



**FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
JOINT MEETING WITH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
April 10, 2025**

**FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
RCUD 2025 MAY 1 AM 11:37**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Colin Veitch, Stephanie Pickup, Nicole Pacheco, Kelly Ochoa

STAFF PRESENT: Superintendent Tara Kohler, School Business Manager Nicole Potter, Executive Assistant Sheri Souza

OTHERS PRESENT: Members of the Fairhaven Finance Committee, Assistant Town Administrator / Town Accountant Anne Carreiro, members of the community, teachers and staff from the Fairhaven Public School District.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Veitch at 6:32 pm.

Superintendent Tara Kohler and School Committee Chair Colin Veitch presented the FY26 budget for the Fairhaven Public School District (FPSD). Mrs. Kohler stated it was requested for her to go over Net School Spending (NSS), what it is, and how it works. Mrs. Kohler presented slides from the State and the Department of Education (DESE) to the committees (Attachment A) regarding NSS and noted how close we are to falling below. Mrs. Kohler also went over Chapter 70 funds, the extreme increase of Out of District costs, and FPSD Capital projects. Mrs. Kohler and Mr. Vietch then fielded any questions and concerns from the two Boards regarding the proposed budget.

Motion to adjourn made by Mrs. Pickup, seconded by Mrs. Pacheco, roll call vote, approved (4-0).

Adjourned at 9:08 pm.

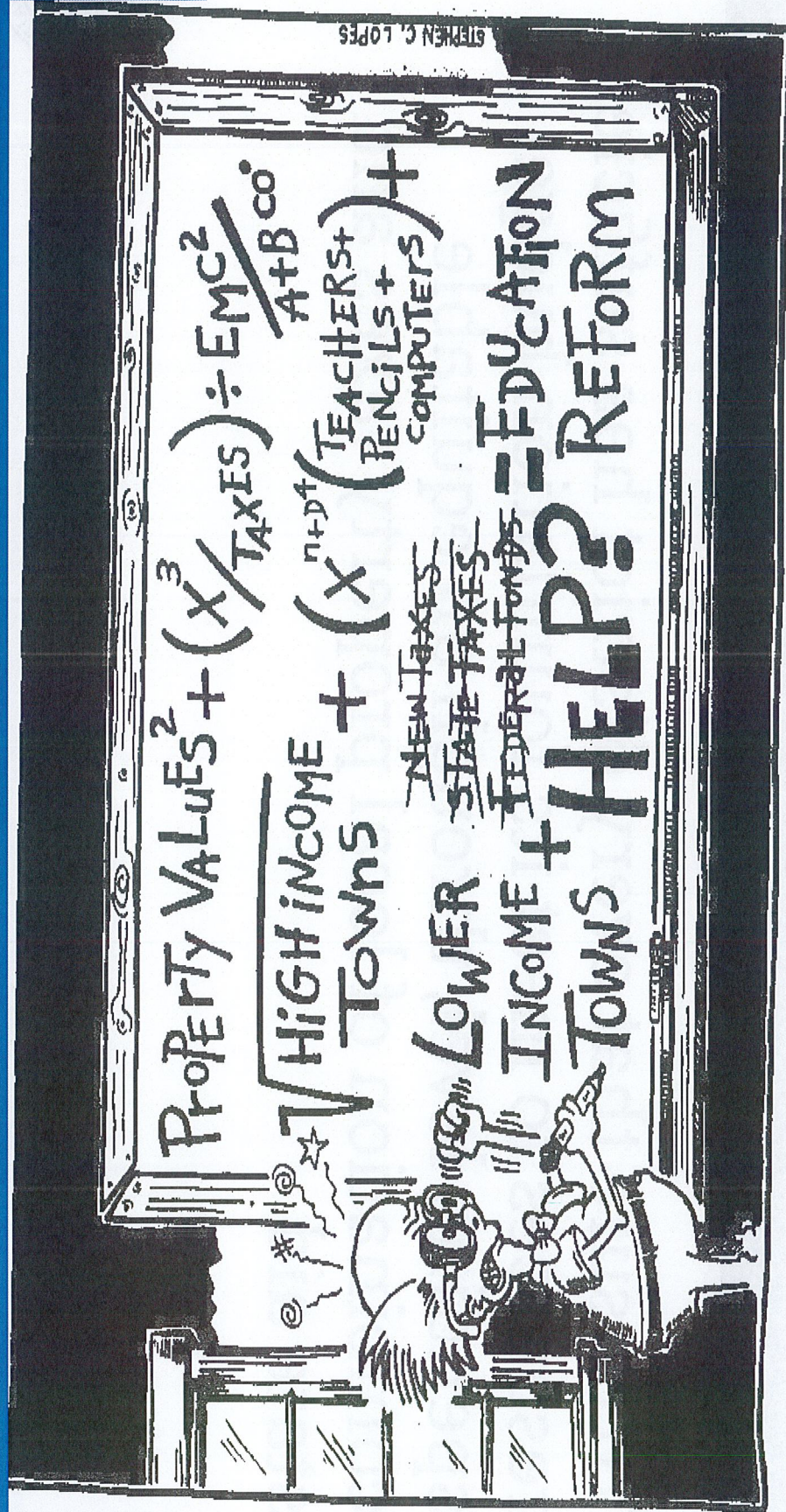
Sheri Souza
Secretary to the School Committee
Fairhaven Public Schools

