FY26 Budget Preview
FY25 Budget Impact
GDRSD

October 23, 2024

GDRSD School Committee
Groton Select Board
Groton Finance Committee
Dunstable Advisory Board
Dunstable Select Board

FY26 Preliminary Budget Overview: October 2024

I. FY25 Budget Impact

- Academic
- Student Support
- Special Education

II. Preliminary Budget Development

- Meeting Student Needs - major cost drivers
- Funding and Revenue: Ch. 70
- Funding and Revenue: Town Assessments

III. What's Next

Positions Cut: FY25

ELA Curriculum Coordinator

HR Administrative Assistant

Social Worker

Team Chair

Content Coordinators

Special Education Teacher: FloRo

Reading Specialist: FloRo

Innovation Technology: FloRo

Librarian: FloRo

Counselor: FloRo

Math Interventionist: Elementary

Reading Specialist: Swallow Union

Special Education Teacher: GDRHS

Social Studies Teacher: GDRHS

Nurse: GDRHS

ELA Teacher: GDRHS

Math Teacher: GDRHS

Special Education Teacher: GDRMS

Team Chair: Middle School

Counselor: Middle School

Digital Literacy Teacher: Middle School

Administrative Assistant: Middle School

Nurse: Middle School/FloRo

Library/Technology: Swallow Union

Academic Impact: Student Learning, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment

Math Intervention cut: District-wide math supervisor taking on math intervention at Swallow Union. FloRo has one full time math interventionist. Groups are larger, meet less frequently, reduced individualized support

Library/Technology teachers cut: FloRo and Swallow Union. Libraries now staffed with paraprofessionals - impact to curriculum/design reduction of collaboration with classroom teachers

High School Social Studies, Math, ELA teachers cut: class size increases across departments, loss of electives, limited course options for students, 100+ scheduling meetings with students, impact to program of studies

CLASS SIZE at all levels impacted: Elementary, Middle, High School

Curriculum Coordinator stipends cut: limited teacher leadership in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Content PD and PD/PL efforts fall exclusively to Assistant Superintendent and Leadership Team: need to restore teacher leadership and collaboration with staff who are with our students!

Student Support: Health, Wellness, and Social Emotional Learning

District Social Worker: increased caseloads shifted to other counselors, flexibility & scheduling of sessions impacted, communication/response to student and families impacted

Districtwide 1.7 FTE Nurse reduction: 0.5 FTE at Floro; 0.5 FTE at Middle School; 0.7 FTE at High School. Below state guidelines (nurse to student ratio) at MS and HS. Nurse's office closed in MS North building. Shared nurse between FloRo and MS South makes coverage a challenge. 7th and 8th graders walk to South Nurse's office.

Middle School Counselor: larger caseloads - loss of continuity (8th grade shared across three counselors)

High School Guidance Counselor and Assistant Principal cuts from FY24: increased caseloads for counseling staff; Team chairs at high school manage 504 plans.

Special Education Services & Student Support

Team Chair Positions cut: impacts Elementary, Middle, High School. Student Services admin office taking on additional responsibilities. Scheduling challenges for IEP meetings, evaluations, etc.

Special education teachers cut: Elementary, Middle & High School: caseloads increase at all levels: larger instructional groups, less flexibility/availability for scheduling, evaluations, team meetings.

District social worker cut: increased caseloads, impacts responsiveness and flexibility for scheduling groups and attending meetings.

Reading interventionist cut: *outline impact

BCBA cut: increased caseloads, responsiveness and flexibility for scheduling consultations, PD, meetings.

Class Size

Average Class Size		
School Year	**23/24**	**24/25**
Florence Roche:		
K	19	17
Gr1	21.25	21
Gr2	21.6	22.4
Gr3	22.6	23.2
Gr4	22.8	22.8
Swallow Union:		
K	17.7	24
Gr1	23.7	18.5
Gr2	23.7	22.5
Gr3	19.3	23
Gr4	21.7	17
Middle School Avg:	21.75	23.1
High School Avg:	18	20.1

Some Common Themes:

Staff stretched thin, taking on additional responsibilities and tasks outside of their area of expertise/training. Many are feeling like they are being asked to do more with less. The good news: our staff is AMAZING, and puts the needs of kids first. Counseling caseloads and health/wellness coverage (1.7 FTE cut in nursing staff) is a challenge felt K-12.

Class Size is at its limit K-12.

Shrinking number of electives and course offerings for students at the high school.

Curriculum coordinator and lead teacher stipends are critical to maintain effective K-12 instructional leadership, collaboration among faculty and our school leadership team, and strengthening student learning in all classrooms. These positions/stipends need to be restored.

