



ACTON-BOXBOROUGH
REVOLUTION

FY25 Superintendent's Recommended Budget

February 15, 2024

Our vision is to provide high-quality educational opportunities that inspires a community of learners.

Our mission is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS ◦ EQUITY ◦ ENGAGEMENT





Core Values

Engagement

We provide engaging educational opportunities where students develop passion and joy for learning.

Equity

We ensure all students have equitable access to programs and curricula to reach their potential.

Wellness

We partner with families to prioritize social-emotional wellness, which is necessary for learning and developing resilience.





Core Values

Agenda

- Important Dates
- Budget Context
- Health Insurance Update
- FY25 Superintendent's Recommended Budget





Important Dates

Process & Timeline

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FY25 Budget Schedule

January 18, 2024	Presentation #1	Superintendent’s Preliminary Budget Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Guidelines & District Goals • Preliminary Revenues & Budget Drivers • A & B Budget Staffing & Adjustments • Projected Assessments
February 1, 2024	Presentation #2	Superintendent’s Preliminary Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities & Capital • Transportation • EdTech • Proposed Fees • Comparable Communities Comparisons
February 10, 2024	Presentation #3 BUDGET SATURDAY	Budget Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A & B Budget Discussion • Special Education • Instructional Leadership & Administration • Potential Structural Changes • Open Q&A
February 15, 2024	Presentation #4	Superintendent’s Recommended A & B Budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary Budget Vote
February 29, 2024	Presentation #5	Superintendent’s Recommended Budget Updates
March 7, 2024	Presentation #6	Public Budget Hearing as required by MGL
March 21, 2024	Presentation #7	Superintendent’s Final Budget Recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Committee Votes FINAL FY25 Budget



Important Dates

Budget Workshop and Preliminary SC Budget Vote:

- February 10, 2024



Preliminary Budget Vote

- February 15, 2024: 25 Days before final budget deadline
- Vote is majority of members from each town

Budget Hearing:

- March 7, 2024

Final SC Budget Vote:

- March 21, 2024
 - 45 Days before earliest Town Meeting
 - Vote is $\frac{2}{3}$ of weighted votes of full School Committee

Town Meetings:

- Acton: Begins May 6, 2024
- Boxborough: Begins May 13, 2024
 - *Budget vote deadlines are counted backwards from earlier Town Meeting*

Important Dates - Override

Override Process - 2 Step Process:

1. **Acton Annual Town Election (Override Vote)**
 - **Tuesday, April 30, 2024**
 - Ballot Vote (Simple Majority)
2. **Annual Town Meeting Approval**
 - Simple Majority
 - **Acton - May 6, 2024**
 - **Boxborough - May 13, 2024**



Budget Context

Process & Timeline

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Our Students

Total Enrollment



High Needs



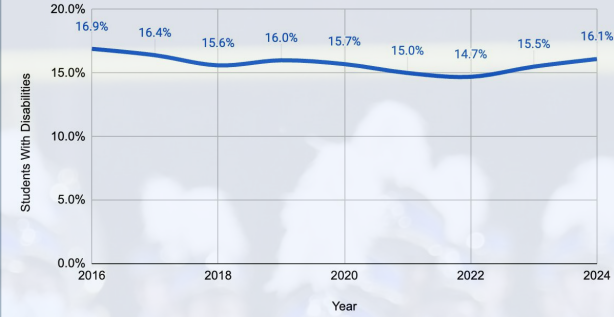
First Language not English



English Language Learners



Students With Disabilities



Low-income Status



Value to the Community

SAT Performance (2022-23)

2nd Highest
Reading SAT Score (656)
among MA Public High
Schools

Highest
Math SAT Score (680)
among MA Public High
Schools



Paul P. Gates School
2020 National Blue Ribbon

Luther Conant School
2022 National Blue Ribbon



In-District Per Pupil Spending (FY22)



\$19,554

A-B Spends **\$1,496**
(8.3%) **below** state
average **per student**



\$18,058

Source: [MA DESE Radar Benchmarking Online](#)

