

FY2022 Budget School Department

Superintendent's Recommended Budget

February 23, 2021

SY 2021-2022: A New Beginning

This school year, 2020-2021, has been a year like none we've ever experienced, and it has presented our district and its students, staff and families, with many unique and difficult challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic not only compromised the physical and mental well-being of our students and staff every day, but it created an extremely challenging educational environment in which equity, achievement and personal success were compromised for many students.

We have seen increased social-emotional issues and declining mental health, increased levels of student regression, and an overall decrease in typical levels of academic achievement and engagement across all schools and grade levels.

Due to the unpredictable course and length of the pandemic, plans to address these issues have unfortunately been more reactive than proactive. And though we continue to develop and implement new strategies and opportunities for remediation and support, and we will continue to do so through the end of the 2020-2021 school year and throughout the summer, many will not be resolved before the new school year begins.

We already know that the 2021-2022 school year is going to be a year of transition for many of our staff and students, as we open our beautiful new PK-5 building, and we move the 5th grade out of the middle school and back to elementary. We hope that this proves to be a positive and exciting opportunity for our students. However, for some students, particularly our high needs students, the transition may be an added difficulty for which additional academic and social supports will be needed.

We also know that, though we may not be facing identical COVID-19 related challenges next year, the adversity that many of our students and their families faced this year will still have residual effects and implications for student success in the 2021-2022 school year.

However, *with challenge comes opportunity*. And, our resilient NPS staff has embraced the challenges presented by remote and hybrid learning and developed new and exciting technology skills, as well as other innovative instructional strategies to engage students in diverse learning environments.

We are sure that these new skills and strategies will enhance the quality of teaching and learning when we are back to a “normal” in-person school year.

Focus for the FY22 Budget

Promote a STRONG opening of our school district this fall by ensuring that personnel, programming and practices:

- Support a successful transition of NES, Balmer and Grade 5 staff and students into the new Northbridge Elementary School
- Meet the academic and emotional needs of all NPS students **where they are** at the start of the 2021-2022 school year
- Focus on building trusting and collaborative relationships with students and their families to build a stronger and more inclusive NPS community
- Promote an innovative and rigorous curriculum for ALL students

ESSER II – CONTINUED COVID FUNDING

- These grant funds are intended to help school districts safely reopen schools and measure and effectively address significant learning loss
- Allocation: \$931,432
 - Per DESE : *Funding is contingent upon availability. All dollar amounts listed are estimated/approximate and are subject to change*
- Time frame: Funding available through 9/30/2023
- These funds are not included in the FY22 operating budget

ESSER II – CONTINUED COVID FUNDING

- This grant will be the primary source of funds to acquire necessary staffing and resources during the 2021-2022 school year to ensure we are able to meet the needs of our students where they are academically, socially and emotionally when they start the new school year.
- The goals and objectives of the new Strategic Plan, which will be identified as a result of our data and assessment review and root cause analysis process, will help guide the spending of this grant.
- Student Support has already been identified by the leadership team as a clear and necessary area of focus across the district.
- Potential expenses may include: additional SpEd staffing, after school programming, social worker, interventionists, differentiated instructional resources

FY22 Budget Process

- October/November 2020: School Committee set budget parameters:
 - Level services budget
 - Incorporation of new elementary school and consolidation of NES, Balmer and Grade 5
 - Reorganization of positions/programs to align with current needs (net neutral)
 - Further review upon notice of available revenue
 - December 2020: Site based managers submitted detailed level services budget to Superintendent
 - January 2021: School Committee met with site based managers to review level services budget detail, new school consolidations, and proposed staff re-organizations; continued meetings with site-based managers to discuss staff re-organizations
 - February 2021: Meetings with Budget Subcommittee and School Committee to discuss projected FY22 budget; meeting with Town Manager to discuss available revenue; continued meetings with site-based managers and budget sub-committee to discuss budget updates and re-organizations
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FY22 Revenue (current projections)

Chapter 70 State Aid: \$15,664,621

- Minimum required increase of \$30 per student
- Minimum required increases since 2014

Town Contribution: \$9,074,492

- Increase of \$424,391 over FY21

Appropriation: \$24,739,113

- Chapter 70 + Town Contribution
- Attempt to maintain 2% increase despite basically flat state aid increases

Year	Chapter 70	Increase	% of Appropriation
2018	15,473,041	69,150	67.5%
2019	15,539,941	66,900	66.4%
2020	15,603,931	63,990	65.5%
2021	15,603,931	-	64.3%
2022	15,664,621	60,690	63.3%

