,394,990	100.00%	\$13,088	\$14,518

In addition to differences in our overall per pupil expenditures, we discovered differences in PPE spending against state averages and best in class (BIC) districts in some key areas identified by the *Needs Assessment*.

As seen in the table above, for the most up to date information available for state comparison, we are below state per pupil spending in every category except payments to out of district schools.

As you can see in the figure that follows, our instructional materials expenditures are significantly lower than the BIC districts. Average spending on instructional materials in BIC districts for FY2014 was \$410 per pupil (PPE) (most current data available). The state average was \$409/PPE. Our FY2014 PPE in Groton-Dunstable was \$124. This was a decrease from \$207/PPE in FY2013.

This significant gap impacts the district’s ability to purchase textbooks, adopt new curriculum for students, purchase technology for teachers and students to maximize learning outcomes, and other instructional supplies. These expenditures positively impact student achievement (Jacques & Brorsen, 2002). Our funds need to increase significantly if we are to offer our students the same resources available in BIC towns. These needs are ever increasing, especially staff devices should we restore positions that were cut in past budget cycles.

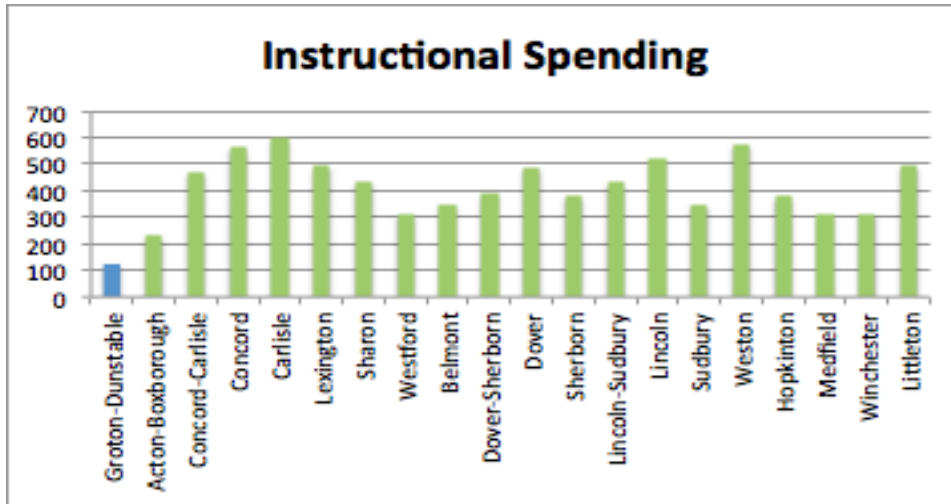


Figure 1: Instructional spending comparison

When examining the best in class (BIC) districts, our funding for professional development is significantly lower and is not a sustainable model moving forward. We compare against the most up to date state reported fiscal information. For the case of PD, the average 2014 per pupil expenditure (PPE) in BIC districts for professional development was \$178. We spent \$139 per pupil.

When comparing the amount Groton-Dunstable spends against our self, we spent \$172 per pupil on professional development (PD) in FY2013 but only \$139 in FY2014. As defined in the *Needs Assessment* according to the most up to date statewide comparison provided at the time (the FY2013 Per Pupil Expenditures Report for the Professional Development Function), we spent \$172 per pupil on professional development (one of the highest amounts we spent in recent years), which was below the state average of \$225 per pupil.

Based on an analysis of BIC districts, as illustrated in the table below, Groton-Dunstable had the lowest per pupil expenditure amount than every other district in the area of guidance counselors. The source for this chart (that was completed in August 2015 was the Finance/Staff Report from the District Analysis and Review Tool (DART) from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). Groton-Dunstable counselor expenditure per pupil was \$185. Lincoln-Sudbury had the highest

PPE at \$894. The average PPE for the group (excluding G-D) was \$508 per pupil, which was \$323 per pupil more than Groton-Dunstable.

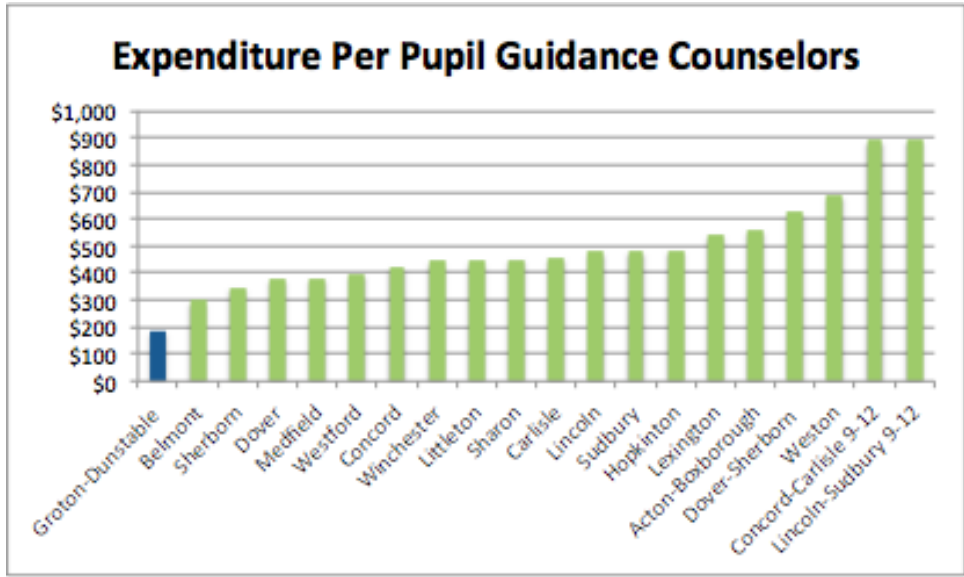


Figure 2: Expenditure per pupil guidance counselors

School Information

Boutwell Early Childhood Center



School Improvement Plan (SIP) Goal #1:
By June of 2016, improve family's knowledge of their child's social development through regular communication (i.e., *This Week in Boutwell Notes*) and assessments (Developmental Checklists), as measured through an end of year survey.

The Boutwell Early Childhood Center provided an integrated, language-based early childhood education program that offered stimulating programming for 68 children aged 3-5 over the past year. Along with daily discoveries in our subject areas, we encountered some moments worth highlighting along the way.

Our well-trained professionals continued to work on the alignment of specific preschool curriculum by reviewing the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics* and the *Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences*, and focusing on social and emotional learning through our social skills curriculum. We are proud of the many accomplishments achieved during 2015, specifically the improvements in the preschool mathematics curriculum provided through the first year of our new math program. In addition, the staff is participating in a multi-part training to help students learn, practice and then independently demonstrate appropriate behavior throughout each child's day. The program the staff is learning to implement is called Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports or PBIS.

Our teachers and parents continued to partner together during the ninth year of the School Council for the Boutwell School. The council is now focused on helping with the development of the PBIS program implementation, as the success of a social and emotional program that supports young children requires buy in from administrators, parents and the community.

Looking forward, our goals for 2016 are both rigorous and designed to support the district's youngest learners. We will complete the work on the alignment of our mathematics curriculum to the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks* and the *Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences*. Staff will be supporting students' social and emotional learning as we develop and implement features of PBIS. The social and emotional learning piece has become important in supporting children in an inclusive setting.

With the continued focus on mathematics, Boutwell students are working hard to achieve an understanding of numeracy concepts that will improve their ability to learn

throughout their lives. Thanks to the efforts of our teachers and specialists, students are learning to listen to and say names of numbers in meaningful contexts, use positional and ordinal language (first, second, third) in everyday activities and use concrete objects to solve simple addition and subtraction problems using comparative language (more than, fewer than, same number of). This groundwork will certainly prepare our students for success well into their future in Groton-Dunstable.

Swallow Union Elementary



SIP Goal #1: By the end of the 2016 school year, we will have effectively implemented the Reader's Workshop model for instruction. This will be measured by 90% of our students reaching our end of year benchmark as reported by the Fountas and Pinnell Reading Benchmark Assessment.

SIP Goal #2: By the end of 2016 school year, grade level teams will reflect on our new math modules in order to enhance, change, or modify lessons. This will assist us in providing the proper-tiered instruction and scaffolding to accommodate differences, learning styles, and levels of readiness. This will be measured by grade level documents that outline lesson revisions by module.

SIP Goal #3: By the end of the 2016 school year, Swallow Union will increase communication methods such as e-mail, website, and twitter, as measured by an 80%+ satisfaction rate on a spring parent communication survey.

In 2015, our staff of well-trained professionals continued to be eager to learn new teaching strategies to enhance their daily instruction. We are proud of the many accomplishments throughout our 2015 school year. They include a continued commitment to enhance our Reader's Workshop model, the implementation of the new math program, our third and fourth graders partaking in the PARCC assessment, ongoing implementation of a new crisis management protocol for evacuations and lockdowns, and continuation of teaching and carrying out the importance of community service through our food and clothes drives.

Swallow Union now houses the elementary level Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC) program and the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) program. These two programs meet the needs for students with intensive special needs and has been a wonderful asset for all our students.

During the fall of 2015, the district conducted a needs assessment of each school. The findings included critical staffing needs that would greatly enhance our delivery of instruction academically and socially. This assessment determined the need for

positions such as the following: A special education co-teacher, a part time math specialist, a part time reading specialist, a shared adjustment counselor, a literacy coordinator, a certified librarian, and an additional specialist area teacher.

Florence Roche Elementary



SIP Goal #1: During the 2015-2016 school year, K-4 teachers will collaborate in grade level teams to select text based writing opportunities and make specific preparations for the implementation of Writer’s Workshop during the 2016-2017 school year, as measured by team meeting agendas.

SIP Goal #2: During the 2015-2016 school year, grade level teams will unpack and reflect on Eureka math modules in order to

support implementation of the program and make lesson adjustments as needed, as measured by meeting artifacts and grade level lesson outlines.

SIP Goal #3: During the 2015-2016 school year, we will improve and streamline our communication at the classroom/grade level to caretaker level by regularly providing two-way communication with families about student performance and learning, as measured by the creation of additions to the Florence Roche communication plan.

SIP Goal #4: By the end of the 2016 school year, we will have an elementary technology integration action plan based off of the technology standards listed in the CCCS that allows us to best integrate technology into the curriculum in every classroom.

The Florence Roche Elementary School had a year of growth during 2015. In fact, growth, in particular growth mindset, has been a topic of discussion among the students and staff. After using the logic model and working with Dr. Novak to conduct a root cause analysis of why the gap between special education and general education students has not decreased, a common theme emerged: as a staff, we needed to shift from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset. As a result, we have been discussing what it means to have a growth mindset and how we can continue to model and teach students how to persevere and learn from mistakes. As a school, we challenged ourselves to come up with 100 examples of growth mindset and posted our chart in the main lobby for people to add to it. Some of our special education teachers created a bulletin board in the front lobby that demonstrated how changing the way we say things could change our mindset. For example, instead of saying, “This is too hard,” we encourage students to say, “I’ll use some of the strategies I’ve learned.”

As a school, we have been making adjustments to our teaching by implementing a new math curriculum, preparing to implement new units of study in Writer's Workshop during the 2016-2017 school year, and continuing to enhance our Reader's Workshop model in all classrooms. Our 3rd and 4th graders successfully participated in the PARCC assessment on Chromebooks in the spring. We have also continued to implement a new crisis management protocol for evacuations and lockdowns. We have continued to encourage our students to be involved in various community service projects, such as collecting supplies for The Transition House and delivering supplies to local senior citizens.

After completing a needs assessment this past fall, we identified critical staffing needs that would help us better meet all students' needs. This assessment determined the need for positions such as the following: A special education co-teacher, a part time math specialist, a reading specialist, a shared adjustment counselor, a literacy coordinator, nursing support, a certified librarian, and additional specialist area teachers.

We would like to express our gratitude to the communities of Groton and Dunstable for supporting our efforts in shaping our children's future.

Groton-Dunstable Regional Middle School



SIP Goal #1: GDRMS staff will create a school-wide intervention plan including the development of a comprehensive Tier 1 approach to the instruction and support of math and literacy, as measured by the annual report given in June 2016.

SIP Goal #2: By June 2016, GDRMS staff will collect feedback from the parent community on our current communication tools (e.g., School Messenger, school website, and the School Brains parent portal) and family engagement programs (e.g., Shadow Day and Student-Led Conferences) and create a plan to increase their effectiveness.

SIP Goal #3: By June 2016, the GDRMS community will be engaged in a process to identify key areas for improvement. The information gathered will lead to a plan for the staff to use professional learning communities in order to research pertinent issues raised by stakeholders and propose solutions to those concerns.

The year of 2015 was a year of exciting changes at Groton-Dunstable Middle School. At the end of the 2014-2015 school year, we bid farewell to Mr. Silverman, former Principal of GDRMS, who retired after leading the school for eight years. This summer, Mr. James

Lin took over the position and enjoyed getting to know staff, students, and the community. The middle school also welcomed Mr. Michael Lubawski as an Assistant Principal who replaced Ms. Dina Mancini who left to accept a position in another district.