Budget History

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21**	FY21 (OPs)	FY22	FY23	FY24
Budget	\$ 86,090,491	\$ 88,721,492	\$ 90,982,111	\$ 96,912,701	\$ 93,132,616	\$ 99,719,222	\$ 102,899,440	\$ 106,224,413
% Increase	3.63%	3.06%	2.55%	6.52%	2.67%	2.90%	3.19%	3.23%
Acton	\$ 55,547,097	\$ 59,981,958	\$ 61,235,581	\$ 65,584,049	\$ 61,909,680	\$ 67,543,928	\$ 69,689,255	\$ 71,669,758
Acton %	3.90%	3.90%	2.09%	7.10%	2.74%	2.99%	3.18%	2.84%
Boxborough	\$ 11,503,148	\$ 11,351,355	\$ 11,522,760	\$ 12,123,116	\$ 11,723,722	\$ 12,676,080	\$ 13,257,674	\$ 13,944,299
Boxborough %	0.80%	-2.09%	1.51%	5.21%	4.26%	4.56%	4.59%	5.18%

*** The total increase in FY21 included debt for the Boardwalk Campus. The operating increase for FY21 was 2.67%*

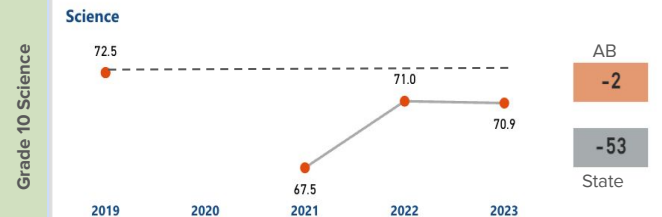
*** Assessment percentages reflect increases after cost shift per Appendix A of the Regional Agreement were applied*

Reduced 40 Positions
over 2 Years

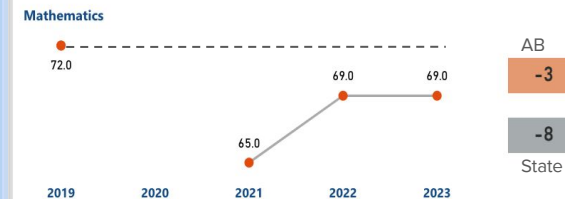
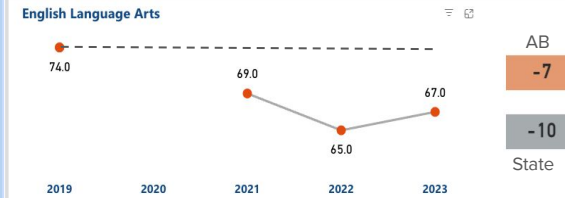
Pandemic Academic Recovery In Progress

Academic Outcomes

Significant disparities exist among performance of student groups



We are making progress in our recovery from the pandemic, but we have not yet returned to pre-pandemic student performance levels



Student Group	3rd Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade
All Students	64	66	86
Low Income	41	34	50
Students w/ Disabilities	23	26	47
EL	27	0	Not Reported
African Amer./Black	33	43	57
Asian	72	85	94
Hispanic/Latino	16	26	65
Multi-Race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	77	46	Not Reported
White	68	64	84
High Needs	46	35	50

Student Group	3rd Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade
All Students	54	78	86
Low Income	27	51	56
Students w/ Disabilities	17	37	41
EL	29	0	
African Amer./Black	25	29	50
Asian	78	96	94
Hispanic/Latino	13	31	65
Multi-Race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	65	69	
White	46	78	85
High Needs	39	49	53

Social Emotional Outcomes (SEL)

Growth of the ABRHS Advisory Program

84% of High School students reported meeting someone new through the Advisory Program last year.

69% of them reported that their teacher was getting to know them.