Year	Appropriation	\$ Increase	% Increase
2018	22,910,443	481,000	2.1%
2019	23,389,965	479,522	2.1%
2020	23,839,465	449,500	1.9%
2021	24,254,032	414,567	1.7%
2022	24,739,113	485,081	2.0%

FY22 Revenue (current projections)

- **Grants: \$1,156,096**

- Allocations not announced until after July 1
- FY21 budget utilized FY20 carryover funds not available in FY22
- ESSER I funds allowed to supplant budget expenses – included in grant funding

- **Revolvers: \$3,037,286**

- School Choice, Tuition Revolver, Circuit Breaker, Athletic Revolver, Transportation Revolver, Use of School
- Anticipated amount needed to fund proposed operating budget
- Closes the gap between the operating budget and the appropriation/grants
- Throughout the year, if operating budget expenses come in lower than budgeted, less revolver funds are utilized. If operating budget expenses come in higher, more revolver funds could be utilized (or reductions made).

FY2021 Revolver Projections

Starting Balance	3,704,840
2021 Revenue	1,400,874
2021 Expense	2,366,308
Ending Balance	2,739,406

FY2022 Revolver Projections

Starting Balance	2,739,406
2022 Revenue	1,517,855
2022 Expense	3,037,286
Ending Balance	1,219,975

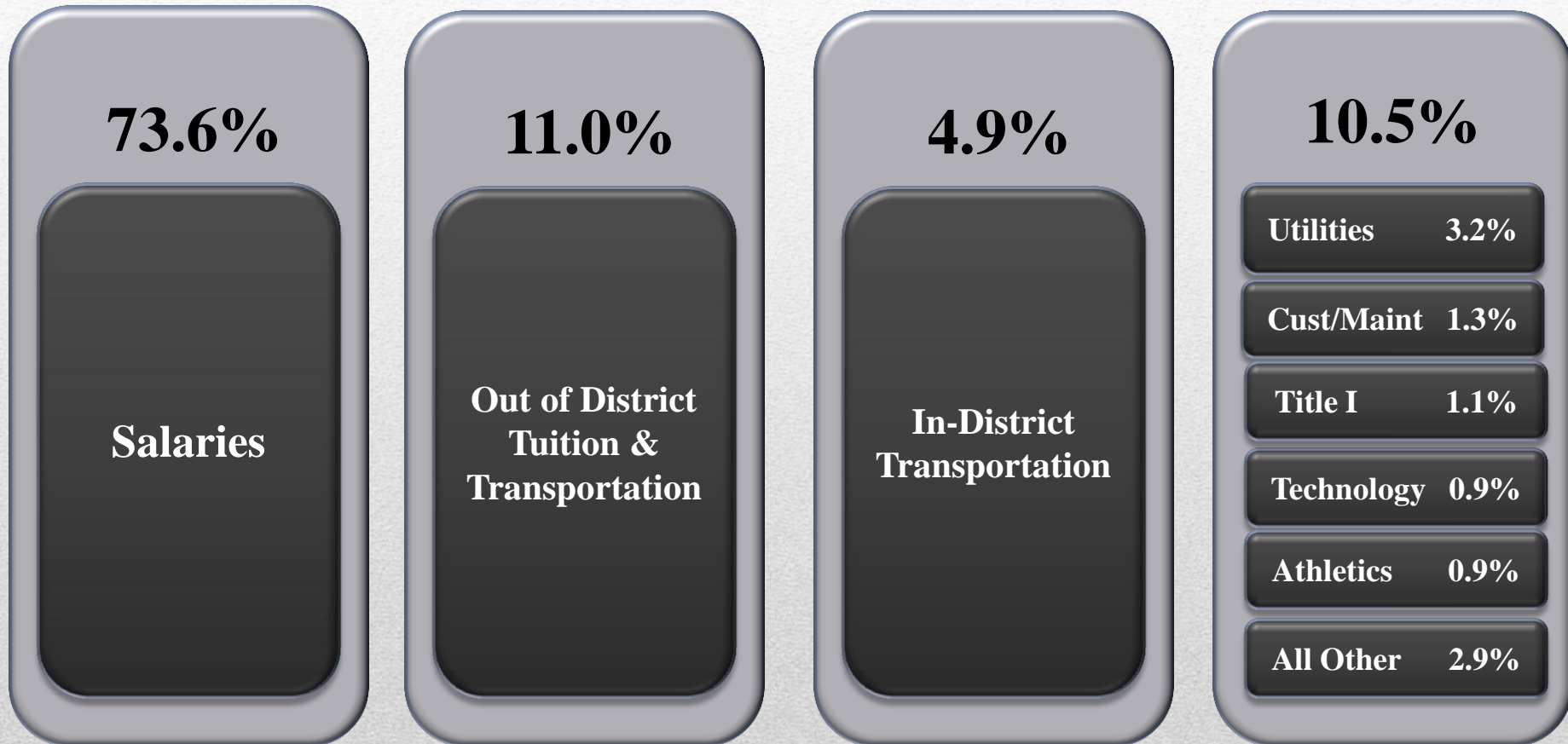
FY21 operating budget expenses are trending under budget = less expenses to be paid from FY21 revolvers = higher FY21 revolver ending balance = additional revolver funds to carry forward into FY22