This year, we maintained many successful programs, piloted some new initiatives, and continued to self-assess to make necessary adjustments and ensure we deliver a high quality education to all students. One of the new initiatives we are piloting is the Master Schedule. This new schedule format includes two important elements – the rotating class schedule and the long block. The rotating schedule provides all students with the opportunity to take their core academic classes at different times during the school day. This format prevents students from having to consistently take a core academic class during a time in the school day when they are not functioning at their very best. The new schedule also includes a period every day that is extended by thirty minutes. This time was built in so staff could provide support to students who need extra academic help or to extend and enrich lessons. The schedule will be reviewed and potential suggestions will be made next school year.

During the 2015-2016 school year, we also started the implementation of the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program. This initiative has allowed teachers to broaden their abilities to integrate technology into their curricula. In the fall, fifth graders in their ELA classes used Green Screen Tools to enhance their book reviews. In the sixth grade, students used ThingLink, a Google App, during their science classes to make interactive posters on various topics on the Earth System. Seventh graders also had the opportunity to present the books they have read by making Green Screen movies or creating Prezi presentations. In the eighth grade science classes, students used applications such as WeVideo and Explain Everything to present information they had learned about climate change.

During this past summer, the school formed a Growth Mindset Committee lead by Assistant Principal Ann Russo. The Committee explored the growth mindset work performed by Carol Dweck and designed activities to be implemented throughout the school year to reinforce important habits of mind critical to learning, such as resiliency and tenacity. GDRMS staff members are beginning to incorporate these concepts into their daily interactions with students to help better prepare them for the challenging work we are asking them to do.

In the area of curriculum, we are responding to the results of the root cause analysis work that was performed at the end of the 2014-2015 school year. During that protocol, GDRMS faculty articulated that professional development and other resources were needed so that they could better evaluate their current curricula and align it to the existing *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*. Under the leadership of Mr. Lubawski, Assistant Principal, Ms. Blydenburgh, ELA Curriculum Coordinator, and Mr. Snodgrass, Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator, ELA and Social Studies teachers are using department meeting time and curriculum half days to work on enhancing the

middle school writing curriculum and other literacy programs. This year the Mathematics Department, under the leadership of Ms. Gartland, Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator, adopted a new math program in all four grade levels, to align to existing curriculum frameworks.

In December, GDRMS students participated in a holiday fundraiser called Project Mitten. Each grade level engaged in their own fundraising activities to raise money for Groton and Dunstable families who are experiencing financial hardship. This year GDRMS students raised over \$8,000, which is quite an accomplishment. Later in the winter, the Student Council will organize the “SOUPER Bowl” activity to collect non-perishable food items for Loaves and Fishes.

This year, GDRMS continues their involvement in the Project 351 program. Project 351 is a youth congress created to celebrate service and civic leadership. This year eighth graders Abigail Eisenklam and Ari Navetta were selected by the eighth grade teachers to represent Dunstable and Groton, respectively. During the Martin Luther King weekend, Abigail and Ari traveled to Boston and joined Governor Baker along with the other students around the Commonwealth to participate in a day of community service. We are very proud of these two students!

GDRMS administration and faculty will continue to work on improving the ways we meet the needs of both struggling and high-performing students. We will keep examining and evaluating both our general education and special education intervention programs and establish a functioning Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) inclusive of standard-based instruction and assessment, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), co-teaching classrooms, and growth mindset models. Based on the results of the *Needs Assessment*, we are requesting additional staff and resources to accomplish the aforementioned objectives. Specifically, we are requesting an additional special education teacher, a part-time reading teacher, a literacy teacher, a math teacher and a librarian. Other needs identified staffing requests such as a part time Mandarin teacher and art teacher to expand out programs and lower high class sizes in the specialist subject areas. Lastly, we are requesting restoration of administrative assistant and records secretary support for the office.

Groton-Dunstable Regional High School



SIP Goal #1: By the Spring of 2016, the scheduling committee will report on the effectiveness of the block schedule and examine alternatives as evidenced by the completion of a comparative analysis document and a proposal based on the data collected from research and surveys.

SIP Goal #2: By spring 2016, the high school will align the curriculum in all grades to the MA Frameworks to ensure a strong structure for ELA instruction, as measured by a completed ELA 9-12 scope and sequence.

SIP Goal #3: By spring 2016, in partnership with MCC & UML faculty and staff, we will create a concurrent dual enrollment program at GDRHS as measured by dual enrollment, concurrent course offerings in the spring 2016 semester.

SIP Goal #4: By June 2016, we will have successfully developed, organized, and executed a comprehensive overhaul of our Advisory Program that is consistent, meaningful and successful, as measured by student and staff pre and post survey results.

By many measures, Groton-Dunstable Regional High School is a high performing school. The students arrive willing to learn and eager to succeed. At the core of the school's success is our staff, who must be commended for their dedication to students, and their willingness to work hard, adapt, and remain flexible as changes in education continue.

For better or worse, schools are largely judged, particularly by individuals outside of the educational establishment, by standardized test scores. Using these as a barometer, GDRHS is a successful high school. For example, while our school enrollment remained static, we have experienced considerable growth in our Advanced Placement (AP) program over the course of the last five years. Of the nearly four hundred schools in the state, GDRHS has consistently fared well on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). While we have great success on this measure, we are aware that the state is phasing this assessment out. Specifically, the MCAS will be replaced with a new assessment after the graduating class of 2019.

Academic achievement is certainly not the only measure of student success. The amount of team and individual accomplishments is too great to list, but GDRHS students continue to excel in a broad range of areas including music, the arts, and athletics.

Additional staffing to counteract large class sizes in math and ELA is needed. We have also been cited by our accrediting agency for not having adequate curriculum leadership, and so moving forward, we need additional staff to allow our coordinators release time to do this curriculum work. We need to address lost programs such as theater and marching band, and obtain staff to support programs that surrounding districts offer (such as 3D art), but we do not have. This year we were awarded a grant through the U.S Department of State's Teachers of Critical Languages Program (TCLP) that afforded us the opportunity to fund a Mandarin Chinese Program for one year. Funding to make that position permanent is critical. Lastly, with more than 90% of our nearly 900 students attending college, an additional guidance counselor to help students with

transitions entering and exiting high school would be beneficial. These budgeting requests, if provided, will assist GDRHS in our noble ambition of being the very best high school in the state.

District Department Information

Curriculum and Instruction Department

The curriculum department focused on a number of main initiatives including beginning to align our curriculum to current *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*, transitioning to PARCC testing in grades 3-8, and improving the quality of professional development (PD).

In January 2015, a group of teachers, administrators, coaches, and instructional technology staff met as a PARCC Action Team to prepare all stakeholders for the transition from MCAS to PARCC. The MCAS was not fully aligned to the current *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*, so in addition to transitioning to an online, timed test, we had to develop a long term plan to align our curriculum. The *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks* for ELA and math came out in December 2011 but attempts to align actual curriculum materials in our district only began in earnest in Fall 2015 and will not be completely phased in and implemented with expertise for the next three to five years.

Given our gaps in curriculum alignment, the increased rigor of the PARCC, and the technological skills required to access the test, we anticipated a decrease in scores. As expected, both GD and the state saw a decrease in PARCC scores, however GDRSD saw greater declines than the state in some areas (see 2015 District Data Presentation: <http://gdrsd.org/wp-content/uploads/GDRSD-2014-2015-Data-Analysis.pdf>). One variable that affected our scores in relationship to the state was that other districts likely aligned curriculum to the current frameworks more readily than Groton-Dunstable.

As a district, we need to continue to align our curriculum to current frameworks, provide professional development for our teachers, and build systemic supports for all students as they access a rigorous and engaging education.

To increase student outcomes, we have been focusing on curriculum alignment and building content knowledge in our PD offerings. Throughout 2015, the PD committee met quarterly to improve the professional development offerings to our educators. Last year, we introduced our multi-part series, which offered over twenty mini-courses in a wide variety of professional development areas to all educators, eighteen self-paced book club offerings, and four in-service courses. These options enable employees to earn Professional Development Points (PDPs), which are required for re-licensure and to achieve highly qualified teacher (HQT) status.

During the summer of 2015, we offered two graduate courses endorsed by Fitchburg State University, *Introduction to Universal Design for Learning (UDL)*, and *Mastering the Art of Writing using Universal Design for Learning (UDL)* to our educators. In order to offer these graduate courses through Fitchburg State (which pay \$1000/per

credit), Dr. Novak taught both these courses at no cost to the district (\$6000 savings) so teachers would have additional PD opportunities. We cannot expect future instructors to offer this service free of charge.

In December 2015, we had three additional graduate courses designed by GDRSD teachers approved by Fitchburg State University. We will pay these instructors \$1000/per credit. These courses will be delivered during the spring 2016 semester. These courses, *Teaching ELL Students*, *Teaching K-12 Mathematics in the 21st Century*, and *Integrating Google Apps for Educators*, will be offered in addition to our popular multi-part series, book clubs and in-service courses and will allow our educators to learn best practices in rigorous courses delivered by their colleagues. In order to fund all these offerings, Dr. Novak gifts presentation honorariums to Groton-Dunstable. This is not a sustainable model.

Student Achievement Trends

For our 2015 analysis, our available data included PARCC data for math and ELA in grades 3-8, MCAS data for science in grades 5, 8, and 10, MCAS scores in ELA and math in grade 10, AP scores, and SAT scores. Based on this analysis, we continue to see a growing gap between all students and our students with disabilities in some areas and low ELA performance, in relationship to math performance. Although we saw some improvements in the grades 6-8 cohort, which was our area of focus, we see significant decreases in grade 5 and this warrants attention as students transition from elementary to middle school.

It is important to note that when examining PARCC data and comparing it to 2014 MCAS data, we anticipated a decrease at both the state level and in our district due to the rigor and the timed nature of this new test. The MCAS was not fully aligned to the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks* so it was not as rigorous as the PARCC and students had all day to complete the test, as opposed to only 75 minutes. As expected, both GD and the state saw a decrease in PARCC scores, so our analysis focused on our scores relative to the state and how those scores increased or decreased from 2014 to 2015. Even this is not an exact comparison, though, as districts had the option to either take a computer-based version of the PARCC or a paper and pencil version. In Groton-Dunstable, our students took the computer-based assessment.

In a press release from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) dated September 21, it noted that, “student achievement on PARCC for those who took the test on a computer appears to have been lower than for students who took MCAS.” As the board did vote to eventually require an online assessment, we will continue to review our assessment results against ourselves to determine in-district growth. Because the state did not disaggregate the pilot year data, we can only compare our achievement to the PARCC state averages, which includes paper and pencil as well as online assessments. We have requested disaggregated scores from the state to allow us to see a more accurate district to state comparison in future years. One variable that

will affect our scores in relationship to the state (regardless of test format) is whether comparison districts aligned curriculum to the new frameworks more readily than Groton-Dunstable.

At the elementary school level, our greatest need is in ELA. Although our math scores in grade 3 and 4 decreased, we still performed well above the state average and have since adopted a new math curriculum that is closely aligned to the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*. In ELA, however, our students with disabilities fell from 22 percentile points above the state average to only 4 points above. This drop of 18 percentile points is compared to a 6 point drop for all students, widening the achievement gap between those two populations. In grade 4, we see the same trend in ELA. Our students with disabilities went from performing 4 percentile points above the state average to 8 points below while the overall population of students made gains.

At the middle school level, our greatest needs are in grade 5 where we see significant decreases in ELA and math with the gap widening between all students and students with disabilities. Whereas our overall student population fell from 81% proficient/advanced (P/A) in ELA, which is 17 percentile points above the state average to 68% P/A, which is only 5 points above the state, our students with disabilities fell from +15 percentile points above the state average to -3. We see the same trend in math, with all students falling from 80% (+20) to 59% (+4) with our special education population moving from 33% P/A (+15) to 19% (-9). Although we made gains in science, the gap widened in that area as well.

In grade 6, while we saw a slight decreases in ELA overall when comparing to state performance, the area of focus this past year (the gap between our general population and our students with disabilities) was minimized. For example, one of our focus areas last year, was a working group and logic model in math in grades 6-8. One of the techniques used was to adopt supplemental intervention resources for these grades and have general education and special education staff work together to define root causes. Overall, we have begun to see this approach work. In math in grade 6, the gap closed significantly, with our students with disabilities performing 19% P/A (state average) in 2014 to 42% (+27) on the PARCC. One outlier was in grade 7 where we saw a decrease in the percentage of students above state averages from the previous year, although they were still above state averages.

In high school, where many of the students had the benefits of services prior to program cuts, and a curriculum that is aligned to the expectations of the state test (we still take MCAS at this level), data shows the gap between GD and the state for ELA achievement is closing. Math proficiency is at an all time high, and we have made huge gains in proficiency scores for students with disabilities. We are closing the gap in all subject areas for students with disabilities. Even though we continue to make gains in ELA, however, we still trail behind many local, DART, and best in class (BIC) districts in ELA while we lead the same districts in math.

To conclude, we need to continue our focus on improving ELA scores district-wide and focus on the achievement of our students with disabilities in all subjects. We also need to address the impact of online testing, new standards, and supports related to new curriculum and instructional approaches.