Cartwheel

2022-23
(end of year)

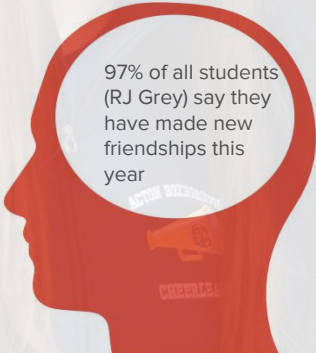
188 referrals
75 still in treatment
60 graduated
5 in intake
28 families declined

2023-24
(as of Jan 15)

82 referrals to date
20 in intake
9 in outreach
48 care ongoing

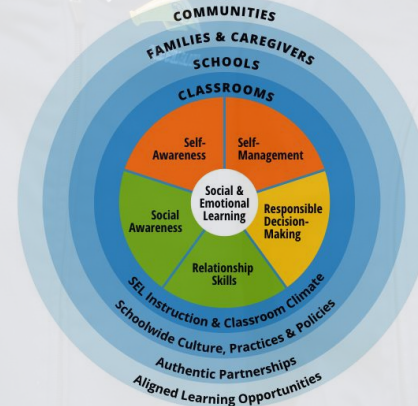


89% of all students say they have a trusted adult at RJ Grey



97% of all students (RJ Grey) say they have made new friendships this year

Advisory at RJ Grey

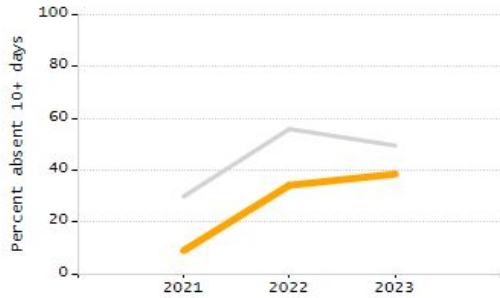


AB adopted the CASEL Framework for SEL, and all elementary schools are working to incorporate the skills into classroom instruction

Social Emotional Outcomes

Post-pandemic Student Attendance

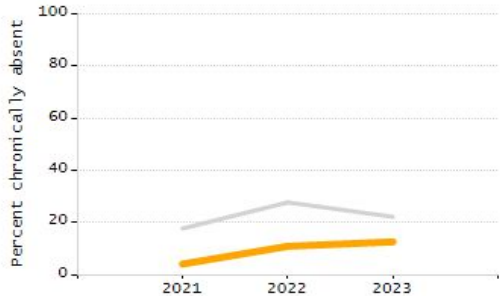
Student attendance
(% of students absent 10 or more days each year)



State
AB

Attendance, chronic absences and disparities among student groups have emerged as a significant and growing social-emotional concern

Chronically absent rate
(% of students absent 10% or more each year)



District Heat Map i

Student Group	2023 % Total Enrollment	2023 % Chronic Absenteeism	2023 % Out School Suspension	2022 % Ninth Graders Passing	2023 % Pathways Enrollment	2022 % Dropout	2021 % 5 Year Graduation
All Students		12.6	0.2	98.7		0.1	98.2
English Learner	6.2	30.8		100.0		0.0	100.0
Students with Disabilities	15.5	22.3	1.2	94.3		0.5	91.2
Low Income	10.6	29.7	0.8	97.2		1.3	93.3
African American/Black	3.0	19.6	2.6	100.0		0.0	100.0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.1	0.0					
Asian	33.3	11.0		99.4		0.0	100.0
Hispanic or Latino	7.9	26.6	0.2	96.7		0.0	100.0
Multi-race non-Hispanic or Latino	5.0	11.1		100.0		0.0	100.0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1						
White	50.7	11.2	0.2	98.3		0.2	96.7

School Committee Budget Guidelines

1. Ensure students have access to a robust **system of supports** for their:
 - a. **Social-emotional, mental and behavioral health needs**
 - b. **Academic needs and interests**
2. Continue to fund work to promote all students' **sense of belonging** through a strong and **inclusive school climate and culture**.
3. Provide resources that continue to **address disproportionate outcomes** for students who have been historically underserved by schools.