Approved: April 30, 2025

FAIRHAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FY26 Budget Presentation





EDUCATION REFORM'S FINANCING FORMULA

Goal of Chapter 70 Formula

To ensure that every district has sufficient resources to meet its foundation budget spending level, through an equitable combination of local property taxes and state aid.



FY 26 Net School Spending

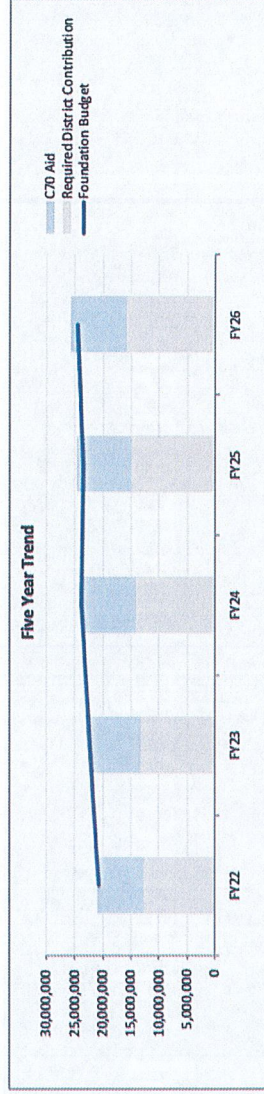
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education FY26 Chapter 70 Summary

94 Fairhaven

Aid Calculation FY26

Comparison to FY25

Prior Year Aid	Enrollment	FY25	FY26	Change	Pct Chg
1 Chapter 70 FY25		1,595	1,590	-5	-0.31%
Foundation Aid					
2 Foundation budget FY26	9,797,583	23,598,054	24,525,651	927,596	3.93%
3 Required district contribution FY26		14,889,430	15,860,855	971,425	6.52%
4 Foundation aid (2 - 3)		9,797,583	9,916,833	119,250	1.22%
5 Increase over FY25 (4 - 1)		24,687,013	25,777,688	1,090,675	4.42%
Minimum Aid					
6 \$75 per pupil increase	119,250	26.52%	26.97%		
7 Minimum aid amount (if line 6 - line 5 > 0, then line 6 - line 5, otherwise 0)	119,250	41.52%	40.43%		
Subtotal		104.61%	105.11%		
8 Sum of 1,5,7					
Minimum Aid Adjustment					
9 Minimum aid adjustment	9,845,283				
10 Aid adjustment increment (if line 9 - line 8 > 0, then line 9 - line 8, otherwise 0)	0				
Non-Operating District Reduction to Foundation					
11 Reduction to foundation	0				
Hold Harmless Aid					
12 Hold harmless aid	0				
FY26 Chapter 70 Aid					
13 Sum of 1,5,7,10, 12 minus 11	9,916,833				



Required Net School Spending Increase

FY26 Required Net School Spending:	\$25,777,688
- FY25 Required Net School Spending:	\$24,687,013
= Mandatory Increase from FY25 NSS:	\$1,090,675



FY26 Town Placeholder

FY26 Town Placeholder: \$25,256,166

\$521,522 below Net School Spending



Annual School Spending Requirements

ANNUAL SCHOOL SPENDING REQUIREMENTS

The Commissioner of Education shall determine each school district's actual net school spending in the prior fiscal year and the estimated net school spending in the current year from information contained in the End-of-Year Pupil and Financial Report.