Table 14:MCAS percent of students at each achievement level

Grade and Subject	Proficient or Higher		Advanced		Proficient		Needs Improvement		Warning/ Failing		Included	CPI	SGP	Included in SGP
	DISTRICT	STATE	DISTRICT	STATE	DISTRICT	STATE	DISTRICT	STATE	DISTRICT	STATE				
GRADE 05 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ³		71		23		48		20		9			N/A	N/A
GRADE 05 - MATHEMATICS ³		67		35		32		21		12			N/A	N/A
GRADE 05 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	78	51	33	16	45	35	18	37	3	13	195	92.8	N/A	N/A
GRADE 08 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ³		80		26		54		14		6			N/A	N/A
GRADE 08 - MATHEMATICS ³		60		29		31		23		17			N/A	N/A
GRADE 08 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	68	42	3	3	65	39	29	40	3	18	216	89.1	N/A	N/A
GRADE 10 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	99	91	72	49	27	42	1	6	0	3	204	99.8	55.0	194
GRADE 10 - MATHEMATICS	98	79	88	53	10	25	1	13	0	8	205	99.1	72.0	194
GRADE 10 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	92	72	50	27	42	44	8	23	0	5	196	97.7	N/A	N/A

Table 15:PARCC Data

Grade and Subject	Level 4 and 5 %		Level 5 %		Level 4 %		Level 3 %		Level 2 %		Level 1 %		Avg Scaled Score	Number of Students Included	Trans. CPI		Trans. Student Growth Percentile (SGP)	
	DIST	STATE	DIST	STATE	DIST	STATE	DIST	STATE	DIST	STATE	DIST	STATE			#	Mean	#	Median
GRADE 3 ELA/L	64	54	4	7	60	47	21	22	10	14	5	10	759	190	191	87.8	--	--
GRADE 3 Math	65	55	9	12	55	43	22	25	12	14	2	6	758	190	191	91.2	--	--
GRADE 4 ELA/L	77	57	26	15	50	42	18	25	4	12	2	5	770	179	182	88.7	174	54.0
GRADE 4 Math	73	48	9	6	64	41	20	29	6	18	1	5	764	181	184	90.2	176	51.0
GRADE 5 ELA/L	68	63	9	8	59	55	23	23	5	10	4	4	762	192	195	90.1	190	38.0
GRADE 5 Math	59	55	12	11	47	44	30	26	11	15	1	5	757	192	194	87.6	190	44.0
GRADE 6 ELA/L	69	60	11	12	59	48	24	25	7	11	1	4	760	200	201	91.8	193	33.0
GRADE 6 Math	76	53	14	10	62	44	20	28	4	14	1	5	765	197	198	94.8	190	56.0
GRADE 7 ELA/L	81	61	42	21	40	40	11	22	7	11	1	6	773	197	199	94.5	195	61.0
GRADE 7 Math	77	45	24	8	53	37	19	32	4	18	1	4	768	199	201	91.2	197	76.0
GRADE 8 ELA/L	78	64	20	16	59	48	17	20	5	10	0	5	771	210	214	98.4	205	51.0
GRADE 8 Math	63	53	2	10	62	43	22	22	12	15	3	10	756	112	116	86.9	110	61.0
GRADE 8 ALG. I	100	80	46	14	54	66	0	15	0	4	0	1	803	104	104	100.0	101	87.0
GRADES 3-8 ELA/L	73	60	18	13	54	47	19	23	6	12	2	6	766	1,168	1,182	92.0	957	48.0
GRADES 3-8 MATH	72	52	16	10	56	43	20	27	7	16	1	6	765	1,175	1,188	91.4	964	62.0

As you can see from the table below, the most recent state accountability data sets Groton-Dunstable as a Level 2 district. All Massachusetts schools and districts are classified into one of five accountability and assistance levels (1-5), with the highest performing in Level 1 and lowest performing in Level 5. Level 1 schools meet improvement targets for all students and all student subgroups. In 2014, our middle school was our only school identified as Level 2. In 2015, although we were “held harmless,” Florence-Roche did not meet their target for increasing the outcomes for students with disabilities and Swallow Union did not meet their target for the outcomes for all students. Without the “held harmless” distinction, three of our schools are performing as Level 2 schools. The high school is still classified as Level 1, but they still take the MCAS, which is not aligned to current *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*.

Table 16: Accountability and PPI trends

	2014 Level	2015 Level	PPI All students 2014	PPI All students 2015	PPI Students with Disabilities 2014	PPI Students with Disabilities 2015
Groton-Dunstable District-wide	2	2	91	88(-3)	42	49(+7)
Swallow Union	1	1 Held harmless	100	74(-26)	n/a	n/a
Florence-Roche	1	1 Held harmless	83	80(-3)	79	70(-9)
Middle School	2	2	78	80(+2)	43	57(+14)

When examining our SAT and AP data, our students do not perform as high as students in best in class (BIC) districts. The figures below examine mean SAT scores in math, writing, and reading and AP scores in US History. Groton-Dunstable is identified by a blue bar in all figures. Districts who outperform Groton-Dunstable are identified with green. Districts who perform lower than Groton-Dunstable are identified with red.

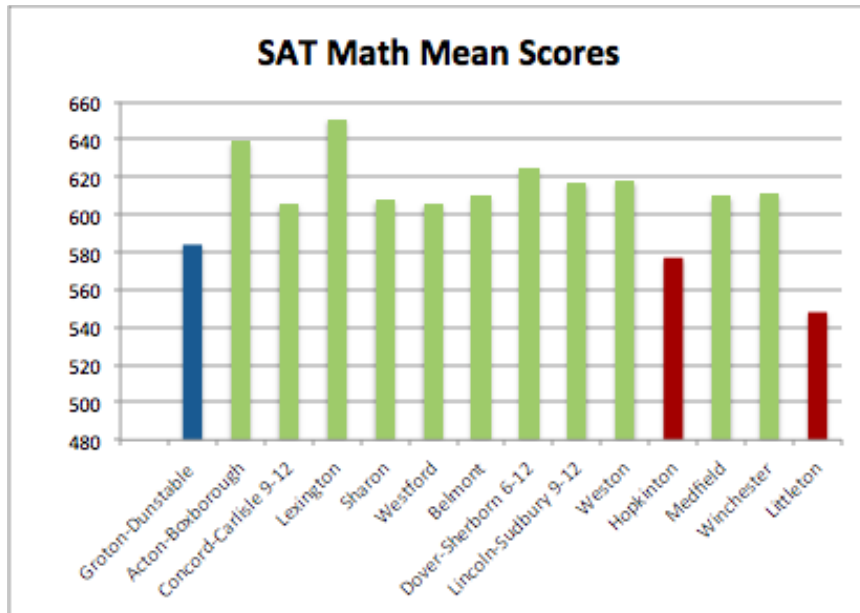


Figure 3: SAT mean math score comparability

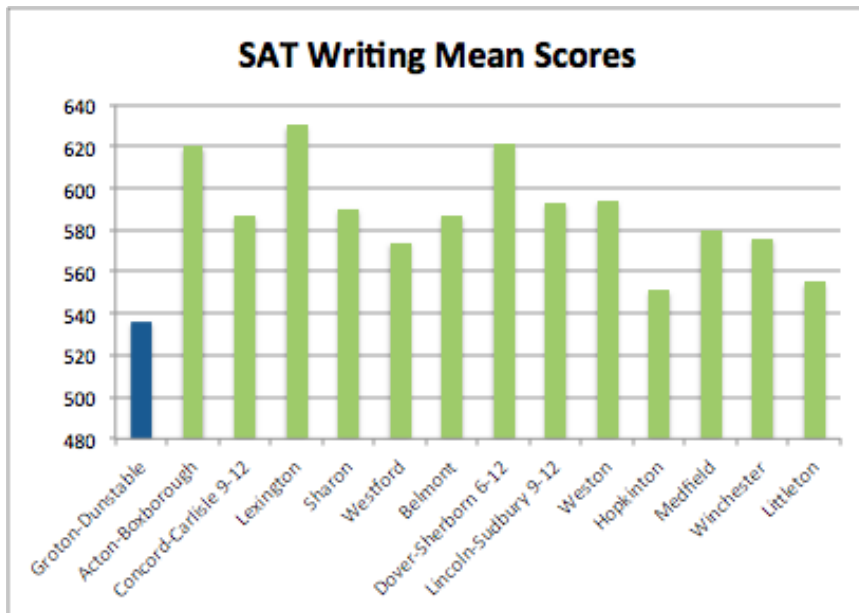


Figure 4: SAT mean writing score comparability

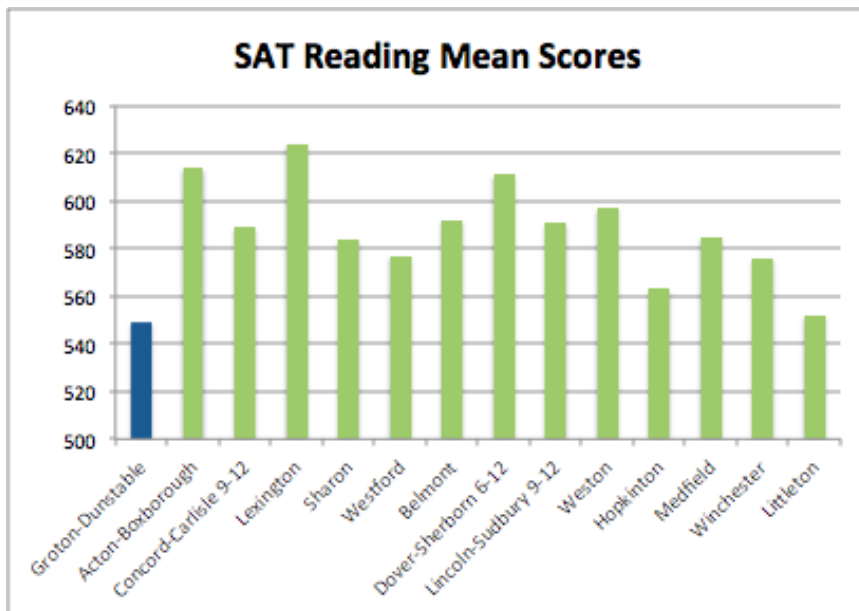


Figure 5: SAT mean reading score comparability

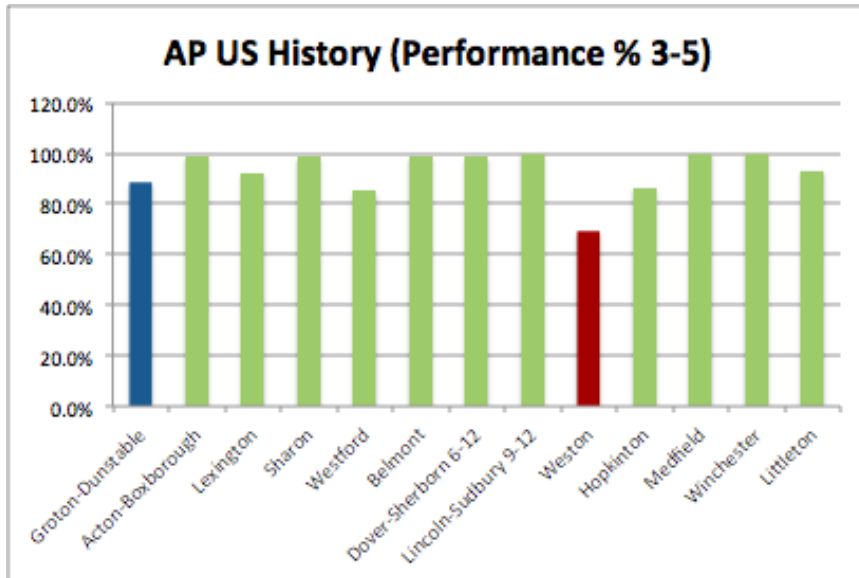


Figure 6: AP US history performance comparability

Human Resources Department

The Human Resources Department is responsible for overseeing the recruitment and hiring of staff; monitoring compliance with personnel laws, regulations, policies, and procedures; ensuring compliance with collective bargaining terms and conditions; and complying with state and federal reporting requirements.

In spring 2015, all returning staff members received appointment letters to ensure correct step and lane placement, current license information, and position. This allowed us to update all HR databases to ensure accuracy moving into the 15-16 school year.

As a frame of reference, Massachusetts law now provides for state and federal criminal background checks for individuals working in public and private schools. (Massachusetts General Laws chapter 71, section 38R). Previously, all districts were required to use CORI checks, which do not show if an employee has a criminal record in another state. Also, CORI checks rely on a name-based search whereas the background checks use fingerprint data.

We have 373 employees, all of whom need to be fingerprinted, as well as all substitutes, bus drivers, and other contracted staff who work with our students. After the fingerprint reports are processed, they are sent to the district and must be reviewed. Under state regulations, the grounds for revocation of an educator's license include if the teacher has pleaded guilty to, been convicted of, or received a deferred sentence for "a crime involving moral turpitude" or one that "discredits the profession, brings the license into disrepute or lacks good moral character."

Lastly, the HR department was thrilled to welcome and onboard 45 new hires in 2015. Many of these employees were hired for positions left vacant by resignations and retirements, so in addition to onboarding new staff, our office completed exit procedures for our former colleagues.

Business Department

Unlike Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014, we experienced financial stability in FY2015. Due to the extraordinary efforts of every district employee and great cooperation from the two towns, FY2015 ended with a positive unexpended balance of \$213,059 in the general fund and actual revenue received exceeded budgeted revenue by \$232,897. This happened in spite of the 9C cuts to our Chapter 71 (Regional Transportation), which resulted in a loss \$116,755.