FY22 Superintendent's Recommended Budget

\$28,932,495

- \$80,967 or 0.28% increase over FY21 Approved Budget
- Level Services = close to level funded
- Includes elementary school consolidation and proposed staff reorganizations

FY22: Where Does the Money Go?



All Other includes: Supplies/Materials/Text (0.8%); Professional Development (0.3%); Instructional Contracted Services (0.9%); Other Expenses (0.9%)

FY2022 Superintendent's Recommended Budget

Category	FY 2021	FY 2022	Increase/ Decrease	% Change
Salary/Other Compensation	20,765,572	21,293,626	528,054	2.5%
Supplies/Materials/Texts	241,692	239,650	(2,042)	-0.8%
Professional Development	84,209	84,267	59	0.1%
Instructional Contracted Services	267,408	252,923	(14,485)	-5.4%
Athletics	271,011	274,663	3,652	1.3%
Technology	304,934	268,484	(36,450)	-12.0%
Utilities	854,036	925,188	71,152	8.3%
Custodial/Maintenance	440,770	388,053	(52,717)	-12.0%
Transportation	1,345,167	1,416,250	71,083	5.3%
Out of District Tuition & Trans	3,675,125	3,191,664	(483,461)	-13.2%
Title I	287,026	324,868	37,842	13.2%
Other Expenses	314,578	272,859	(41,719)	-13.3%
	28,851,528	28,932,495	80,967	0.28%

- Other expenses includes: copiers, legal, dues, accreditation. advertising, Medicaid billing, postage, MTRS grant expenses, etc.

FY22 Expense Drivers

Category	Increase/ (Decrease)	Notes
Salaries	\$ 528,054	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steps/Lanes/COLAs 2 union contracts not yet negotiated for FY22 Minimum wage increase / increase in substitute rates Limited retiree offsets (1 at end of FY21, 1 in March FY22)
Out of District Tuition & Transportation	(\$ 483,461)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 students budget in FY22 vs 31 students in FY21 5 less placements (3 graduating, 1 moving, 1 no longer attending) 2 additional placements (students moving into Northbridge) 2 students in residential placements aging out in FY22 (pro-rated tuition = 336K less than full year) Transportation: 2 less runs; higher daily rates = small increase
Utilities	\$71,152	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity – New Elementary School
Transportation	\$71,083	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.6% increase in-district contract rates Modified allocation for agricultural school transportation – instead of evenly splitting by participating towns, allocating cost based on # of students from each town attending = increase for Northbridge
Custodial/ Maintenance	(\$52,717)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of NES modular classrooms = no longer lease land Anticipated decrease in trade contractor expenses due to new NES and new MS boilers
Technology	(\$36,450)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease in hardware budget due to new NES technology funded through project budget & purchases with COVID grants

Reorganization of Positions:

School	Position	FTE		School	Position	FTE
Balmer	Grade 2 Teacher	1.0	→	New NES	Grade 3 Teacher	1.0
Middle	Grade 5 Teachers	7.0	→	New NES	Grade 5 Teachers	7.0
Middle	Grade 5 SpEd Teachers	2.0	→	New NES	Grade 5 SpEd Teachers	2.0

- Swap Grade 2 & Grade 3 teacher due to small Grade 2 class moving up to Grade 3
- Grade 5 team moving from MS to new NES
- Keeping 8 sections of Kindergarten budgeted – unknown incoming class size