A. Eligible Net School Spending Categories

1. The sum of the following expenditures for public education from local revenues and M.G.L. c. 70 school aid, reported in accordance with 603 CMR 10.06 and these Guidelines shall be considered a school district's annual net school spending for purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of M.G.L., c70.

- 1000 - All Administrative Services
- 2000 - All Instructional Services
- 3100 - Attendance Services
- 3200 - Health Services
- 3400 - Food Services not including the cost of food
- 3510 - Athletic Services
- 3520 - Other Student Activities
- 4000 - All Operation and Maintenance of Plant
- 5100 - Employee Retirement
- 5200 - Insurance Programs
- 5260 - Non employee insurance
- 5300 - Rental-Lease of Land, Buildings and Equipment
- 5400 - Short Term Debt Service/Interest - RANS
- 9100 - Programs with Other Districts in Massachusetts
- 9110 - School Choice Tuition
- 9120 - Tuition to Charter Schools
- 9200 - Programs with School Districts in Other States
- 9300 - Programs with Schools Other than Public Schools
- 9400 - Payments to Collaboratives



Per Pupil Spending

State Avg 2023: \$21,116

Fairhaven 2023: \$16,788

Difference: \$4,328

1,830 Students = \$7,900,000



Net School Spending Facts

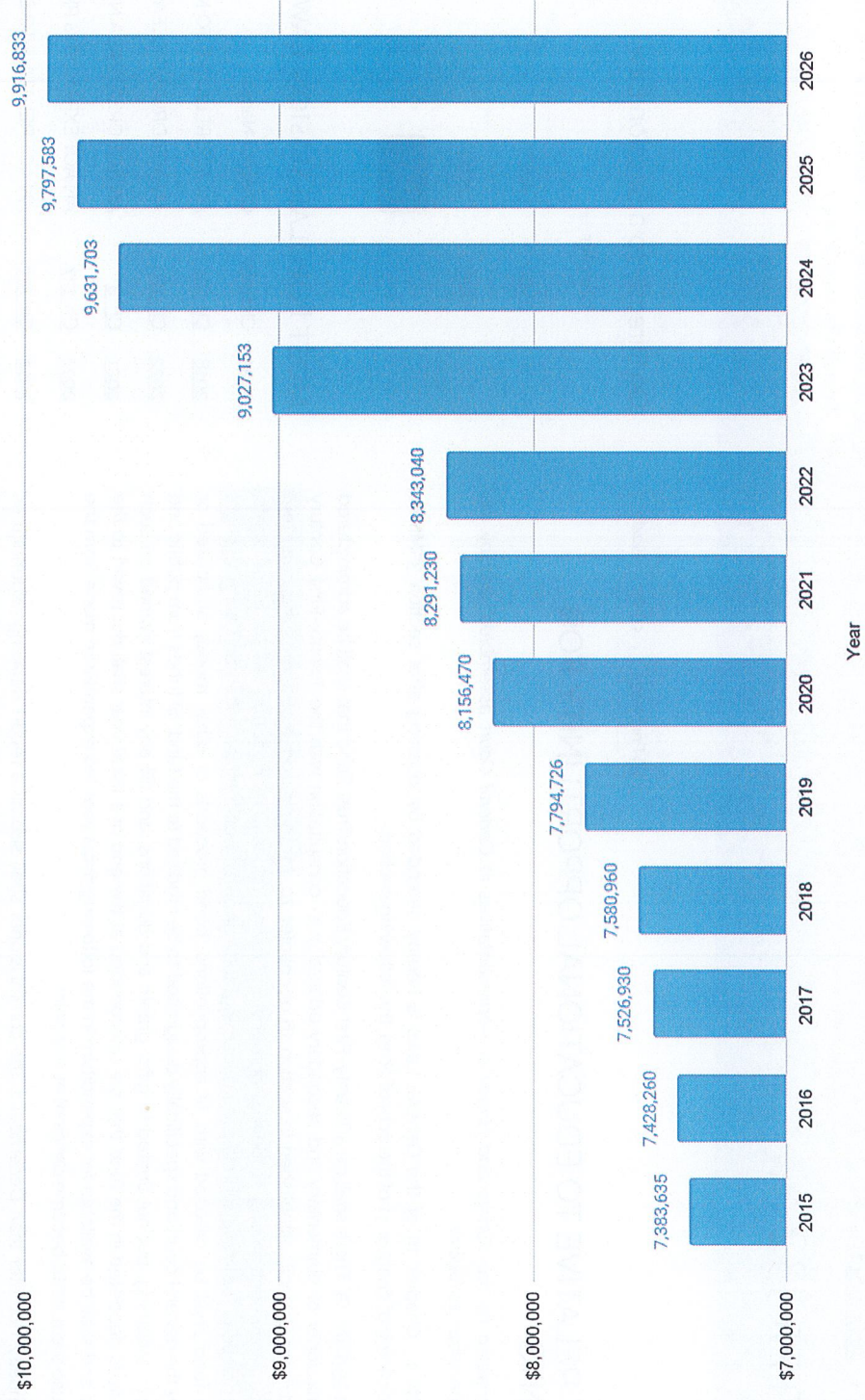
- State average is 126% of the state's net school spending requirement
- Scaled by per-pupil spending, Fairhaven spends \$8 million less than average.
- Fairhaven's school funding would rank lower than 98% of districts in MA.