We worked with the staff this year to identify staffing, supply, and professional development cuts from past fiscal years and the impact this has had on our district. This information is available in our Needs Assessment document.

As a school district, we must continue to monitor those aspects of the budget that are not controlled by simple budgeting. The variability in state aid, the unexpected special education costs that occur throughout any school year, the conditions and costs of our utilities, and the growing costs of benefits for our employees are just some of these less controlled costs.

At this time, we project our FY2015 excess and deficiency (E&D) account will be certified by the Department of Revenue (DOR) at \$808,000; representing 2% of the FY2016 general fund budget. By law the district is permitted to maintain a fund balance of up to 5% of the budget in order to pay for unanticipated expenses, particularly in areas of private school special education tuitions and building infrastructure repairs (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC), plumbing, electrical, etc...). This amount of E&D is still low, but we were able to increase it \$433,737, which is a significant amount in one year. With good budgeting and continued communication and transparency, effective strategic and technology and capital planning, and a continued partnership with the two towns, we feel we can increase E&D to the recommended level of 4% over the next few fiscal years.

At this time, the FY2016 general budget is in very good shape from both a revenue and an expenditure perspective. Although, we continue to be concerned with the variability of state aid, particularly with Chapter 70 (state aid to support school operations), Chapter 71 (Regional Transportation Reimbursement) and Special Education Circuit Breaker.

The Business Office continues to hone our procedures and payroll practices to omit errors. Our staff continues to receive training on Tyler Technologies, the operating software that was implemented in January 2013. We also continue to consult with the

Department of Revenue (DOR), Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and Melanson Heath (our district accountants) on a number of fiscal procedures.

Food Services Department

The Groton Dunstable Food Service department provides an average of 20,000 student meals district-wide each month. There are 22 employees and 1 Food Service director divided amongst 2 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, and 1 high school.

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program, which is a federally assisted meal program. Any child may purchase a lunch through this program and those who are eligible are offered lunch at free or reduced price. In Groton-Dunstable, 7% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch (calculated from number of applications on file and from the Direct Certification list we are required to run through MA Executive Offices of Health and Human Services).

Our food service program is primarily self-funded from cafeteria sales and a government reimbursement of \$0.35/per meal. The exception is the district supports a portion of health insurance for cafeteria staff (the food service revolving account pays a significant portion). Our profits pay for all cafeteria salaries and the purchase of all food and paper products. In addition, the department pays for all professional development in the food services department, food safety applications and equipment repair and replacement and 25% (\$30,000) of the Director of Business and Finance's salary. As of FY2016, all food service employees are required to complete hours of training for professional development. There are no major equipment repairs or replacements planned for any of the school kitchens.

A portable 2-sided salad bar has been added to the high school lunch offerings. The purchase price was \$2400.00. It has been a positive addition for students and staff as an alternate lunch that provides both vegetarian and gluten free options.

The goal of the Groton Dunstable Food Service Program is to provide each child with a nutritious, balanced meal that helps promote learning. We work hard to balance student acceptance with nutritional integrity.

Pupil Personnel Services Department

The Groton-Dunstable Regional School District provides a constellation of support services for students with special education needs. The primary goal is to ensure that students are offered a continuum of services in order to make effective progress in all areas within the least restrictive environment. The array of services that students may receive can include specialized academic instruction, instructional support, related therapy services (speech and language, occupational and physical therapy), counseling services (guidance, adjustment, psychological and vocational), consultation services (educational, behavioral and related services), supplemental services (behavioral support, assistive technology, transition planning, extended year services and specialized transportation), nursing/health services (medical, vision/hearing services,

orientation and mobility), early childhood education and individualized assessment and evaluation.

All schools are supported by a registered nurse, guidance counselor(s), a special education team chairperson, licensed special education teachers and instructional support staff. In addition, the district is also supported by licensed school psychologists, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, a board certified behavior analyst (BCBA), and a physical therapist.

In addition to providing special education instructional support and co-teaching models within the general education classrooms throughout the district, language-based classrooms have been developed and implemented at the middle and high school to support students with language-based learning disabilities that impact their ability to access curriculum in the general education environment. The district currently has therapeutic learning centers at all levels (elementary, middle, and high) that provide support to students with emotional disabilities that interfere with successful independent learning in the mainstream.

The following areas of focus and priority were identified as focus areas for the department:

- Reducing the dependence on services provided by outside agencies and increasing the utilization of in district personnel in order to provide better consistency, oversight and supervision.
- Developing long-term and sustainable professional development opportunities based on themes that emerged as a result of the Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) department needs assessment.
- Building the capacity of building staff and providing opportunities for educators to serve as a support and resource for colleagues.
- Strengthening the existing in-district programs (therapeutic, language-based) and eliminating programmatic gaps that result in out of district placements, with the goal of providing comprehensive and well-developed programs that are articulated to meet the needs of students across all grade spans.
- Developing transition practices that are structured in a sequential and consistent manner across the various school levels (PK to Kindergarten, 4th to 5th, 8th to 9th) in order to ensure continuity.

The continuing goal of the Pupil Personnel Services department is to build the capacity of programming within the district in order to support the majority of students with disabilities within their community to allow for access to general education when and where appropriate. As we continue to address the aforementioned priorities, the department will continue to develop and implement initiatives in order to best meet the needs of our students.

The district *Needs Assessment* outlines areas that we as a district have identified for staffing needs in the Pupil Personnel Services department. These include, but are not limited to a guidance counselor and adjustment counselor, a part time psychologist, a part time speech teacher, additional special education teachers and additional nursing support.

Technology and Information Department

Over the past year, the educational technology department spearheaded improvements across the district aimed at enhancing communications, data management and continued support of the district's technology infrastructure.

With feedback from parents and staff, the technology department developed a capable website, which along with our television show "Back to School," acts as a showcase of the amazing things taking place within the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District. In addition, the technology department developed a custom, online platform to showcase student work through a customized, digital portfolio tool, which is available for all students.

Over the summer, the district transitioned to a new student information system, allowing data to be managed more efficiently as well as expediting necessary reporting to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Our asset inventory system, developed during FY2015, was used to identify and replace worn out technology equipment in FY2016 and the maintenance of our existing hardware remains a top-priority. With FY2016 funds, the department introduced technology in locations, with the support of building administration, thought to have the most impact on staff and students. In particular, library spaces at both elementaries and at the middle school received a needed refresh of technology resources, which included the installation of Google Chromeboxes.

With their simple-to-use, easy-to-manage approach, Google Chromebooks continue to be in high-demand. Additional Chromebooks were purchased at the classroom level from kindergarten through eighth grade. The selection of this equipment ties in well with existing Google software and affords our students not only an opportunity to collaborate, curate and create digital materials, but also remain current with digital activities that are expected in the 21st century and included in the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*.

District and building servers received substantial upgrades, allowing for speedier Internet connections, better security and greater access for Internet-capable devices. With support from the business department, the district signed a service contract for 50 district printers, with a cost savings from prior fiscal years.

Technology integration continues to evolve and is becoming an essential tool for our staff, enhancing and supporting the delivery of our PreK through twelfth grade curriculum. At the macro-level, technology integration has shown marked improvement, however the district has identified a need to bolster instructional resources at the elementary level as well as increasing media and research skills at the middle school. The educational technology department continues to focus on the integration of technology into the curriculum and strives to ensure that resources are available for all students to become technologically literate and achieve their full academic potential. Additional staffing additions to the technology department will bolster both support and instruction for staff and students. These staffing positions, outlined in our *Needs Assessment*, include technicians to support our increasing devices so that our staff to device ratios are closer to state recommended levels and a technology integration specialist at the elementary level to support technology integration in the classroom.

Although not officially released until May 2016, the five-year technology strategic planning committee began its work identifying goals and recommendations for the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District. The underlying theme of the committee's work is that educational technology and a solid infrastructure will improve student academic achievement through the use of technology.

Building and Grounds Department

The FY2017 budget for Buildings and Grounds is 3.6% higher than the FY2016 budget. This provides an overall increase to our payroll maintenance overtime account and to additional vendor services to meet the demands of implementing updated safety codes to pass the state inspections.

We increased our overtime to 200 hours to allow the maintenance personnel to meet increased demands. Very often, due to current staffing levels, the 8-hour day is not enough to address the needs of the district. Additionally, we propose increasing overtime to expedite the work orders. Moving forward, the director aims to reduce reactive maintenance by adopting a cost-effective, proactive maintenance program to prevent repairs that require vendor services. In FY2017, we will continue to seek out other energy conservation opportunities in the district to address the capital improvements needed for the building infrastructure. However future goals do include increasing the Buildings & Grounds staff to 5 full time employees to increase efficiency.

In the Deferred Maintenance/Capital Improvement account, these line items were adjusted to focus on the Building & Ground priorities for FY2017. Other line items were either reduced or not funded in the FY 2017 budget.

Key proposed upgrades and purchases for this year are:

- High School Black Box wood floor repair/maintenance which requires removing the existing floor and installing new theatre flooring

- Ductless split HVAC system for both HS main office and Guidance office
- High School tennis courts (4) resurfacing and repainting lines
- Installing water conserving Smart Valve for urinals (reducing sewer costs) in the High School
- Continue to install electric hand dryers, to decrease paper towel use in the High School and MS North
- Chimney repointing at ECC and Swallow Union
- Ongoing locker replacement at MS South
- Replacing aging custodial and maintenance equipment. Breakdowns are increasingly more expensive as labor intensive parts are harder to replace.
- Purchasing F350 1 ton 4x4 pickup truck - last purchase in 2004.

Peter Twomey Youth Center

The Peter Twomey Youth Center (PTYC) is the base for the Extended Day Programs (FR/SU/BT); Community Education Programs (adult and children's enrichment); and scheduling for all district facilities including the Performing Arts Center, Black Box Theater, gyms and fields. It is self-supporting and is funded by tuitions, community donations and fundraisers. It is located on the Main Campus of schools in Groton.

The Extended Day Program is available to all district students from Pre-K through middle school and is located at the Boutwell Early Childhood Center, the Florence Roche and Swallow Union elementary schools and the Peter Twomey Youth Center. The staff of this program are committed to providing academic support, supervised peer socialization and organized age appropriate activities within a safe and nurturing environment.

The Community Education Program which includes Adult Ed; GDRHS After 2 Club, middle school after school clubs and elementary children's enrichment programs is always looking for new and different ways to provide a variety of offerings at all levels. Over the years, Community Ed has incorporated school and town programs that have been in danger of being cut due to budget constraints such as the middle school and elementary plays, the middle school ski program, elementary band, flag football and summer tennis camp.

Financial Information

Budget Drivers and Assumptions

The FY2017 Superintendent's Recommended Budget is \$40,475,339, which represents an increase of \$4,025,509 or 11.04% from FY2016's adopted budget. This includes increases to assessments and projected revenue. The district uses DESE's Chart of Accounts to categorize and report expenditures. Therefore, the General Fund is broken into nine (9) major function categories.

- District Leadership and Administration;
- Instructional Services;
- Other School Services;
- Maintenance;
- Fixed Charges;
- Community Service;
- Fixed Assets;
- Debt Retirement and Service; and
- Programs with Other Districts.

These functions are defined in DESE's Chart of Accounts (Appendix E). In the sections that follow, there will be a short narrative and bullets explaining any major changes to each function. The Community Service function does not apply to the Groton-Dunstable School District so is therefore not included in our budget:

When examining the major function categories, the biggest drivers and assumptions of the FY2017 Budget include:

- Larger than anticipated teacher lane changes
- Large increases to active and retiree health insurance
- Large increases to Middlesex Retirement from FY2015's costs
- Applied two years of increases in salary expenditures for all collective bargaining units including all step and lane increases because all units were still bargaining when the budget book was published in FY2016
- Restored school instructional materials and equipment to FY2010 levels of an additional \$48,805 over FY2016 levels.
- Increased substitute lines \$25,000 to accommodate a new pay scale
- Increased curriculum professional development lines \$100,000 to accommodate needs
- Assumed 3 years of actuals and used the State's Cherry Sheets when projecting School Choice and charter school tuitions
- Assumed 5 years of actuals and recent rate trends when budgeting all utilities

Table 17: General fund function categories

FUNCTION	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	FY2015 ACTUALS	FY2016 APPROVED BUDGET	FY2017 REQUESTED BUDGET	DIFFERENCE
1000	District Leadership and Administration	1,198,378	1,115,571	1,432,145	316,574
2000	Instructional Services	17,995,203	18,362,766	21,571,615	3,208,849
3000	Other School Services	2,520,231	2,552,653	2,742,805	190,152
4000	Maintenance	2,279,561	2,601,726	2,816,803	215,077
5000	Fixed Charges	5,948,120	6,898,819	7,118,857	220,038
7000	Fixed Assets	135,559	108,695	138,220	29,525
8000	Debt Retirement and Service	3,238,988	3,100,863	2,948,691	-152,172
9000	Programs with Other Districts	2,167,081	1,708,737	1,706,203	-2,534
	Totals:	35,483,121	36,449,830	40,475,339	4,025,509

1000 Function: District Leadership and Administration

FY2017’s requested District Leadership and Administration function has increased \$316,574 from FY2016’s appropriated budget. In addition to the increased contractual obligations to the positions budgeted in this function, many factors contributed to the changes in this function’s budget:

- The Assistant Superintendent (1.0 FTE) and the Curriculum Administrative Assistant (1.0 FTE) were both moved from Instructional Services (2000 function) to District Leadership and Administration, which increased this function’s budget by \$164,871. The district did this to better align the end of year reporting with DESE’s Chart of Accounts (Appendix E). These are not new positions.
- In FY2016, the district added a .44 FTE Human Resources Clerk with the monies available from the resignation of the contracted Human Resources Specialist. This resulted in a savings of \$25,334 in the Human Resources Contract Services line which will be used for Human Resources needs in FY2017.
- Per the *Needs Assessment*, an additional 1.0 FTE Business Office Clerk was budgeted for \$45,000.
- Per the *Needs Assessment*, additional 2.0 FTE Network Technicians were budgeted for \$100,000.