FY26 Preliminary Budget Development

School Committee FY26 budget guidance

- Sport Fee review and Family Cap Option
- Kindergarten Fees
- 5-year Capital Plan developed from Facilities Assessment
- Operational Audit performed
- Review of the Regional Agreement
- Reduced reliance on Excess & Deficiency

FY26 Major Cost Increases to Meet Student Needs:

Collective Bargaining Agreements

Benefits
- Health/Dental/Life/LTD Insurance
- Middlesex Retirement (9.15%)/Medicare
- OPEB ($20K)

Contracted Service
- 2% most services
- Custodial Cleaning Contract (17%
- Student support/evaluation (2%-40%)

Professional Development
- Majority 0% - 2%

Substitutes
- 10% to keep up with trend

Supplies
- 2% all supply lines

Transportation
- Regular Ed 3.3%
- Special Ed 23% increase
- Homeless Transportation 100%

OOD Tuitions
- 8.5% - 10% Inflation and placements

Utilities
- 2% - 5% Heating, Telephone, Sewer
- 10% Electricity
- $50K Water at HS

Collective bargaining update

The GDRSC and the GDEA agreed to a collective agreement for September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2027. The items that are tied to a financial impact include:

1. The membership agreed to shift their portion of health insurance premium by 5% over the contract term. In FY26, the employee will absorb an additional 3% of the premium and in FY27 the employee will absorb an additional 2%. The total 5% shift will **save** the school district over $500,000 during the duration of the agreement.
2. Salary increase totaling 9% over the 3 fiscal years - 3% each year.
3. Longevity incentive was updated
4. Hourly rate for hours beyond contract was updated (PD, sub coverage, etc.)
5. Employee substitute rate change from per diem to $40 per hour. This will **save** the district in the cost of substitutes.

What is else included in the FY26 budget?

The preliminary budget starts as level services budget. It includes all the positions and programs we currently have for FY25. As per budget guidance, it also includes:

- Incorporate additional Kindergarten expenses to the general fund $125,000 (this should lower full day kindergarten fee over 3 years)
- Reduce the reliance of E & D as a revenue source to support the general fund. The projections include a reduction from $500K to $400K.

Updating the 5-Year Projection Calculation - Revenue

State Aid

- Chapter 70 - FY25 Funding plus hold harmless $30 per student
- Chapter 71 - FY25 Funding plus 3%
- Charter Reimb - 5 year average due to large funding swings

Federal Aid

- Medicaid Reim - $150,000 (level fund)

Local Aid

- PTYC Rent - $92,500 (level fund)
- Interest Income - 5 year average to plan rate fluctuations
- Miscellaneous - $10,000 (level fund)
- E & D - Reduce by $100,000 each fiscal year (FY26 = $400,000)