Possible LEGAL and DISTRICT consequences if the funding crisis is not addressed:

Non-approval of tax rate
Enforcement action by A.G.
Reduction in State Aid
Loss of NEASC accreditation
Maximized class sizes
Elimination of clubs and sports
Elimination of fine arts programs
Staff layoffs



Chapter 70 (State) Funding by Year



CHAPTER 132

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AN ACT RELATIVE TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 10 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 35MMM, inserted by section 9 of chapter 41 of the acts of 2019, the following section:-

Section 35NNN. (a) There shall be a Twenty-First Century Education Trust Fund that shall be administered by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education in consultation with the Twenty-First Century Education Advisory Council, established in section 16 of chapter 70, for the purpose of addressing persistent disparities in achievement among student subgroups, improving educational opportunities for all students, sharing best practices for improving classroom learning and supporting efficiencies within and across school districts. The fund shall be credited with: (i) appropriations, bond proceeds or other money authorized or transferred by the general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund; (ii) funds from public and private sources, including, but not limited to gifts, grants and donations; and (iii) any interest earned on such money. Revenues deposited in the fund that are unexpended at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund and shall be available for expenditure in the following fiscal year. No expenditure made from the fund shall cause the fund to become deficient at any point.

(b) Annually, not later than December 1, the commissioner shall submit a report detailing expenditures from the trust fund to the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means and the chairs of the joint committee on education.

SECTION 2. Chapter 15 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 1 the following section:-

Section 1½. The definitions in section 2 of chapter 70 shall apply to this chapter.

SECTION 3. Section 13E of chapter 40 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is