2000 Function: Instructional Services

FY2017’s requested Instructional Services function has increased \$3,208,849 from FY2016’s appropriated budget. In addition to the increased contractual obligations to the positions budgeted in this function, many factors contributed to the changes in this function’s budget:

- The Assistant Superintendent (1.0 FTE) and the Curriculum Administrative Assistant (1.0 FTE) were both moved from Instructional Services to District Leadership and Administration (1000 Function), which decreased this function's budget by \$164,871. The district did this to better align the end of year reporting with DESE's Chart of Accounts (Appendix D).
- Teacher lane changes are anticipated to be \$115,000, which is \$56,000 more than was expended in FY2016. This new number reflects actual documentation submitted by teachers.
- As part of the *Needs Assessment* at Boutwell, a consulting Special Education teacher was budgeted for an additional \$22,388.
- As part of the *Needs Assessment* for Florence Roche; 1.5 FTE Specialist Area teachers, a 1.0 FTE Library/Media Specialist, a .6 FTE Math Specialist, a 1.0 Kindergarten Assistant, and a .6 FTE Technology Integration Specialist were budgeted. These additional 4.70 FTE's cost \$225,299. This will be offset from restructuring other positions for a savings of \$69,359. In addition, a 1.0 FTE special education co-teacher and a .4 FTE Speech Language Pathologist were budgeted for \$78,358 from the *Needs Assessment*. Lastly, as part of the *Needs Assessment*, the Reading Specialist was moved from an hourly part time position to a salaried full time position and this was budgeted for an additional \$19,763.
- As part of the *Needs Assessment* for Swallow Union; a 1.0 FTE Specialist Area teacher, a .5 FTE Library/Media Specialist, a .4 FTE Math Specialist, a .5 Kindergarten Assistant, and a .4 FTE Technology Integration Specialist were budgeted. These additional 2.8 FTE's cost \$136,293. This will be offset from restructuring other positions for a savings of \$66,468. In addition, a 1.0 FTE Special Education co-teacher and a .2 FTE Speech Language Pathologist were budgeted for \$67,164 from the *Needs Assessment*. The reading specialist was moved from an hourly part time position to a salaried part time position and this was budgeted for an additional \$14,737, as a product of the *Needs Assessment*. 2.0 FTE special education teachers were added to Swallow Union between the FY2016 budget booklet development and the start of the school year. These two positions are budgeted for \$128,986 in FY2017. There was a savings in FY2016's out of district tuitions that helped offset these two costs.
- As part of the *Needs Assessment* for the Middle School, the Reading Specialist increased from a .5 FTE to a 1.0, a 1.0 FTE Literacy Teacher Specialist, a 1.0 FTE Math Teacher Specialist, a 1.0 FTE Library Media Specialist, and .33 FTE Music teacher, and a .4 FTE Mandarin teacher were budgeted for a cost of \$235,208. In addition, as part of the *Needs Assessment*, a 1.0 Special Education co-teacher was budgeted for \$55,970. Also, as part of the *Needs Assessment*, the Middle School's clerical budget line increased .38 FTE for additional hours for the records secretary. In addition, one administrative assistant increased from 214 days to a full year, 261-day, administrative assistant, as defined by the *Needs Assessment*. This increased the budget \$12,943 and \$8,377 respectively. Between the FY2016 budget booklet development and the start of the school year, the Middle School also increased the speech therapist from a .6 FTE to a 1.0 FTE and will cost \$31,496 in FY2017.

- As part of the *Needs Assessment* for the High School; three .33 FTE's for Content Area Coordinator coverage, a 1.0 FTE Math teacher, a 1.0 FTE ELA teacher, a 1.0 FTE Social Studies teacher, a .67 FTE Music teacher, a .67 FTE Art teacher, a .33 FTE Theater teacher, a .17 FTE Videography teacher, and a .33 FTE Mandarin teacher were budgeted for a cost \$348,691. Lastly, in the *Needs Assessment* we budgeted a 1.0 guidance counselor for an additional \$55,970. In addition, in FY2016 the High School added a 1.0 FTE Special Education teacher. This costs an additional \$78,740 in FY2017. A portion of this was offset from restructuring another position.
- As part of the *Needs Assessment* an additional .5 FTE ELL teacher and a 1.0 FTE elementary literacy coordinator was budgeted for \$27,985 and \$82,000 respectively. Also, as part of the *Needs Assessment*, a .6 FTE district wide special education school psychologist was budgeted for \$33,582 as part of the *Needs Assessment*, a 1.0 FTE elementary adjustment counselor for an additional \$55,970 was also budgeted. Also in the *Needs Assessment* is the addition of coordinator stipends for physical and behavioral health, fine and performing arts, and foreign language difference between what is paid now and the extension to 1-12 for a total cost of \$19,410.
- As part of the *Needs Assessment*, professional development on-site workshop costs increased \$45,710.
- The district increased the special education team chairs in FY2016 from 2.67 FTE to 3.0 FTE to cover out of district placement oversight. The cost of this difference (\$35,839), which accounts for salary increases of existing positions and an expansion of this position from .67 to 1.0. In addition, a behavior specialist position was moved from a part time contracted service provider (paid from a grant) to a full time district employee. This position is budgeted for \$66,625 in FY2017.
- The district increased teacher substitute lines by \$25,000 to account for the new substitute starting pay rate and the need to cover sick leave of new staff who are part of the *Needs Assessment*.
- Due to student IEP's, the district's para-educators increased from 69.17 FTE's to 80.67 FTE's. The additional cost in FY2017's general budget is \$112,710.
- Due to contractual obligations, the tuition reimbursement line increased \$20,000 in FY2017.

3000 Function: Other School Services

FY2017's requested Other School Services function has increased \$190,152 from FY2016's appropriated budget. In addition to the increased contractual obligations to the positions budgeted in this function, many factors contributed to the changes in this function's budget:

- As part of the *Needs Assessment*, an additional .7 FTE nurse at the High School and an additional .5 FTE nursing assistant at Florence-Roche are budgeted. The FY2017 costs for these two new positions are \$39,179 and \$8,366 respectively.

- Regular in-district transportation general fund expenses have increased \$34,405 from FY2016's budgeted amount. The district will pay the additional \$75,000 contractual amount out of the transportation revolving account that was established in FY2015. FY2017 is the second year of a new 5-year contract with Dee Bus Inc.
- As part of the *Needs Assessment*, the district is adding 4.56 FTE lunch aides. This represents 12 actual aides but the FTE is calculated on the hours worked. These positions are only 3 hours/day (.38 FTE per lunch aid). The total cost is \$66,600.
- As part of the *Needs Assessment*, the Athletic administrative assistant is going from a .5 FTE to a 1.0 FTE and the cost is \$15,236.

4000 Function: Maintenance

FY2017's requested Maintenance function has increased \$215,077 from FY2016's appropriated budget. In addition to the increased contractual obligations to the positions budgeted in this function, the following two main factors contributed to the changes in this function's budget:

- As part of the *Needs Assessment* a .5 FTE custodian at Florence Roche, a .5 FTE custodian at the High School, and a 1.0 FTE at the two middle school buildings was budgeted. The total cost of these positions in FY2017 is \$90,397. In addition, as part of the *Needs Assessment*, a 1.0 district wide maintenance position is budgeted in FY2017. The cost for this position is \$50,273.
- Heating, sewer, and electricity costs district wide are only expected to go up \$4,801 from FY2016's budget based on a five-year mean of actuals. The maintenance department continues to do things to keep these costs as controlled as possible.

5000 Function: Fixed Charges

FY2017's requested Fixed Charges function has increased \$220,038 from FY2016's appropriated budget. Many factors contributed to changes in this function's budget:

- At this time, we estimate the sick leave buyback to be \$34,720 less than FY2016's budgeted amount of \$101,665. The reason for this is that we have less known retirees than we did last year.
- The district incurred a cost of \$766,735 in FY2017 for Middlesex Retirement, which is \$26,735 more than the FY2016 budget about. The FY 17 amount is based upon an actual assessment from Middlesex retirement. The district receives a 2% discount for paying the entire Middlesex retirement costs upfront and, which will reduce the cost by \$14,393 for a total budgeted amount of \$752,342.
- Last year, we anticipated health insurance percentages to increase double digits due to the deficit in the GIC. While there is still a deficit, rates increased roughly 9% in FY2016 and we anticipate a similar increase for FY2017. Therefore, the active health insurance line item increased \$321,162 for FY2017. Included in this number is the district's best estimate for all the new hires from the *Needs*

Assessment. We estimate this amount because we can not determine how many of the new hires who qualify for benefits will sign up for them. We were able to obtain an accurate estimation of anticipated costs through a health care audit of retirees. This line will be decreased by \$82,426 from the FY2016 amount to reflect accurate projections.

- The Medicare line increased \$36,058 based on the difference of FY2017's anticipated cost of the district's overall payroll expenditures from FY2016's budgeted amount. There is still no limit to the wages that can be subject to the Medicare tax, which equals 1.45% of all covered wages.
- Unemployment was reduced \$65,000 based on anticipated claims in FY2017 as well as the most current bill from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Unemployment.
- Active dental insurance increased \$24,306 based on an anticipated 2.5% increase in FY2017. This expected increase was based on a 5-year history. Included in this increase is the district's best estimate for all the new hires from the *Needs Assessment*.
- Retiree dental insurance increased \$419 from FY2016's budgeted amount. This represents actual anticipated costs and a 2.5% increase.

7000 Function: Fixed Assets

FY2017's requested Fixed Assets function has increased \$29,525 from FY2016's appropriated budget. Many factors contributed to the changes in this function's budget:

- Technology's "Computer Lease and Purchase" line item, after being fully reduced to zero in FY2016, has increased \$6,500. The lease is a part of a plan to revamp an engineering computer lab at the high school. With support of the principal, the three-year lease option of leasing equipment is an effective strategy to support the required technologies needed to offer engineering and other computer science classes.
- Technology's "Acquisition of New Equipment" line item has increased \$5,000 due to the need to maintain teacher laptops and to provide an updated laptop replacement for selected staff throughout the district.
- The district budgeted to replace one of the F350 1 ton 4X4 pickup trucks for the maintenance department. The last one was purchased in 2004. The cost in FY2017 is \$22,000.

8000 Function: Debt Retirement and Service

FY2017's Debt Retirement and Service is a fixed cost to the two towns. The debt principal and interest has decreased \$152,172 from \$3,100,863 in FY2016 to \$2,948,691 in FY2017. The district recently took advantage of the favorable interests rates and refunded the existing Middle School bonds for a savings of \$239,284 over the life of the refunded bonds. This money will be used to lower the debt assessments, which works out to a savings of roughly \$20,000 annually.

9000 Function: Programs with Other Districts

FY2017's requested "Programs with Other Districts" function has decreased \$2,534 in the General Fund budget. Many factors contributed to the changes in this function's budget:

- School Choice tuition out of district is expected to increase \$2,534. This is based on the latest information we have available from the state's Cherry Sheets. These costs fluctuate from year to year.
- Tuition to Charter schools was level funded. This is based on the latest information we have available from the state Cherry Sheets. These costs fluctuate from year to year.
- FY2017 Private Day, Residential, and Collaborative Tuitions were level funded. Circuit Breaker aid from the State and Special Education grants offset these tuition expenses. Private Day expenses are expected to be \$982,825 but will be offset \$450,000 from Circuit Breaker and \$97,000 from a grant. Residential tuitions are budgeted for \$765,599 and will be offset \$350,000 from Circuit Breaker. Lastly, we anticipate our Residential Tuitions to be \$272,875 and offset \$60,000 from a grant. In total, we have budgeted \$2,021,299 for these three types of tuitions but only \$1,064,299 is coming from the General Fund.

GDRSD Budget Savings Initiatives

Below include short summaries of some of the cost-savings measures employed by the district this fiscal year.

After allowing a printer service agreement to expire in FY2015 because of concerns surrounding poor support and an adjustable, monthly cost, a new service agreement was signed in FY2016. Our new managed print service contract, with fixed monthly fees, will have an immediate savings impact of over \$15,000, each year, as compared to the prior agreement. Although fewer total printers are covered, new high-capacity printers were added in addition to carefully selecting existing district printers capable of maintaining the same level of printing needs for our staff.