FY25 Strategic Investments

1	K-12 Social Emotional Learning & Bullying Prevention Curriculum	Identified by Bullying Prevention Task Force (2023) and SEL Program Review (2020) as needed.	\$70,937
2	K-6 Literacy Curriculum Consumables	Needed to support implementation of new Core Literacy Curriculum as part of district-wide structured literacy program	\$100,000
3	Professional Learning to support Multilingual Students	Professional learning platform (Elevations) to support all educators in meeting needs of multilingual students	\$13,000
4	Acton-Boxborough Resource Center	Continuation of program initially funded by legislative earmark to provide needed resources to families with a particular emphasis on multilingual and low-income families.	\$55,000

FY25 Budget Context

Projected \$9.5M Funding Gap

(based on available revenues with 3% assessment increase in Acton, which is limited by Prop. 2 ½)

Neither budget proposal reflects a “level-services” budget.

2 Budget proposals: Superintendent’s Preliminary Budgets (A&B)

- **A Budget:**

- Preliminary proposal: **\$2M reduction** from level-services
- Used if an override passes
- Would require ***\$7.5M in additional funding*** for schools in FY25

- **B Budget:**

- Preliminary proposal: **\$9.5M reduction** from level-services
- Used if an override fails
- **No additional funding** for schools

FY25 Budget Context

The Preliminary A Budget does not reflect a “level-services” budget.

Feb 15th “A Budget” Update

- **A Budget:**
 - Preliminary proposal: **\$2M reduction** from level-services
 - Used if an override passes
 - Would require ***\$7.5M in additional funding*** for schools in FY25
- On February 10th, the School Committee requested we **reduce an additional \$1M** from the budget based on feedback from Boxborough



Health Insurance

Superintendent's Recommendation

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Health Insurance Update

- Previously indicated GIC as potential path forward
- New rates from MIIA benchmarked to GIC plans more cost-effective
- 2 Year Cost Analysis MIIA/GIC/HIT
- Discussion with unions

2 Year Analysis of Savings MIAA v. HIT & GIC *(in millions)*

	FY25				FY26 <i>(no rate increase)</i>	2 YEAR TOTAL	2 Year MIAA Plan Savings
Insurer	Q1&2	Q3&4	1st Year	1 Year MIAA Plan Savings	Annual		
HIT (status quo)	\$ 7.23	\$ 7.23	\$ 14.46	\$ (1.51)	\$ 14.46	\$ 28.92M	\$ (3.03)
GIC (Low Annual)	\$ 7.23	\$ 6.00	\$ 13.23	\$ (.28)	\$ 11.99	\$ 25.23	\$.66
GIC (75% of Low)*	\$ 7.23	\$ 6.19	\$ 13.42	\$ (.47)	\$ 12.37	\$ 25.79	\$.10
GIC (50% of Low)**	\$ 7.23	\$ 6.37	\$ 13.60	\$ (.66)	\$ 12.75	\$ 26.35	\$ (.47)
GIC (High Annual)	\$ 7.23	\$ 6.75	\$ 13.98	\$ (1.04)	\$ 13.50	\$ 27.48	\$ (1.59)
MIAA BM3	\$ 6.47	\$ 6.47	\$ 12.94	-	\$ 12.94	\$ 25.89	-

Conclusions & Recommendations

- Recommend moving to MIIA Benchmark 3 Plan effective July 1, 2024
(will require vote at 2/29/24 meeting)

Notes:

- MIIA will save \$1.5M per year over Acton HIT
- 2 Year Savings with MIIA *more likely than not* to yield greater savings than GIC over same period
- MIIA plans are Fully Insured
 - July 1 Transition eliminates 6 months risk with HIT
- MIIA plans can start July 1 - FY25 Savings for District and Employees
- Retirees to continue with Aetna from July 1-December 30, then transition to MIIA
- MIIA only offers BCBS Plans (more popular with employees by 2:1 margin)
- MIIA offers High Deductible HSA Plans/ GIC does not (popular with employees)
- MIIA Requires 2 Year Commitment
 - 2nd Year Rate Guarantee not to exceed average of rate increases across MIIA
- District consulting with Cook & Co./ Attorney Dupere around transition