Go Directly to a Session Law

Chapter

Type

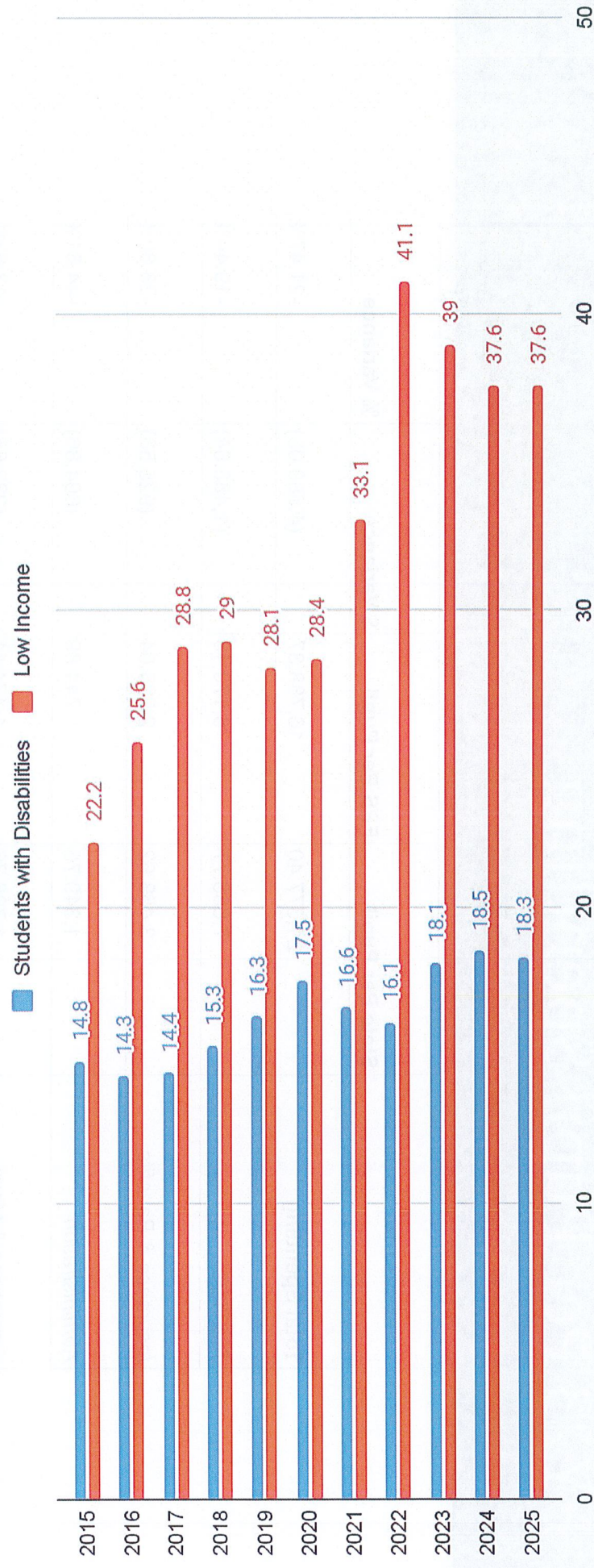
Year

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MOST POPULAR SESSION LAWS

Year	Chapter	Chapter Name
2018	Ch. 121	AN ACT RELATIVE TO MINI...
2022	Ch. 179	AN ACT DRIVING CLEAN E...
2021	Ch. 8	AN ACT CREATING A NEXT-...
2022	Ch. 127	AN ACT EXPANDING PROT...
2012	Ch. 222	AN ACT RELATIVE TO STUD...
2018	Ch. 69	AN ACT RELATIVE TO CRIMI...
2023	Ch. 2	AN ACT MAKING APPROPRI...
2022	Ch. 268	AN ACT RELATING TO ECO...
2023	Ch. 77	AN ACT MAKING APPROPRI...
2020	Ch. 253	AN ACT RELATIVE TO JUSTI...

Selected Student Population % - 10 Year Picture



FY23 Per Pupil Spending

	State Per Pupil	FPS Per Pupil	\$ Variance	% Variance
Total Spending	21,377.40	16,788.37	(4,589.03)	-21.47%
<i>Teachers</i>	7,658.77	6,170.13	(1,488.64)	-19.44%
<i>Insurance & Benefits</i>	3,453.62	2,528.04	(925.58)	-26.80%
<i>Administration</i>	1,349.75	744.89	(604.86)	-44.81%
<i>Operations & Maint</i>	1,706.76	1,474.11	(232.65)	-13.63%
<i>Pupil Services</i>	2,206.59	1,879.34	(327.25)	-14.83%

Source: MA DESE FY23 Per-Pupil Spending

FPS Student Achievement

The table on the next slide compares Fairhaven to the 10 school systems that DESE defines as comparable districts statewide based on various demographic attributes. The comparison shown uses two metrics: (1) the total percentage of students meeting or exceeding Math and ELA MCAS tests for the past 2 years, equally weighted by grade level and (2) the 2-year weighted report card score provided by DESE for each district's substantial progress towards meeting targeted goals.

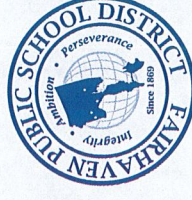


FPS Student Achievement

	AVG	MCAS	SUB	MCAS	SUB	2024	2024	2024	2024	2023	2023	2023	2023
	RANK	RANK	RANK	2 YR 3-10	K-12	E 3-8	M 3-8	E 10	M 10	E 3-8	M 3-8	E 10	M 10
Fairhaven	1.5	2	1	47	55	42	51	49	57	44	50	48	49
Central Berkshire	3.5	4	3	42	49	42	39	53	64	43	37	53	52
Swansea	5.0	3	7	44	46	37	45	52	51	41	45	61	54
Monomoy Regional	5.5	1	10	49	42	46	47	56	49	51	48	62	61
Blackstone-Millville	6.0	7	5	39	47	34	38	52	42	39	39	54	36
Carver	6.0	10	2	35	54	39	33	54	36	29	31	52	41
East Bridgewater	7.0	5	9	41	44	41	38	43	27	46	40	48	36
Narragansett	7.0	11	3	32	49	26	27	58	41	30	33	55	46
Northbridge	7.0	9	5	36	47	32	37	60	46	30	35	60	47
Southwick-Tolland	7.0	6	8	40	45	35	40	61	55	37	39	58	49
Westport	9.5	8	11	37	39	33	37	47	30	37	41	47	33

FPS Student Achievement

Fairhaven ranks second in MCAS scores and first in substantial progress, with no other district ranking in the top three of both categories.





