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**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

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**SUPERINTENDENT**

*Margaret Adams, Ed.D.*

January 11, 2024

Dear Hingham Public Schools Community:

At the School Committee meeting earlier this week, the Superintendent presented a first look at the [projected budget for the 2024-2025 school year](#) (fiscal year 2025). The report highlighted that the district faces fiscal challenges ahead as several major expenses increase to outpace the revenue available to cover them.

The Superintendent's budget presentation included the following points:

- The total budget for the Hingham Public Schools this year is \$65.7 million. This budget was partially achieved through an operational override of \$7.9 million approved by voters last spring to support several Town departments. The override enabled the school district to maintain additional positions created during the pandemic to address students' increased academic and social-emotional needs and prevent layoffs for this school year.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of Hingham ensures a 3.5% increase in funding for the school district each year. Based on that increase and anticipated State funding, we estimate \$68 million from the Town allocated to the schools for the FY25 budget.
- However, initial projections indicate anticipated expenses for FY25 to be approximately \$2.8 million more than the amount allocated by the Town to the schools. That shortfall is partly due to significant increases in major expenses:
  - Of the \$2.8 million, \$1.6 million is due to increased special education costs, including out-of-district special education tuition and specialized contracted services. The MOU with the Town includes provisions for the School Committee to request funding to cover unanticipated increases in these costs.

- The remaining \$1.2 million of the projected deficit is due to the district's obligations on several budget drivers, including meeting existing contractual agreements with our employees, utilities, and increases in substitute educator costs.

Clearly, these fiscal pressures also have implications for the School Committee's ongoing [contract negotiations](#) with the Hingham Education Association (HEA), particularly given the salary and wage increases that union leaders have proposed. The current FY25 budget proposal includes the funds needed to support the School Committee's latest offer to the units currently in negotiations.

District leaders will explore various ways to achieve a balanced budget during the upcoming budget process and will present several scenarios to the School Committee to minimize the impact on the academic and enrichment programs essential to a first-rate education in the Hingham Public Schools.

As always, we welcome community input on this important process, and we invite you to share your perspectives about how best to allocate the resources available. Please visit the [School Committee meetings page](#) of our website for more information.

Sincerely,

Nes Correnti  
School Committee Chair

Margaret Adams, Ed.D.  
Superintendent