In prior years, district websites were a fixed, monthly cost, which included software and user fees. This monthly expenditure was set to increase, in part to changes outside of the district's control, relating to e-Rate eligibility. The terms of e-Rate were modified and the costs associated with the software and support were set to substantially increase. As a part of a new district communication strategy, a new, custom designed website in FY2016 was introduced. After an initial outlay of \$10,000 for the one-time design fee, in FY2017, we can expect the costs surrounding the maintenance and support of the district websites to be reduced to near zero. A contingency fund will be included for updates, on an as needed basis, but will likely not be needed.

As a part of the FY2017 budget, a two-year plan is in place for the installation of short-throw, digital projectors in all elementary classrooms. There is a substantial, but fair

install cost for each unit provided by an outside vendor. However, the Building and Grounds Department is actively looking into the feasibility of installing projectors, in-house, with a savings over \$10,000 for FY2017 and FY2018.

In FY2016, multiple servers received substantial upgrades and in a few instances, were completely replaced, thanks in part to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). With immediate savings near \$5,000, the donations from MIT allowed aging servers to be replaced and/or repaired with solid equipment, allowing for speedier Internet connections, better security and access for greater amounts of devices.

The Technology and Pupil Personnel Department have partnered to implement a tracking system for all personalized technology and related software. In doing so we have eliminated duplication and unnecessary purchases. This ensures consistent alignment with the student specific needs based on Individualized Educational Plans and Individualized 504 Plans.

In FY2015, the district bought a used van to do all in-district special education PAVE program runs. This van is used daily throughout the school year and the summer and the savings is roughly \$26,000 per year.

The Maintenance department is always looking for ways to reduce costs. Hand dryers were installed in three schools: Swallow Union and the Middle Schools. We will continue to install hand dryers till all lavatories are completed outfitted with hand dryers. Hand dryers reduce the need for costly paper towels in the district and we estimate the overall savings to be \$5,000+ per year.

At Swallow Union, we replaced the inefficient hot water heater, which ran off the boiler with a high efficiency electric hot water tank. Now the boiler can be on shut down during the warmer months.

Ceiling mounted "destratification" fans were installed in the gyms of the High School, the two Middle Schools and Swallow Union. These fans will recirculate the heat buildup in the ceiling area of the gym to the floor area. Yearly savings is about 1100 therms of heat per unit. There are about 4 units per building.

In the high school, the server rooms were overheating with the computers and telephone system constantly running. Mini-split ductless systems were installed in the two server rooms to provide air conditioning. We will see a reduction in the costly repairs to the systems in these rooms.

To conserve water and reduce sewer costs, we have installed Smart Valves for urinals in Swallow Union and Florence Roche Schools. This reduces the water consumption up to 40,000 gallons per urinal per year for estimated annual savings up to \$600 per urinal. We will continue to install in the High School and the two Middle Schools.

The Maintenance department continues to centralize the storage of the custodial supplies at Prescott. This has considerably reduced the costs of supplies by allotting to schools month to month what is requested. We are pleased to have managed to keep our costs down efficiently since Maintenance started this program in 2008.

Dr. Novak continues to find cost-savings measures to support the curriculum department and district professional development. For example, she has presented out of district and provided the district with her honorarium. This school year, she is scheduled for 8 sessions where all travel and mileage are paid for by the sponsoring district and all honorariums are paid directly to Groton-Dunstable. This year, we anticipate total payments to be approximately \$10,000. Also, during the summer 2015, Dr. Novak taught two 3-credit graduate courses through Fitchburg State University at no cost to the district. For all other classes offered through Fitchburg State, instructors are paid \$1000 a credit. This was an additional savings of \$6,000. For FY2017, she will continue to teach 2 courses for the district and has plans for district partnerships that can provide up to \$30,000 in anticipated professional development savings.

General Fund Budget vs. Actual History

From FY2011 through FY2015, actual General Fund expenditures ranged from 96.7% to 99.6% under budget, with the sole exception of FY2013, in which a .8% over-expenditure occurred and was subsequently covered by an additional infusion of Excess and Deficiency (E&D). In FY2011-FY2012, actual revenues were significantly lower than budgeted. The federal government's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) alleviated this discrepancy. Allowable General Fund expenditures were reclassified to the ARRA grants, keeping spending below the level of actual funding.

In FY2011, actual expenditures left an apparent surplus of over \$1M; however, in the same year, revenues were also down: Chapter 70 had been reduced by 1.91%. The State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) and the Education Jobs Fund supplemented funding at the federal level. Expenditures that ordinarily would have been charged to the General Fund were covered by these federal grants. Also, the amount of budget support from E&D and transfers from revolving funds was somewhat lower in FY2011 than in FY2010 and FY2012.

FY2014 and FY2015 ended with surpluses of \$139,597 and \$213,321 respectively. In FY2014, an additional appropriation of \$613,533 from E&D enabled expenditures to remain within budget; whereas, in FY2015, a 9.1% increase in assessments provided the necessary funding for the budget while allowing a modest increase in E&D.

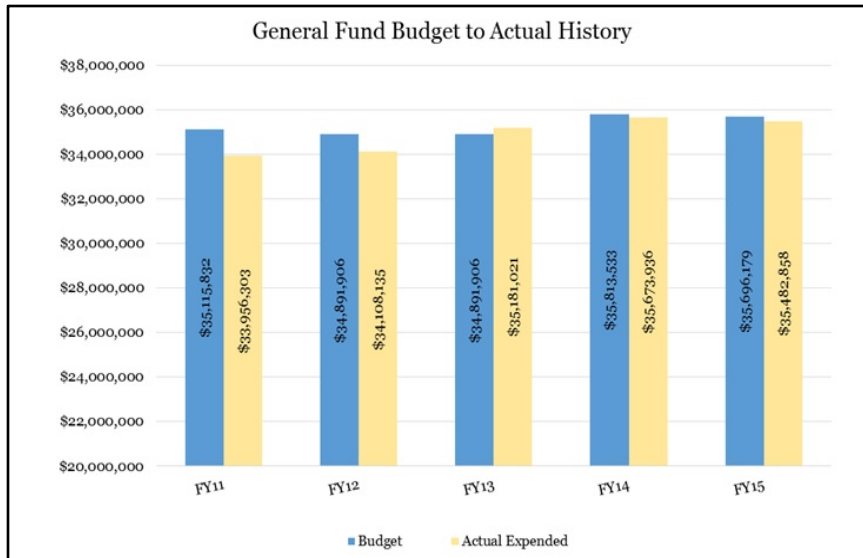


Figure 7: General fund budget to actual history

Revenue and Expense Projections

FY2017’s general fund budget is \$4,025,509 or 11.04% higher than FY2016’s adopted budget. Much of this increase is to fund the costs of the *Needs Assessment*, which is covered in detail in the Financial Information section. FY2017’s assessments, with debt, total \$3,939,133, which is an increase of \$3,315,187 over FY2016’s.

On January 27, 2016, the FY2017 Governor’s Recommended Budget was released and Chapter 70 was projected to be \$10,623,273, which is \$90,001 higher than the districts FY2016’s budgeted amount. Last year, the Governor received an extra month to release the FY2016 proposed budget, after the Superintendent’s Recommended Budget was released, but there was a deficit in the Governor’s budget and the district was not sure if the Chapter 70 amount proposed would remain. For this reason, there is a large increase in the district’s FY2017 Chapter 70 budgeted amount.

Chapter 71 aid is unpredictable and varies from year to year. The amount budgeted was based on FY2016’s End of Year Report that was sent to the State this past October. The district anticipates anywhere from a 62% to 68% reimbursement rate on FY2016’s total in-district transportation costs for all students who reside more than one and half miles from their school. FY2017’s budgeted amount is \$57,400 more than FY2016’s budgeted amount.

The district is projecting a slight increase to Medicaid reimbursements based on FY2015's actuals. In addition, Charter reimbursements were increased based on the latest information on the state's Cherry Sheets. Lastly, the district again increased PTYC Rent to cover increased expenses such as plowing and sanding of program sites. In addition, this increase reduces assessment amounts by the same amount.

Table 18: 2015-2017 General Fund revenues

General Fund Revenues	FY2015 Actual Revenue	FY2016 Approved Revenue Budget	FY2017 Projected Revenue
Chapter 70 (State Aid)	\$10,513,273	\$10,533,272	\$10,623,273
Operating Assessment	\$21,164,497	\$21,877,195	\$25,872,975
Excess and Deficiency (E&D)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transfers In from Revolving Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Medicaid Reimbursements	117,788	\$110,000	\$120,000
Local Reimbursements	\$74,498	\$86,000	\$86,000
Non-Resident Tuition	\$0	\$0	\$0
PTYC Rent	\$60,000	\$75,000	\$82,500
Bond/BAN Premium	\$17,322	\$0	\$0
Loan Proceeds	\$23,550	\$0	\$0
Interest	\$7,307	\$7,500	\$7,500
Charter Reimbursement	\$37,506	\$45,000	\$62,000
Regional Transportation (Chapter 71)	\$655,735	\$615,000	\$672,400
SUBTOTAL-OPERATING	\$32,671,476	\$33,348,967	\$37,526,648
Reserve to Reduce Debt Assessment	\$0	\$9,108	\$0
Premium from Refunding Bonds	\$0	\$0	\$1,630
Premium on MS Roof Bonds	\$0	\$2,907	\$2,760
School Building Authority	\$1,607,363	\$1,527,363	\$1,439,463
Debt Assessment	\$1,650,237	\$1,561,485	\$1,504,838
SUBTOTAL-DEBT	\$3,257,600	\$3,100,863	\$2,948,691
TOTAL REVENUE	\$35,929,076	\$36,449,830	\$40,475,339

Table 19: Budget by 1000 function

FUNCTION	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	FY2015 ACTUALS	FY2016 APPROVED BUDGET	FY2017 REQUESTED BUDGET	DIFFERENCE
1000	District Leadership and Administration	1,198,378	1,115,571	1,432,145	316,574
2000	Instructional Services	17,995,203	18,362,766	21,571,615	3,208,849
3000	Other School Services	2,520,231	2,552,653	2,742,805	190,152
4000	Maintenance	2,279,561	2,601,726	2,816,803	215,077
5000	Fixed Charges	5,948,120	6,898,819	7,118,857	220,038
7000	Fixed Assets	135,559	108,695	138,220	29,525
8000	Debt Retirement and Service	3,238,988	3,100,863	2,948,691	-152,172
9000	Programs with Other Districts	2,167,081	1,708,737	1,706,203	-2,534
	Totals:	35,483,121	36,449,830	40,475,339	4,025,509

State aid fluctuates from year to year. We must make educated guesses when completing our revenue budget in the winter because the final Governor's Budget does not come out until the spring. Over the past ten years, as you can see in Table 20, the District is right back to where we were in FY2007. The amount received in 2016 for state aid was only a \$45,548 or a .37% increase to the amount received in 2007.

Our budget percentage saw a very unhealthy growth from FY2010 through FY2013. It caught up to us in FY2014 when we needed to amend our budget by adding an additional \$613,000 to cover expenses. The reliance on E&D also during this time diminished our contingency. The dependence on E&D started during the recession, with the help of additional state aid (SFSF, ARRA, etc.) the district endured but it is important to point out that our amended budget in FY2009 is higher than the amended one in FY2014.

Table 20: FY2007– FY2016 State Aid History

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Chapter 70	10,590,960	10,757,109	9,914,811	10,858,434	10,224,085	10,278,973	10,384,573	10,449,473	10,513,273	10,575,673
	10.9%	1.6%	-7.8%	9.5%	-5.8%	0.5%	1.0%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
Chapter 71	903,225	926,641	890,730	534,352	563,508	535,653	527,609	596,745	772,490	681,930
	55.3%	2.6%	-3.9%	-40.0%	5.5%	-4.9%	-1.5%	13.1%	29.5%	-11.7%
Circuit Breaker	652,955	890,573	659,805	393,491	399,362	626,066	723,378	779,962	823,512	935,085
	13.3%	36.4%	-25.9%	-40.4%	1.5%	56.8%	15.5%	7.8%	5.6%	13.5%
Total	12,147,140	12,574,323	11,465,346	11,786,277	11,186,955	11,440,692	11,635,560	11,826,180	12,109,275	12,192,688
	13.5%	3.5%	-8.8%	2.8%	-5.1%	2.3%	1.7%	1.6%	2.4%	0.7%
SFSF/ARRA/Ed Jobs/ RTTT (State Aid)			1,165,224	542,808	730,542	355,908				
Federal/State Grants	867,520	882,371	864,991	826,662	812,283	833,228	806,372	773,790	778,374	778,472
		Totals:	2,030,215	1,369,470	1,542,825	1,189,136				
% change Federal/State Grants	3.8%	1.7%	-2.0%	-4.4%	-1.7%	2.6%	-3.2%	-4.0%	0.6%	0.01%

As you can see below, grants revenue peaked in FY2008 at \$882,371 and has been on a downward track since then, with the single exception of FY2012. FY2016's grants revenue is \$89,048 or 10.3% less than that received in FY2007. Federal and state grants revenue received during the ten-year period totaled \$8,224,063. Had these grants been funded at FY2007 levels throughout, the district would have received a total of \$8,675,200, resulting in a difference of \$451,137.