Conclusions & Recommendations

- Recommend Withdrawal From/ Dissolution of Acton HIT
(will require vote at an upcoming meeting TBD)

Notes:

- Attorney Dupere to provide legal analysis and considerations
- Need to determine how retiree Aetna plans funded (through district or HIT)
- Will need to consider runout claims period
 - Establishment of runout contingency fund in budget - \$700K
 - Need HIT cash flow analysis to determine correct amount
- If all or some of contingency unused, either returned to E&D or OPEB
 - (School Committee decision Spring 2025)
 - Contingency amount can then be applied as savings on FY26 Budget
- District consulting with Cook & Co./ Attorney Dupere around transition



FY25 Recommended Budget

Superintendent's Recommended Budget

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Budget Summary - A & B Budgets



	Revised FY24	Preliminary FY25 “ <u>A</u> ” Budget	Recommended FY25 “ <u>A</u> ” Budget	Preliminary FY25 “ <u>B</u> ” Budget
Total Budget Appropriation	\$106,224,413	\$115,312,084	\$114,246,750	\$108,057,298
Increase from prior year	\$3,324,973	\$9,087,671	\$8,022,337	\$1,832,885
Percent Increase from prior year	3.23%	8.56%	7.55%	1.73%
TOTAL Assessments	\$85,614,057	\$95,961,728	\$94,897,594	\$88,706,942
Acton Assessment	\$71,669,758	\$79,843,743	78,959,916	\$73,818,212
Acton % Change	2.84%	11.41%	10.17%	3.00%
Boxborough Assessment	\$13,944,299	\$16,117,985	15,937,678	\$14,888,760
Boxborough % Change	5.18%	15.59%	14.30%	6.77%

Summary of Recommended Budget Changes

NET Change from Preliminary to Recommended Budget: (\$1,065,334)

Added Costs

- Added \$700K for Health Insurance Contingency Fund (HIT Runout)
- Restored 1 Elementary SpecEd Teacher
- Restored 4 Elementary SpecEd Assistants

Savings

- Reduced Health Insurance by \$1.5M (\$800K NET of HIT Runout)
- Reduced OPEB Contribution Budget by \$250K
- Reduced 1 Kindergarten Section (1 Teacher, 1 Assistant) - projected 40 fewer students
- Offset additional \$30K salaries to Revolving
- Reduced Part-time HS Data Assistant
- Reduced misc. expense lines by \$55,000
- Reduced programs and services by \$26,750

Increased K Tuition increase by \$325 to \$2,125 (was \$125 increase in Preliminary)

Note: memo incorrect

Budget Summary - A Budget

FY25 Comparative Summary of Expenditures by Admin Category Recommended "A" Budget

<i>Admin</i>	<i>FY22</i>	<i>FY23</i>	<i>FY24</i>	<i>FY25</i>	<i>FY25 Budget</i>
<i>Number</i>	<i>Actuals</i>	<i>Actuals</i>	<i>Revised Budget</i>	<i>"A" Budget</i>	<i>Increase / Decrease</i>
01 - TOTAL SUPERINTENDENT	\$ 292,751.15	\$ 119,867.52	\$ 124,555.00	\$ 142,000.00	\$ 17,445.00
02 - TOTAL ASST SUPT CURR AND INSTRUCTION	\$ 381,078.16	\$ 575,519.00	\$ 610,120.00	\$ 805,696.00	\$ 195,576.00
03 - TOTAL FINANCE DIRECTOR	\$ 22,996,584.16	\$24,182,209.42	\$24,832,689.00	\$27,449,642.00	\$ 2,616,953.00
04 - TOTAL PERSONNEL DIRECTOR	\$ 62,704,853.50	\$65,175,931.95	\$69,232,349.00	\$71,563,275.00	\$ 2,330,926.00
05 - TOTAL SPECIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR	\$ 6,260,331.97	\$ 6,090,030.12	\$ 4,860,095.00	\$ 7,023,778.00	\$ 2,163,683.00
06 - TOTAL INFORMATION TECH DIRECTOR	\$ 744,627.04	\$ 852,602.62	\$ 789,050.00	\$ 859,272.00	\$ 70,222.00
07 - TOTAL FACILITIES DIRECTOR	\$ 3,737,686.29	\$ 4,141,461.09	\$ 4,154,302.00	\$ 4,797,165.00	\$ 642,863.00
08 - TOTAL MUSIC DIRECTOR	\$ 74,871.05	\$ 87,484.49	\$ 86,367.00	\$ 92,349.00	\$ 5,982.00
09 - TOTAL ART DIRECTOR	\$ 127,518.71	\$ 132,728.24	\$ 126,310.00	\$ 126,310.00	\$ -
10 - TOTAL - DEI DIRECTOR	\$ 189,746.90	\$ 21,195.73	\$ 114,400.00	\$ 118,650.00	\$ 4,250.00
13 - TOTAL ATHLETIC DIRECTOR	\$ 104,863.53	\$ 217,782.12	\$ 113,650.00	\$ 119,400.00	\$ 5,750.00