2020-2021 Average Class Size				2021-2022 Estimated Class Size		
Grade	2020-2021 Enrollment	Sections	Class Size	2021-2022 Enrollment*	Sections	Class Size
Kindergarten	146	8	18.3	150	8	18.8
Grade 1	149	8	18.6	146	8	18.3
Grade 2	115	6	19.2	149	7	21.3
Grade 3	124	7	17.7	115	6	19.2
Grade 4	144	7	20.6	124	7	17.7
Grade 5	148	7	21.1	144	7	20.6

Enrollment figures based on 12-11-20 iPass enrollment report

*2021-2022 is estimated – planning for current class enrollment

Reorganization of Positions:

School	Position	FTE		School	Position	FTE
High	Library Media Specialist	1.0	→	New NES	Library Media Specialist	1.0
			NEW:	High	Library Clerk	0.5

- HS library primarily used for research by students attending with their teachers; ELA, social studies have research skills in their curriculum
- There is currently no library position at Balmer or MS (previous budget reductions)
- Current NES media specialist is only 0.5 FTE technology teacher/media specialist and is also an instructional technology specialist 0.5 FTE; she will be 1.0 FTE technology teacher at new NES
- New NES has a state-of-the-art media center that needs to be stocked, organized and overseen by an experienced specialist who can also teach library skills and promote early literacy and a love for reading in our elementary students
- HS Library Clerk will still allow for teachers to send students to library to do independent research, check out books, or use the space to study, etc. (other periods will be covered by teacher duty periods)

Reorganization of Positions:

School	Position	FTE		School	Position	FTE
Middle	Speech & Language Assistant	1.0	→	New NES	Speech & Language Pathologist	1.0
NES/Balmer	Instructional Tech	0.9	→	New NES	Instructional Tech	0.5
NES/Balmer	Technology Teacher	1.1		New NES	Technology Teacher	1.5

- With the transition of Grade 5 to the new building, decrease in speech services needed at MS
- The district is receiving increased numbers of new/incoming students at the elementary level qualifying for speech services
- Speech and language services require extensive testing and reporting that cannot be done by an SLPa
- Shifting the FTE split between Instructional Technology and Technology Teacher to allow for more direct student technology instruction and additional related arts opportunities at the new NES, particularly with the infusion of 1:1 Chromebooks, a new state-of-the-art maker space, as well as the addition of Grade 5

Reorganization of Positions:

School	Reduced Position	FTE
Middle	Music Teacher	0.5
Middle	Health Teacher	1.0
Middle	Nurse	0.5

- With Grade 5 leaving, the Middle School will only have 3 grades. MS currently has 8.0 FTE Related Arts Teachers with 4 grades.
- 2.0 FTE Music Teachers are being reduced to 1.5 FTE Music Teachers as two full-time teachers are no longer needed
- MS currently has 2.0 FTE Gym Teachers and 1.0 FTE Health Teacher. Two P.E. teachers will become Wellness Teachers incorporating both physical education and health into their curriculum – this is the same model in place at the High School
- MS will be staffed with 1.5 FTE Nurses instead of 2.0 FTE. The .5 Nurse will help the F/T nurse during the first part of the day when nurses visits are most frequent and will assist across the district with health screenings

Reorganization of Positions:

School	Added Position	FTE
New NES	Dean of Students	1.0
New NES	Art Teacher	0.5
New NES	Lunch Aides	0.1
New NES	Instructional Assistants	4.0

School	Reduced Position	FTE
NES	Crossing Guard	0.3

- Dean of Student Support will provide additional administrative support focused on student attendance, social-emotional and behavioral supports and school/family collaboration to ensure individual student success
(NES currently has one administrator (exc. PK - ECC); new NES adding Gr. 5)
- NES Art is currently 0.5 FTE – need additional 0.5 FTE to accommodate the addition of Grade 5 and to ensure all students receive Art instruction
- Increasing the hours of the existing lunch aides to accommodate the transition time that will be necessary for six different grade levels to get in and out of the lunch room every day
- Addition of three IAs to address new students who may come in needing this special education assistance (has been typical trend); 1 of the 4 is a current re-org that will need to be maintained going forward to FY22
- Current NES closing – no crossing guard needed at Cross St. location

Reorganization of Positions:

School	Position Reduced	FTE
High School	Vocational Coordinator	1.0

- Per MASCA (*MA Assoc. of School Counselors*), college and career coordination, including the facilitation of internships, are standards on the school counselor rubric
- Current NHS caseloads are about 175:1, ideal ratio is 250:1, and typical ratios in MA are 405:1, therefore, our current guidance staff will be able to effectively absorb vocational responsibilities
- Guidance counselors will be able to use the personal knowledge they have of each of the students on their caseloads, as well as the relationships they have built with each student during their years at the high school, to proactively connect students with internships and other career-based opportunities that are most closely linked to each student's individual needs and strengths

