

Dear Resident of Sudbury,

The FY16 budget is projected to be 3.02% greater than FY15. The Sudbury School Committee along with SPS administration developed a budget that is responsive to the needs of our students, supports the work of our teachers, and takes into account our obligations to comply with mandates to align our curriculum to the most recent MA standards and to continue implementation of the new Educator Evaluation System.

The FY16 budget that is presented in this warrant totals \$39,684,331, an increase of \$1,163,032 over the current year. This budget reflects a level increase in state and local revenue sources compared to the current year. This assumption, as well as others, remains somewhat fluid and uncertain at this point in time. We anticipate that this fluidity may continue up until Town Meeting.

As we focus on meeting the diverse needs of our students, we continue a multi-year effort to re-build our teaching and learning infrastructure to challenge and support all learners. In addition, we continue to implement two significant mandates; most recent MA Standards in Mathematics and ELA and the new Educator Evaluation system. Both mandates require ongoing professional development, curriculum resources, operational supports, instructional technology and time for staff across the district to collaborate.

In order to continue to respond to the needs of our students, as determined by review of a variety of local and state data, to support the work and development of educators, and to enhance educational opportunities for all students, we include the following in the FY16 budget: 1.0 FTE Middle School Co-Teaching, 1.0 FTE social/emotional/behavioral specialist, and 1.0 FTE Assistant Principal, and 1.0 FTE Data Analyst.

Student enrollment directly impacts budget planning. SPS enrollment is projected to decline in FY16 by approximately 72 students (-2.51%) across the district. All three grade levels at the middle school will continue to have enrollments in excess of 300 (6th-333, 7th-325, 8th-325) students while our incoming Kindergarten class was 248 for FY 15 and is projected to be approximately 249 for FY16. The uncertainty of the real estate market and, in particular, the number of homes “on the market,” continues to be an additional factor which impacts our ability to plan in a programmatically and fiscally responsible manner. Our enrollment projections for FY16, while addressing factors that are known to us, allow for little flexibility if we should experience an influx of school aged children. Therefore, if there is an increase in student population due to “move-ins”, we will need to add class sections/FTEs if we are to remain within reasonable proximity to the class size guidelines established.

A key budget driver is special education. This federal and state mandated program requires us to provide a level of service that meets the needs of each identified student starting at age 3. Over the past few years we have developed programs within our schools that allow us to serve the students in Sudbury with lower costs than serving them in out-of-district placements. The creation of additional in-district special education programs allows Sudbury students to be educated with their peers in Sudbury and although requiring additional staffing, these programs are more cost effective than out-of-district placements. At this time, we project our special education expenses - not including salaries - will be 6.34% less in FY16 than FY15. Because special education accounts for nearly 27% of our operating budget, we are continually seeking every efficiency and economy possible while maintaining a quality, mandated level of service.

The SPS School Committee and administration seek to provide all Sudbury students with an exceptional educational experience, in a safe environment, that allows them to reach their academic and personal goals and become educated, confident, well rounded, and thoughtful contributors in our society. We will continue to offer leadership to achieve these goals in a fiscally responsible manner.

Respectfully yours,

*Dr. Anne S. Wilson*  
SPS Superintendent