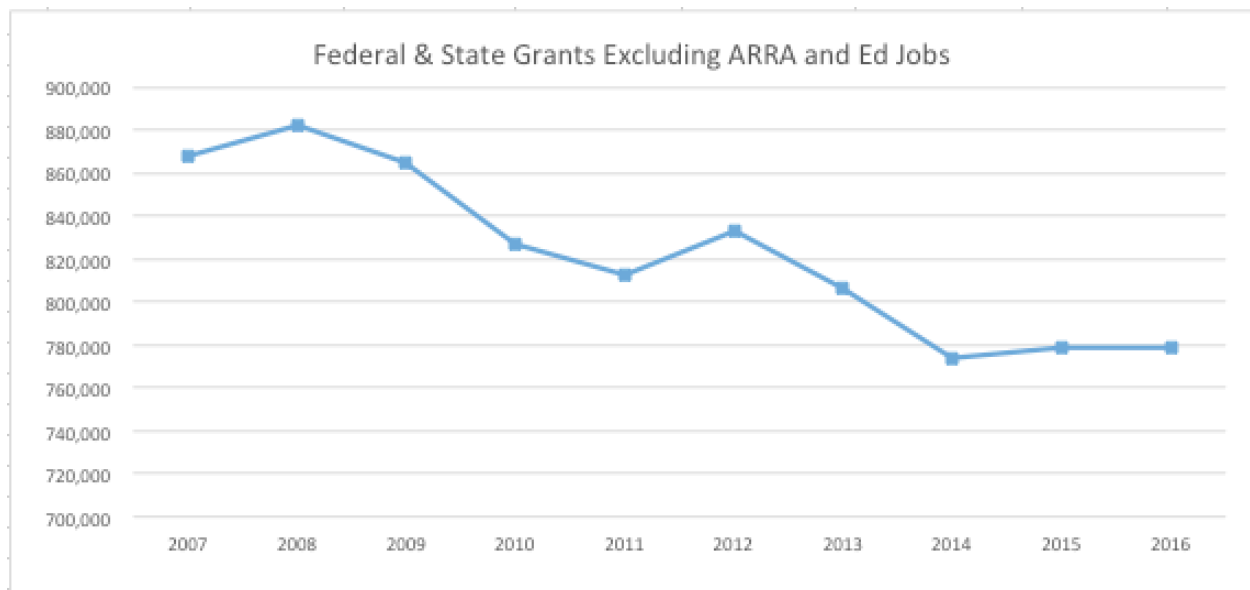


Figure 8: 10-year federal and state grant history

Local Aid and Net School Spending (NSS)

“Chapter 70 is the Commonwealth's program for ensuring adequate and equitable K-12 education funding. It determines an adequate spending level for each school district (the foundation budget). It then uses each community's property values and residents' incomes to determine how much of the foundation budget should be funded from local property taxes. Chapter 70 state aid pays for the remaining amount” (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). A history of Chapter 70 state aid shows rising levels up to FY2009, when mid-year funding cuts dropped the anticipated aid from \$11,080,035 to \$9,914,811. Aid rebounded in FY2010, only to drop in FY2011 to a level below that of FY2007, demonstrating considerable variability from year to year. Chapter 70 funding has risen slowly each year since, although it still remains below FY2007 levels, while costs continue to climb.

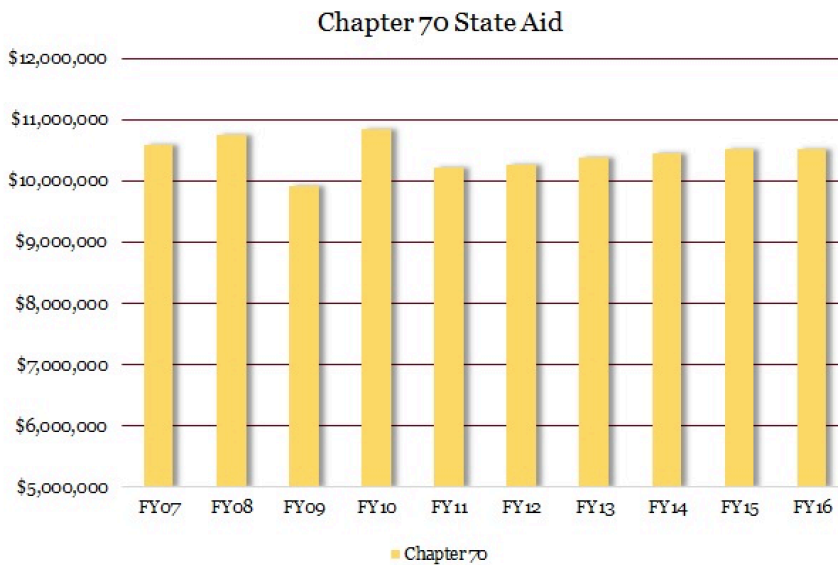


Figure 9: Chapter 70 state aid

Chapter 70 as a percentage of required net school spending rose steadily through FY2003, then began to decline thereafter. In actual dollars, the amount of Chapter 70 aid rose in every year, except in FY2009, when it was supplemented by the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, a federal appropriation derived from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Since then, there has been a widening gap between the district's required net school spending and Chapter 70 aid, leaving a higher percentage to be funded by local contribution.

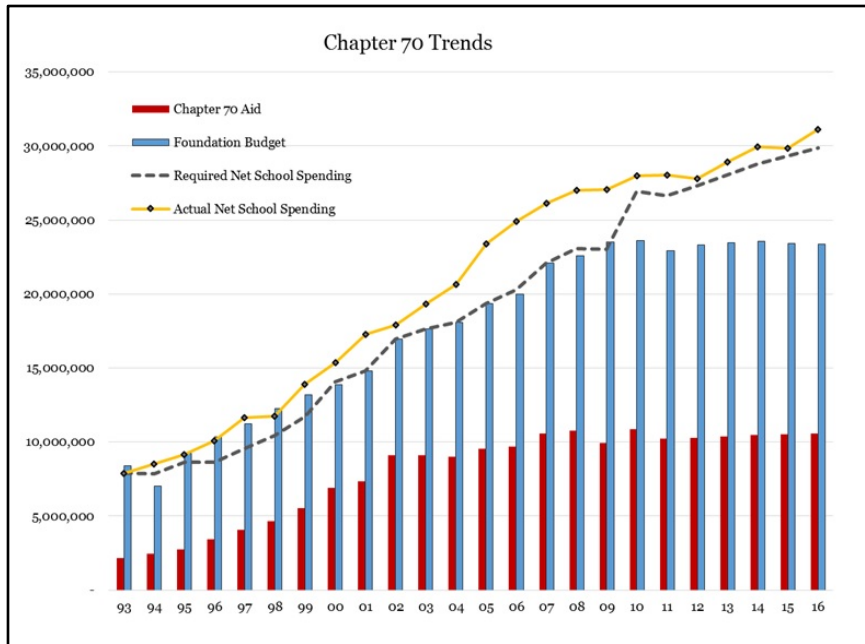


Figure 10: Chapter 70 state aid trends

Chapter 71 Transportation is the state’s program to reimburse regional school districts for a portion of eligible transportation costs. According to MGL Chapter 71, Section 16C, “when the agreement provides for the furnishing of transportation by the regional school district, the regional school district shall be obliged to provide transportation for all school children in grades kindergarten through twelve and the commonwealth shall reimburse such district to the full extent of the amounts expended for such transportation; provided, however, that no reimbursement for transportation between school and home shall be made on account of any pupil who resides less than one and one-half miles from the school of attendance, measured by a commonly traveled route.” Full reimbursement of eligible expenditures has not materialized. The reimbursement percentage in 2008 was 89.9% and then declined to a range of 57.59% though 66.43% between FY2010 and FY2014. In dollars, transportation reimbursement rose from \$534,352 in FY2010 to \$655,735 in FY2015. Reimbursement for FY2016 has been conservatively budgeted at \$615,000, although the most recent projection from the Department of Revenue is \$681,930. This conservative number is in response to recent mid year 9C cuts that affected prior projections and allocations of chapter 71 monies.

Chapter 71 Transportation Aid

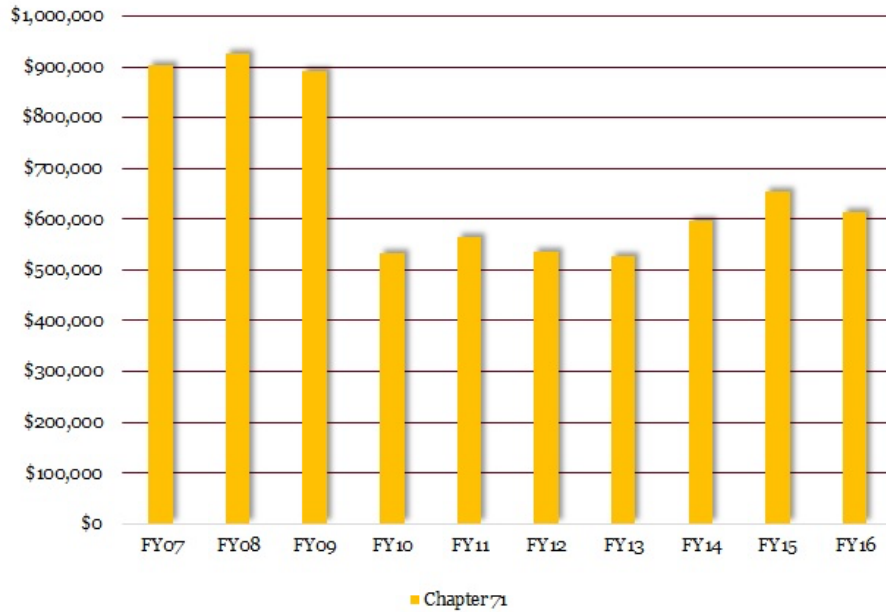


Figure 11: Chapter 70 state aid trends

Assessment History

This chart demonstrates our assessment history dating back to FY2007, including enrollment, operating assessments, and debt assessments. The assessment history demonstrates great variability. Town assessments went from -3.2% to +8.6% in Groton and -4.3% to +10.9% in Dunstable. The highest assessment increases occurred in FY2015 as a result of a 2.66% increase in the operating budget, combined with ending the reliance on E&D as a funding source for the budget.

Table 21: Town of Groton assessment information FY2007-FY2016

Fiscal Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Enrollment	2,296	2,279	2,262	2,193	2,151	2,082	2,059	2,003	2,002	1,995
Enrollment %	76.61%	77.07%	77.68%	77.38%	76.28%	75.63%	75.59%	75.67%	76.29%	77.12%
Enrollment % Change	-0.1%	0.6%	0.8%	-0.4%	-1.4%	-0.9%	-0.1%	0.1%	0.8%	1.1%
Operating Assessment	12,512,468	13,362,468	13,807,492	14,152,469	14,616,005	14,627,099	14,725,819	15,119,512	16,519,251	17,097,405
Debt Assessment	1,992,729	1,930,929	1,621,456	1,776,576	1,657,605	1,127,197	1,237,704	1,233,324	1,236,785	1,168,791
Total Assessment for Groton	14,505,197	15,293,397	15,428,948	15,929,045	16,273,610	15,754,296	15,963,523	16,352,836	17,756,036	18,266,196
Assessment % change	2.1%	5.4%	0.9%	3.2%	2.2%	-3.2%	1.3%	2.4%	8.6%	2.9%

Table 22: Town of Dunstable assessment information FY2007-FY2016

Fiscal Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Enrollment	701	678	650	641	669	671	665	644	623	592
Enrollment %	23.39%	22.93%	22.32%	22.62%	23.72%	24.37%	24.41%	24.33%	23.71%	22.88%
Enrollment % Change	0.2%	-2.0%	-2.7%	1.3%	4.9%	2.7%	0.2%	-0.3%	-2.5%	-3.5%
Operating Assessment	3,654,258	3,849,195	3,954,171	3,968,111	4,053,833	4,019,676	4,053,641	4,162,255	4,641,896	4,779,790
Debt Assessment	604,392	575,168	524,973	565,586	546,213	380,646	421,568	397,500	416,802	392,694
Total Assessment for Dunstable	4,258,650	4,424,363	4,479,144	4,533,697	4,600,046	4,400,322	4,475,209	4,559,755	5,058,698	5,172,484
Assessment % change	1.3%	3.9%	1.2%	1.2%	1.5%	-4.3%	1.7%	1.9%	10.9%	2.2%

Assessment is calculated per the District’s regional agreement. The basic formula for the operating assessment is operating budget less other revenue sources (e.g. Chapter 70) equals the amount to be assessed. Operating assessment is based upon minimum local contribution as determined by DESE. The amount to be assessed in excess of the minimum local contribution is assessed based on each town’s percentage share of student enrollment in all of the district’s schools as of October 1.

Debt assessment is based upon each town’s student enrollment in each of the school buildings; therefore, the assessment is calculated separately for each individual bond issue and then aggregated. Because enrollments by town fluctuate somewhat from year to year, the proportionate share of the debt assessment also fluctuates.