School	Position Reduced	FTE
Middle School	Title I Specialist	1.0

- With the reduction of Grade 5 and a restructuring of teaming at MS, one of the Title I positions is being reduced
 - Title I positions are grant funded positions and contingent on available grant funding
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Reorganization Summary

FTE Positions Reduced:	5.3
FTE Positions Added:	7.1
Total FTE's Added:	1.8

Net Savings: \$27,796

Budget Impact – New NES

Category	Budget Reductions Attributed to New Elementary School	Reduced Cost
Custodial/Maintenance	Lease – Land for NES modular classrooms	28,500
Custodial/Maintenance	Playground woodchips, playground supplies, other misc. costs	4,520
Custodial/Maintenance	Contracted Services, repairs – Trades (HVAC, plumbing, electrical, boiler, etc.)	24,500
Utilities	Heat – decreased therm usage, trash removal – consolidated location	48,256
Technology	Chromebooks, computers, projectors, printers, wireless access points, document cameras, etc. New hardware from project budget; existing items reused at other schools	53,110
Salaries	Staffing changes attributed to school consolidation and 5 th grade moving out of MS	157,849
	Total Budget Reductions attributed to new NES	317,045

Category	Budget Additions Attributed to New Elementary School	Increased Cost
Custodial/Maintenance	Additional Service Contracts: Elevator, Fire Protection Services	4,600
Utilities	Electricity – Increased kilowatt usage; Water – fire protection services	79,069
Stipends	5 th grade chorus & band, early intervention team meeting outside school day	5,311
Supplies	Art – new kiln supplies, Music – 5 th grade ukuleles, Gym – portable basketball hoops, Computer Education – maker space supplies	7,432
Salaries	Staffing changes attributed to school consolidation and 5 th grade moving out of MS	180,971
	Total Budget Additions attributed to new NES	277,383

Net Budget Impact: \$39,611 Reduction

Looking Ahead to FY2023

- The proposed FY22 budget utilizes \$3M in revolver funds to balance the budget. If \$1.3 million is received as revolver revenue for FY23 (lower than projected for FY22 due to unknown CB), only \$1.5 million of revolver funds will be available to balance the FY23 budget in order to leave a \$1M balance. This is \$1.5 million less than FY22.
- If FY21/FY22 expenses comes in under budget and less revolver funds are needed to balance the budget in those years, and/or if FY21/FY22 revolver revenue comes in higher than projected, additional revolver funds will be available to help fund the FY23 budget.
- Student Opportunity Act should result in additional OOD transportation circuit breaker reimbursement, but decreasing OOD tuition expenses will result in less tuition based CB revenue as CB is a reimbursement program.
- ESSER II grant funds will be available to fund continued COVID related expenses and student remediation services in FY22 & FY23. Any remaining ESSER II funds may be able to help fund FY23 budget.

FY2022 Revolver Projections	
Starting Balance	2,739,406
2022 Revenue	1,517,855
2022 Expense	3,037,286
Ending Balance	1,219,975

FY2023 Revolver Projections	
Starting Balance	1,219,975
2023 Revenue	1,300,000
2023 Expense	1,519,975
Ending Balance	1,000,000

Calculation for visual purposes only

Summary

- Level services operating budget for FY22 requires an \$80,967 or 0.28% increase over FY21
- Chapter 70 only increased by the minimum \$30 per student, or \$60,690 and the Town Contribution increased by \$424,391 resulting in the school department's appropriation increasing by 2% = \$485,081
- \$3 million will be spent from revolver accounts to help fund the budget, leaving a \$1.2 million available balance
- Salaries – contract obligations – main reason for budget increase – mainly offset by decrease in OOD Tuition
- Re-organization of positions – majority due to new school consolidation = net 1.8 FTE's added; \$27,796 net savings
- Net budget reduction of \$39,611 attributed to opening of new school
- ESSER II Grant funding (not included in operating budget) available to assist with safe school reopening and remediation for learning loss
- Based on current revolver projections, a lesser amount of revolver funds will be available to fund the budget in FY23 resulting in a potential revenue shortfall

Important Upcoming Dates

- Public Hearing - March 9, 2021
- Presentation to Finance Committee - March 10, 2021
- School Committee Votes on the Budget - March 23, 2021
- Annual Spring Town Meeting - May 4, 2021