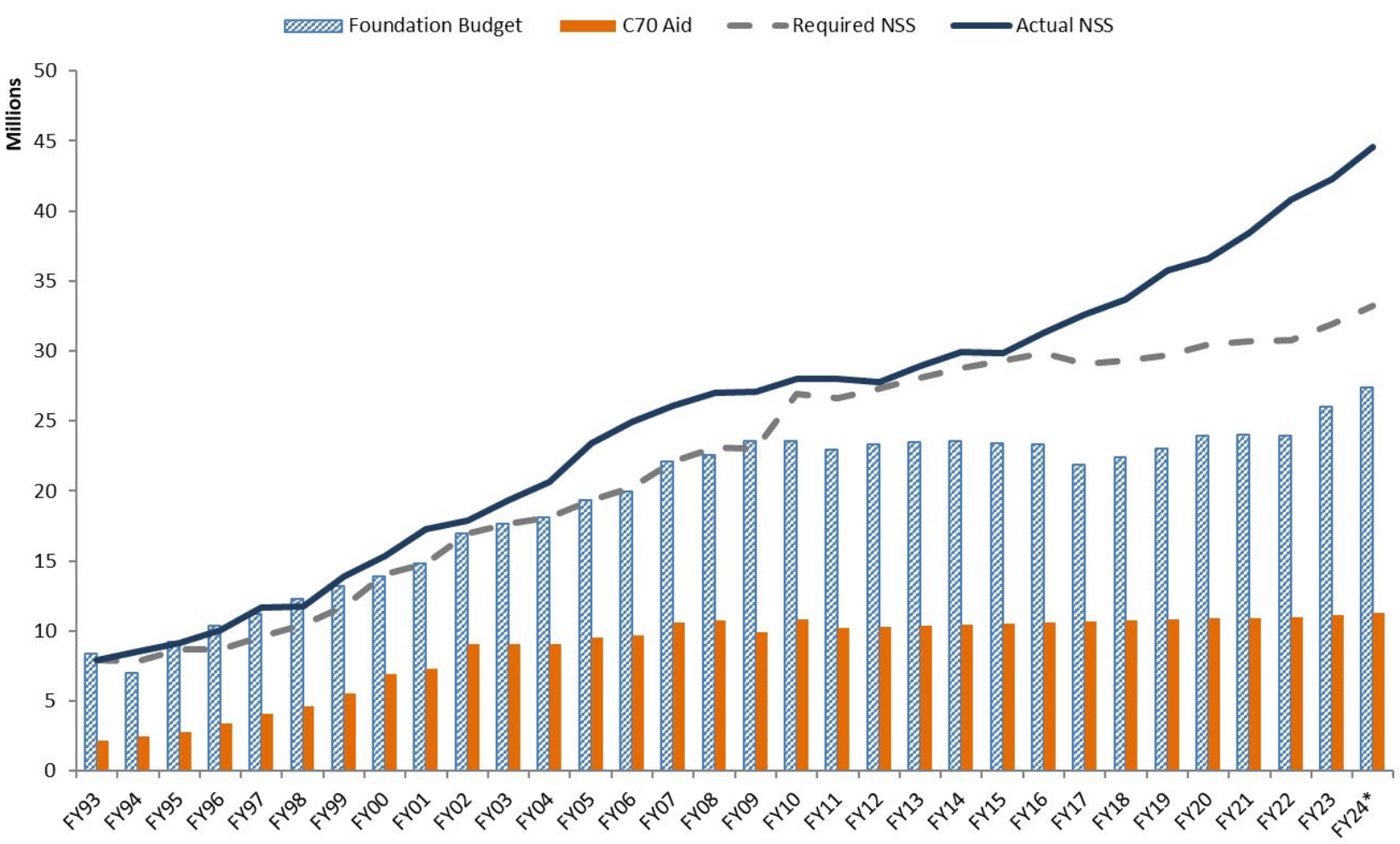
Recent history of Chapter 70 increases

GDRSD is one of 211 school districts in Massachusetts that are in hold harmless status. This means that they do not take away funding for declining enrollment, but they provide additional minimum aid per pupil. Those amounts were:

FY19 Enrollment: 2373 x $30 = $71,220
FY20 Enrollment: 2357 x $30 = $70,710
FY21 Enrollment: 2317 x $0 = $0* (GDRSD rec'd ESSER funds = $551,490)
FY22 Enrollment: 2253 x $30 = $67,590
FY23 Enrollment: 2288 x $60 = $137,280
FY24 Enrollment: 2283 x $60 = $136,980
FY25 Enrollment: 2250 x $30 = $67,500 BUT July increase to $104 = $234,000 however budget is passed using $30 per student. Excess to roll into E & D at the end of FY25

GDRSD Ch 70 Funding History

	Foundation Enrollment	% Chg	Foundation Budget	% Chg	Required Local Contribution	Chapter 70 Aid Reflects Penalties, where applicable	% Chg	Required Net School Spending Aid + Local Contribution	Required NSS Includes Carryover	% Chg	Actual NSS	% Chg	Dollars Over/Under Requirement	% Over/ Under
FY08	2,860	-1.70%	22,567,813	2.30%	12,305,992	10,757,109	1.60%	23,063,101	23,063,101	4.50%	27,022,910	3.40%	3,959,809	17.20%
FY09	2,838	-0.80%	23,533,501	4.30%	13,095,797	9,914,811	-7.80%	24,175,832	23,010,608	-0.20%	27,067,279	0.20%	4,056,671	17.60%
FY10	2,757	-2.90%	23,587,738	0.20%	16,063,245	10,858,434	9.50%	26,921,679	26,921,679	17.00%	27,971,858	3.30%	1,050,179	3.90%
FY11	2,745	-0.40%	22,939,192	-2.70%	16,429,914	10,224,085	-5.80%	26,653,999	26,653,999	-1.00%	28,038,150	0.20%	1,384,151	5.20%
FY12	2,735	-0.40%	23,308,786	1.60%	17,069,512	10,278,973	0.50%	27,348,485	27,348,485	2.60%	27,781,983	-0.90%	433,498	1.60%
FY13	2,640	-3.50%	23,452,027	0.60%	17,673,118	10,384,573	1.00%	28,057,691	28,057,691	2.60%	28,938,811	4.20%	881,120	3.10%
FY14	2,596	-1.70%	23,574,679	0.50%	18,322,278	10,449,473	0.60%	28,771,751	28,771,751	2.50%	29,918,904	3.40%	1,147,153	4.00%
FY15	2,552	-1.70%	23,421,974	-0.60%	18,828,192	10,513,273	0.60%	29,341,465	29,341,465	2.00%	29,827,764	-0.30%	486,299	1.70%
FY16	2,496	-2.20%	23,366,261	-0.20%	19,288,600	10,575,673	0.60%	29,864,273	29,864,273	1.80%	31,276,846	4.90%	1,412,573	4.70%
FY17	2,380	-4.60%	21,908,747	-6.20%	18,375,113	10,706,573	1.20%	29,081,686	29,081,686	-2.60%	32,583,854	4.20%	3,502,168	12.00%
FY18	2,385	0.20%	22,374,530	2.10%	18,540,836	10,778,123	0.70%	29,318,959	29,318,959	0.80%	33,662,086	3.30%	4,343,127	14.80%
FY19	2,373	-0.50%	23,046,297	3.00%	18,825,814	10,849,343	0.70%	29,675,157	29,675,157	1.20%	35,753,408	6.20%	6,078,251	20.50%
FY20	2,357	-0.70%	23,962,885	4.00%	19,528,829	10,920,053	0.70%	30,448,882	30,448,882	2.60%	36,594,678	2.40%	6,145,796	20.20%
FY21	2,317	-1.70%	24,034,914	0.30%	19,807,347	10,920,053	0.00%	30,727,400	30,727,400	0.90%	38,443,512	5.10%	7,716,112	25.10%
FY22	2,253	-2.80%	23,977,455	-0.20%	19,781,401	10,987,643	0.60%	30,769,044	30,769,044	0.10%	40,834,045	6.20%	10,065,001	32.70%
FY23	2,288	1.60%	26,006,774	8.50%	20,809,059	11,124,923	1.20%	31,933,982	31,933,982	3.80%	42,299,889	3.60%	10,365,907	32.50%
FY24*	2,283	-0.20%	27,429,942	5.50%	21,929,584	11,261,903	1.20%	33,191,487	33,191,487	3.90%	44,599,980	5.40%	11,408,493	34.40%