State Code	FY26 Budgeted -NSS
1000 District Leadership & Administration	252,290
2210 School Leadership	65,225
2250 Tech/Maintenance Agreements	28,975
2357 Professional Development	147,951
2410 Textbooks	56,802
2430 Instructional Equip./General Supplies	188,363
2440 Other Instructional Services (Tutoring)	89,780
2450 Instructional Technology	219,549
2710 Guidance and Adjustment	18,000
2800 Psychological Services	9,000
TOTAL INSTRUCTION	823,645
3200 Medical Health Services	9,866
3300 Transportation Services	1,875,506
3500 Athletics/Student Activities	383,691
3400 Food Service	1,200
3600 School Security	35,000
TOTAL STUDENT SERVICES	2,305,263
4110 Custodial Services	1,500
4120 Heating of Buildings	240,000
4130 Utility Services	402,260
4200 Maintenance	321,925
4225 Building Security Equipment	30,882
4400 Networking and Telecommunications	2,500
TOTAL MAINTENANCE	999,067
5260 Non-Employee Insurance	3,390
5300 Lease Agreements	28,950
9000 Out of District Tuitions	1,464,019
OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURES	5,876,624
SALARY	19,901,064
TOTAL REQUEST	25,777,688
INCREASE	957,475
PERCENTAGE INCREASE	3.86%

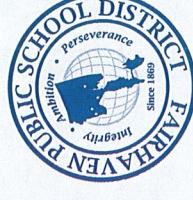
FY26 Federal Grant Funding Update

Update on FY26 Federal Grant Funding

On March 14, 2025, the Senate passed a full-year continuing resolution (CR), which included level-funding of most entitlement grants, including ESSA and IDEA. These funds will be available for the FY26 round of grants issued by Massachusetts.

Notably, the CR normally has both a top-level amount for federal education grants as well as an explanatory statement with specific amounts for each grant program (e.g., Title I, Title IIA, IDEA). However, this CR did not contain designated amounts for all grant programs. It does have specific amounts for Titles IA, IIIA, and IVA & B, and therefore we expect those programs will be level funded in FY26, though note there will be fluctuations in FY26 funding amounts due to normal enrollment changes. In addition, the CR maintains level funding for Perkins funding for formula grants through September 30, 2025, but gives discretion to the administration for this funding after that date. Similarly, the CR does not have specifics for Title I Part D, Title IIA, and IDEA. Therefore, there is some ambiguity in the expectations for the latter programs and how the lack of specific amounts for Title I-D, Title IIA, IDEA, and Perkins will be interpreted by U.S. Department of Education officials.

We will keep you informed through our newsletters and other communications as we are notified of the process and funding for our federal grant programs.



Federal Funding - Title I

Title I Part A of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides financial assistance to districts and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.

Grant supports:

- Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning (1)
- WIN Paraprofessionals/District Interventionist (5)
- WIN Consultant and program



Federal Funding - Special Ed IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Federal Special Education Entitlement Grant provides funds to ensure that eligible students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education that includes special education and related services designed to meet their individual needs in the least restrictive environment

Grant supports:

- Special Education Teachers (4)
- School Psychologist (1)
- Special Education Clerk (1)



Federal Funding - Special Ed IDEA Early Childhood

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Federal Special Education Entitlement Grant provides funds to ensure that eligible students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education that includes special education and related services designed to meet their individual needs in the least restrictive environment (Preschool)

Grant supports:

- Special Education Paraprofessional (1)



Federal Funding - Title IV - After School Programs

Provides districts with funds to build capacity and ensure that all students have access to a high quality educational experience

Grant supports:

- After School salaries and programming



FPS FY24 Net School Spending vs. State

Most Districts Spend in Excess of Net School Spending