Budget Summary - A Budget

<i>FY25 Comparative Summary of Expenditures by Admin Category Recommended "A" Budget</i>					
<i>Admin</i>	<i>FY22</i>	<i>FY23</i>	<i>FY24</i>	<i>FY25</i>	<i>FY25 Budget</i>
<i>Number</i>	<i>Actuals</i>	<i>Actuals</i>	<i>Revised Budget</i>	<i>"A" Budget</i>	<i>Increase / Decrease</i>
15 - TOTAL SENIOR HIGH PRINCIPAL	\$ 470,253.29	\$ 463,592.38	\$ 469,045.00	\$ 428,454.00	\$ (40,591.00)
16 - TOTAL JUNIOR HIGH PRINCIPAL	\$ 208,262.04	\$ 232,641.60	\$ 239,455.00	\$ 232,195.00	\$ (7,260.00)
17 - TOTAL BLANCHARD PRINCIPAL	\$ 71,661.03	\$ 69,972.74	\$ 71,366.00	\$ 76,005.00	\$ 4,639.00
18 - TOTAL CONANT PRINCIPAL	\$ 54,621.08	\$ 63,552.98	\$ 63,786.00	\$ 63,786.00	\$ -
19 - TOTAL DOUGLAS PRINCIPAL	\$ 45,249.63	\$ 55,063.95	\$ 62,137.00	\$ 62,410.00	\$ 273.00
20 - TOTAL GATES PRINCIPAL	\$ 49,424.84	\$ 58,398.89	\$ 61,123.00	\$ 61,123.00	\$ -
21 - TOTAL McCARTHY-TOWNE PRINCIPAL	\$ 75,869.72	\$ 59,636.37	\$ 67,350.00	\$ 68,600.00	\$ 1,250.00
22 - TOTAL MERRIAM PRINCIPAL	\$ 66,763.02	\$ 67,109.82	\$ 66,516.00	\$ 66,716.00	\$ 200.00
29 - TOTAL NURSING	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 40,043.36	\$ 43,200.00	\$ 51,773.00	\$ 8,573.00
39 - TOTAL PHYSICAL ED	\$ 30,186.57	\$ 29,954.40	\$ 36,548.00	\$ 38,151.00	\$ 1,603.00
TOTAL ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DIST	\$ 98,689,703.68	\$ 102,736,778.79	\$ 106,224,413	\$ 114,246,750	\$ 8,022,337

Recommended Motion for Preliminary Budget Vote

MOTION: That the total budget of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District for the fiscal year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 be preliminarily set at \$114,380,105 (an increase of 7.68%) and that budget would be funded by member towns to be preliminarily assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and the terms of the Regional Agreement and amendments thereto as follows:

Acton \$79,070,675 (an increase of 10.33%) and

Boxborough \$15,960,274 (an increase of 14.46%);

Offset by use of E&D Reserve in the amount of \$0

With the remainder accounted for by other sources of revenues and reserves to be detailed in the final budget vote.

Questions & Discussion