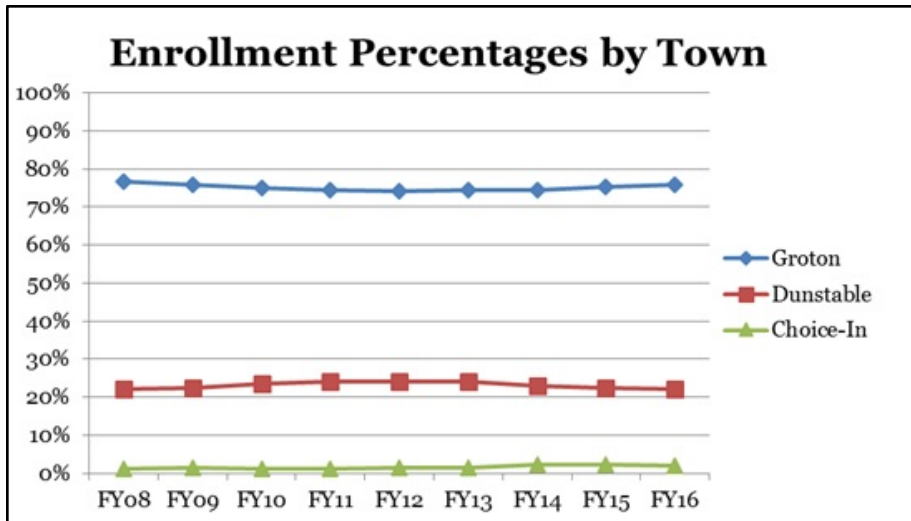


Figure 12: Enrollment percentages by town

Debt Projections

Refunding debt was issued in December 2015 for the Middle School Building and HS land at favorable rates of 2% and 3%. Similarly to refinancing a mortgage, the proceeds of the new debt are used to retire the majority of the 8/1/2006 debt at lower interest rates. This will generate savings of \$239,284 over the life of the bonds, which go directly to lowering debt assessment. By FY2022, \$16,259,384 of the current outstanding debt will be retired, reducing the annual debt service from \$2,290,575 in FY2022 to \$619,575 in FY2023. That reduction results in lowered debt assessments to the towns as illustrated in the table below. It should be noted that with the development of a long-range capital plan, there is always the potential for capital projects that may mean potential new debt in the future.

In November 2015, Moody’s affirmed the A1 rating on the district’s general obligation bonds.

Table 23: Outstanding debt as of 1/1/2016 including New Issue 12/18/2015

School	Issue Date	Principal	Interest	Total Debt	Purpose of Borrowing	Matures
Middle School	8/1/06	345,000	12,800	358,800	Middle School North	FY2017
Middle School	1/29/15	641,000	118,143	759,143	MS Roof (New Issue)	FY25
High School	8/1/06	20,000	800	20,800	HS Land	FY2017
High School	10/1/09	1,660,000	360,150	2,020,150	HS Land	FY28
High School	9/22/11	10,060,000	1,451,050	11,511,050	Refunding of HS Bldg 10/15/01	FY22
High School	9/22/11	500,000	58,000	558,000	Refunding of HS Land 10/15/01	FY21
Middle School	12/18/15	2,720,000	347,387	3,067,387	Refunding of MS Bldg 8/1/06	FY25
High School	12/18/15	160,000	20,954	180,954	Refunding of HS Land 8/1/06	FY25
Total		16,106,000	2,370,284	18,476,284		

Table 24: Estimated debt assessments from FY2016-FY2028

	FY2016	FY2017	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28
Total Debt	3,100,863	2,948,691	2,846,550	2,723,950	2,625,925	2,502,700	2,290,574	619,575	596,800	574,263	146,813	142,088	137,363
Offset to Debt Assessment													
MSBA-HS	1,527,363	1,439,463	1,344,063	1,581,003	1,581,003	1,581,003	1,581,003						
Premium-MS Roof	2,907	2,760	2,501	2,218	1,934	1,628	1,321	1014	684	354			
Premium-Refunding Bonds		1,630	1,373	1,211	1,051	895	741	553	329	109			
Excess FY2015 debt	9,108												
Net Debt for Assess	1,561,485	1,504,838	1,498,613	1,139,518	1,041,937	919,174	707,510	618,008	595,787	573,800	146,813	142,088	137,363
Debt Assessment													
Groton	1,168,791	1,143,574	1,138,843	865,956	791,801	698,509	537,659	469,644	452,757	436,049	111,568	107,977	104,386
Dunstable	392,694	361,264	359,770	273,562	250,136	220,664	169,851	148,364	143,030	137,751	35,245	34,111	32,977
Total Debt Assess.	1,561,485	1,504,838	1,498,613	1,139,518	1,041,937	919,174	707,510	618,008	595,787	573,800	146,813	142,088	137,363

Excess and Deficiency (E&D)

According to MGL Ch.71, section 16B1/2, the district is required to maintain an excess and deficiency (E&D) account to record the net surplus or deficit in the general fund, and to have it certified by the Department of Revenue each year. The District has maintained a substantial level of E&D through FY2013, ranging from \$767,564 to \$1,620,627. A pattern of budgeting E&D as a funding source occurred from FY2010 through FY2014 in an effort to support an adequate budget while controlling assessments. All available E&D from FY2013 was used in FY2014. Careful management

of FY2014's spending allowed the District to end the year with a surplus, which was certified at \$374,263. Similarly, in FY2015 the combined revenue and expenditure surplus of \$446,218 resulted in a projected certified E&D of approximately \$800,000.

A target of 3.5-4% of the current year's budget would provide a substantial balance for unforeseen expenditures and would also be a positive factor for the District's bond rating. Accordingly, 3.5-4% of the FY2016 adopted budget of \$36,449,830 would give a range of \$1,275,744 to \$1,457,993. It will take the District a number of years to achieve this percentage but we are committed to getting there.

The Reserve for Expenditure account consists of E&D funds voted by School Committee to be used as a funding source for future expenditures. Once voted and approved, the funds are reclassified into Reserve for Expenditure.

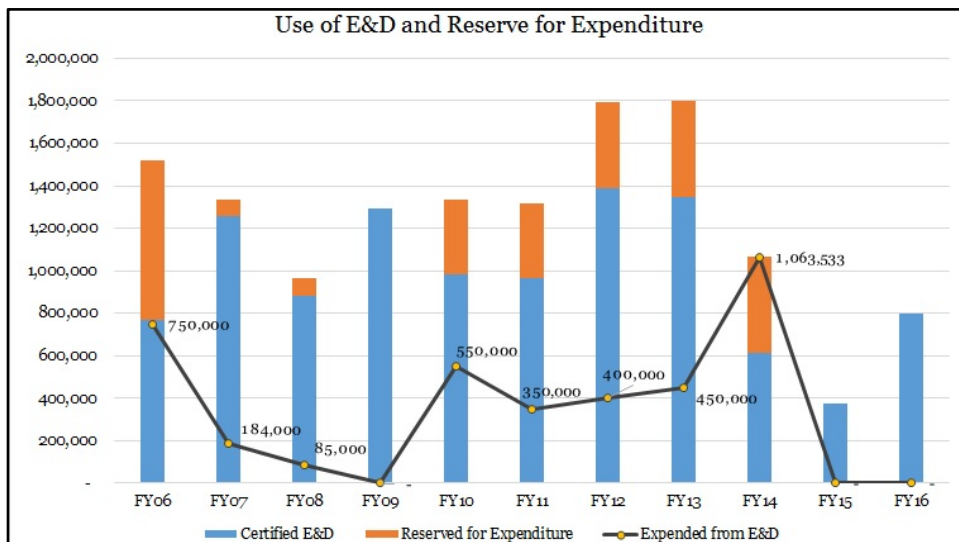


Figure 13: Use of E&D and reserve for expenditure

Special Revenue

Special Revenue Funds are established to account for specific, restricted purposes as mandated by law. These include federal and state grants, revolving funds, and gifts.

Grants

In FY2016, we are receiving \$783,472 in federal, state and private grant funding. The major source of the district's grant funding is the federal Title VI Special Education Allocation grant, which funds para-educators, special education contract services, supplies and tuitions. Total grant revenues decreased from FY2015 to FY2016 by \$7,883. Likewise, the district anticipates a slight decrease in grant funding in FY2017 due to the downward trend of the past 10 years of federal and state allocations (excluding ARRA and Ed Jobs grants received from 2009 through 2012).

Table 25: Grant funding trends

Grants	Actual FY2015	Awarded FY2016	Projected FY2017
Federal Grants			
Title I	\$50,412	\$54,162	\$54,412
Title IIA	\$39,408	\$39,775	\$39,775
Title VI	\$646,530	\$644,362	642,000
Special Ed Program Improvement	\$21,494	\$20,865	\$20,500
Early Childhood	\$16,620	\$16,608	\$16,500
Early Childhood Program Improvement	\$0	\$2,000	\$0
Total-Federal Grants	\$774,464	\$777,772	\$773,187
State Grants			
Academic Support	\$2,800	\$0	\$0
Foundation Reserve	\$0	\$0	\$0
Big Yellow School Bus (Mass Cultural Council)	\$200	\$200	\$200
STARS (Mass Cultural Council)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Essential School Health Services (MA Dept. Public Health)	\$910	\$500	\$500
Total-State Grants	\$3,910	\$700	\$700
Private Grants			
Groton Dunstable Education Foundation *	\$12,981	\$5,000	\$5,000
Total-Private Grants	\$12,981	\$5,000	\$5,000
GRAND TOTAL-ALL GRANTS	\$791,355	\$783,472	\$778,887

As you can see in the following tables, we have the same FTE's budgeted in FY2016 as we do in FY2017 but we reduced the amount spent on salaries in the grants by \$19,148. We do this for two reasons. The first reason is because when we pay out of the grant for teacher salaries, we are charged a retirement contribution to Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System (MTRS) and that means we receive less money overall (9%). The second reason is that these entitlement grants, in general, have a history of reductions in recent years while salaries increase.

Table 26: FY2016 Grant accounts salaries

Position	FY2016 Budgeted Salary	FY2016 Budgeted FTE	FY2017 Budgeted Salary	FY2017 Budgeted FTE	Grant Account
Teacher	50,078	1	54,412	1	Title I
Administrator	12,000	0	12,0000	0	Title IIA
Spec. Ed Analyst	80,000	1	0	0	Title VI-240
Admin Assistant	34,162	1	46,521	1	Title VI-240
Paraprofessional	70,281	4	133,840	6	Title VI-240
Spec. Ed Specialist	43,917	1	0	0	Title VI-240
Paraprofessional	15,700	1	16,500	1	262-Early Child.
Total	282,421	9	263,273	9	

All of our revolving account balances are healthy with the exception of the athletics account. We made progress in this account in FY2015 by reducing the deficit from \$31,662 to \$16,257. We anticipate that athletics will have a healthy balance by FY2018. The district was able to restore a combined \$843,848 in all of the revolving accounts from 7-1-14 to 6-30-15, which was the planned goal of the FY2015 budget. This money was used to close the deficits in FY2013 and FY2014.

The expenses in salaries in our revolving accounts have increased by \$80,171 and the FTE amount increased .24 from FY2016's budgeted amount. Again, now that these accounts are healthy, we can return to funding previously funded amounts to help lower the general fund.

Table 27: Revolving funds balances as of 6/30/2015

Revolving Funds	Beginning Balance 7/1/2014	FY2015 Revenues	FY2015 Expenditures	Ending Balance 6/30/2015
Food Service Revolving	190,137	827,039	813,978	203,198
Athletic Revolving	-31,662	331,565	316,160	-16,257
Football Revolving	18,278	65,046	63,987	19,337
Unified Sports	150	5,125	5,275	0
Early Learning Center	0	327,960	148,858	179,102
School Choice (Students In)	0	296,230	86,361	209,869
Circuit Breaker	0	841,370	642,764	198,606
Regional Transportation	0	58,563	0	58,563
Performing Arts Center	13,792	22,805	22,648	13,949
Building Use Revolving	33,560	56,046	42,480	47,126
Community Ed Programs	99,821	169,288	151,574	117,535
Peter Twomey YC Fund	33,787	1,206	723	34,270
Extended Day (PTYC)	220,008	459,040	369,709	309,339
HS Parking Lot Fund	51,182	23,800	27,878	47,104
HS Non Resident Tuition	87,762	199,500	144,082	143,180
School Gift Funds	16,554	15,043	16,836	14,761
Lost Book Accounts	7,385	1,528	2,191	6,722
HS Enrichment	1,802	12,238	14,040	0
SEPAC	1,210	0	0	1,210
Boutwell Parent/Child Group	1,356	0	0	1,356
Insurance Claim Revolving	0	4,310	4,310	0
Total-All Revolving Funds	745,122	3,717,702	2,873,854	1,588,970

Table 28: FY2016-FY2017 revolving accounts salaries

Position	FY2016 Budgeted Salary	FY2016 Budgeted FTE	FY2017 Budgeted Salary	FY2017 Budgeted FTE	Revolving Account
Administrator	35,000	0.3	30,000	.25	Food Service
Food Service	403,375	17.89	396,839	17.39	Food Service
Admin Assistant	13,213	0.5	15,236	.5	Athletics
Teacher	98,844	1.2	115,449	1.3	Non Resident Tuition
Special Ed Teacher	124,850	2.5	143,415	2	Early Learning Tuition
Paraprofessional	162,662	7	208,695	8.19	Early Learning Tuition
Admin Assistant	37,326	1	42,591	1	PTYC
Custodian	23,127	0.5	23,503	.5	PTYC
Administrator	74,735	1	77,575	1	PTYC
Total	973,132	31.89	1,053,303	32.13	