Foundation Budget
C70 Aid
Required NSS
Actual NSS
Millions
50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
FY93
FY94
FY95
FY96
FY97
FY98
FY99
FY00
FY01
FY02
FY03
FY04
FY05
FY06
FY07
FY08
FY09
FY10
FY11
FY12
FY13
FY14
FY15
FY16
FY17
FY18
FY19
FY20
FY21
FY22
FY23
FY24*

FY25 Operating Budget Funding Distribution

Dunstable	$7,962,157	16.7% of the budget
Groton	$26,412,384*	55.3% of the budget
Chapter 70	$11,329,403	23.7% of the budget
Chapter 71	$974,625	2.0% of the budget
Other State funding	$62,753	0.1% of the budget
Other Federal funding	$150,000	0.3% of the budget
Other Local funding	$852,911	1.8% of the budget

*does not include $619,000 gift

Updating the 5-Year Projection - Assessments

Applying the FY25 5-year rolling average percentage to the total needed to be assessed to the towns gives us the best estimate of the anticipated calculation.

	FY25	FY26	$ Incr	% Incr
Dunstable Assessment	$ 7,962,157	$ 8,538,803	$ 576,646	7.24%
Groton Assessment	$27,031,384	$28,879,266	$1,847,882	6.84%

Note: The Preliminary FY26 Budget is increasing 6.9%

What if the Towns do not have the funding for the Assessment?

If the Towns decided to go for an operational override, and that request failed again at the ballot, the School District would need to reduce the assessments to the amounts that the Towns could afford. If no other revenue could be identified to fill that need, the budget would need to be reduced.

Preliminary calculations indicate that the budget would need to be reduced by

$2,130,430.

What would that look like?

Applying the FY25 5-year rolling average percentage to the reduced total needed to be assessed to the towns.

	FY25	FY26	$ Incr	% Incr
Dunstable Assessment	$ 7,962,157	$ 8,052,639	$ 90,482	1.14%
Groton Assessment	$27,031,384	$27,235,000	$ 203,616	0.75%

Note: The Reduced Preliminary FY26 Budget would be increasing by 2.44%

What's next:

10/28 - Principal & Director Budget Requests due

10/29 - Supt & Director of Finance to meet as a group with Principals & Directors regarding requests and alignment of requests with district goals, DIPP, SIPP, etc.

As well as...

- Working with Regional Agreement consultants
- Working with Leftfield regarding building capital needs (MEP Assessment)
- Review Operational Audit recommendations and communicate results

Communication to Date

TriComm meeting on August 28th to discuss:

- Town preliminary revenue projections (multi-year)
- GDRSD updated 5 year projections with estimated assessments

School Committee has approved Budget Guidance and Timeline

TriComm meeting tonight October 23, 2024

Groton Town Charter change has been approved so we have more time to work on preliminary numbers due January 2025