Cape Elizabeth Town Council

Minutes Monday, April 27, 2026

7:00 PM

Town Hall Council Chambers

Elizabeth K. Scifres, Chair
Stephanie P. Anderson
Caitlin J. Harriman
Penelope A. Jordan
Jonathan T. Sahrbeck
Andrew B. Swayze
Timothy L. Thompson

1. Convening of the Meeting

Chair Scifres convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call by the Town Clerk

Members Present:
Councilor Anderson, Councilor Harriman, Councilor Jordan, Councilor Sahrbeck, Chair Scifres, Councilor Swayze, Councilor Thompson

Members Absent:

3. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

4. Citizen Opportunity for Discussion of Items Not on the Agenda

Speakers:
District 4 - Commissioner Patricia Smith -
Publicly acknowledged and thanked, Councilor Thompson, for work on the Cumberland County Finance Committee.

5. Town Council Reports and Correspondence

Councilor Sahrbeck -
The 1934 building Committee, meeting April 29th,
encouraged people to look at the Councilors corner on the website: CapeElizabeth.gov
Councilor Jordan -
Property tax committee, tentatively have a presentation with GPCOG (Greater Portland Council of Governments)
about potential positive impact on property tax, May 18th.

6. Finance Committee Report

Speaker: Kristie Bradbury, Finance Director

The revenues and expenses for the town general fund should be at 75%.
Revenues: 75%
Tax collection rate: 96.73% as of April 23rd 2026
Expenses:74.4%.

We are exactly where we need to be.

A. March 26 Budget by Departments

Speakers:

B. Dashboard March 31, 2026

Speakers:

C. Town General Fund Revenues by Department March 31, 2026

Speakers:

7. Town Manager's Report

Speakers:
Patrick W. Fox, Town Manager

Manager Remarks:
Earlier in the month I mentioned that spring construction projects were just kicking off, and the theme of spring cleanup has continued through the month of April.
This past week, the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust coordinated with the Public Works Department
on a Town-wide cleanup effort. Thank you to 50+ volunteers that participated.
There were over 15 roadways, 10 trail systems, and 5 public properties cleared of trash and debris, and Public Works was out today picking up the bags and items left at 10 drop-off locations around Town for recycling or disposal for these items.

Fort Williams is another area experiencing a lot of spring construction and cleanup. Ongoing work at Goddard Mansion, Battery Blair, and the start of the new Children's Playground are all underway, in addition to annual work done by Town Staff to bring the grounds back to life each spring.

Construction efforts on these projects will either be wrapped up by June, or paused until September, to avoid impacts to the park during the busy summer season.

Bids, Events and Special Announcements:
Upcoming events at Portland Headlight include
Cape Elizabeth Residents Only Lighthouse Day Sunday, May 17th and
the season opening on Saturday, May 23rd.

8. Review of Draft Minutes

A. Approval of the Draft minutes from the April 6, 2026 Town Council Meeting.

Moved by Councilor Stephanie Anderson and Seconded by Councilor Andrew Swayze

Ordered, the Cape Elizabeth Town Council Approve the minutes of the meeting held on April 6th, 2026.

7 yes, 0 no (Stephanie Anderson, Caitlin Harriman, Jonathan Sahrbeck, Elizabeth Scifres, Andrew Swayze, Tim Thompson, Penny Jordan) (None)

Speakers:

9. Agenda Items

A. School Budget Presentation

Speakers:
Lee Schroeder, School Board Member
Dr. Christopher Record, Superintendent
Marci Abbott, Business Manager

Speakers:
Lee Schroeder, School Board Member
Dr. Christopher Record, Superintendent
Marci Abbott, Business Manager

School Budget FY 2027 Budget Presentation

See Attachment - **FY27 Budget Presentation TC April 27**

Town Council Inquiry & Clarifications
Councilor Anderson asked for clarification on the pro forma vs the slides presented
Clarification was provided that the **8.37%** figure refers to the school-specific tax rate change,
while **8.91%** refers to the total taxes to be raised.

Chair Scifres asked for clarification on the state valuation:
The "three-year rolling sales study" by the state has increased Cape Elizabeth's valuation,
which paradoxically reduces state subsidy because the town is viewed as having a higher "ability to pay."

Councilor Jordan asked if we knew how the proposed new state funding formulas will impact Cape Elizabeth.
Dr. Record stated changes to the funding formula that will not impact the community

for the next three years.

Councilor Thompson noted declining kindergarten enrollment (approx. 74–85 students).
Dr. Record acknowledged that while class sizes are small, staffing is determined by student needs, not just raw numbers.

Councilor Jordan urged the board and town to collaborate on a long-term (5-year) plan to balance school operations,
new construction debt, and municipal infrastructure without pricing residents out of their homes.

Councilor Anderson asked for clarification on CIP/Maintenance:
The district remains committed to **$1.2–$1.3M** in annual maintenance, including upcoming roof replacements at Pond Cove and the High School.

Dean of Students: This part-time role focuses on the transition between middle and high school, safety committees, and homeless student liaison duties.

Councilor Anderson asked for clarification on the Special Education increase:
The 31% increase in the Pond Cove resource room line was attributed to **Ed Tech retirement contributions** (MainePERS)
and contractual changes following recent negotiations.

The School Board emphasized that there are **no educational program cuts** and **no layoffs of currently filled positions** in this budget.
The Town Council praised the "thoughtful and difficult work"

Speakers:

B. Opportunity for Public Comment on the Proposed FY 2027 Municipal Budget

Speakers:
Kevin Jordan - Cape Elizabeth Land Trust: Robinson Woods Project. Requesting Funding.
Lisa Gent, 1026 Saywer Rd. - Cape Elizabeth Land Trust: Robinson Woods Project. Requesting Funding.

Speakers:

C. Schedule Public Hearing on the Proposed FY27 Municipal Budget

Ordered, the Cape Elizabeth Town Council schedules a public hearing on May 4, 2026 for the FY27 Municipal Budget.
Moved by Councilor Swayze and Seconded by Councilor Anderson

Approve

7 Yes, 0 No Minority (Stephanie Anderson, Caitlin Harriman, Jonathan Sahrbeck, Elizabeth Scifres, Andrew Swayze, Tim Thompson, Penny Jordan) (None)

Speakers:

D. Public Hearing: Porch and Ramps Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Speakers: No Public Comment

Speakers:

E. Opportunity for the Council to vote on the proposed Porch and Ramp Zoning Ordinance Amendments.

Ordered, the Cape Elizabeth Town Council approves the proposed Porch and Ramp Zoning Amendments as written.

Moved by Councilor Sahrbeck and Seconded by Councilor Harriman

Approve

7 Yes, 0 No Minority (Stephanie Anderson, Caitlin Harriman, Jonathan Sahrbeck, Elizabeth Scifres, Andrew Swayze, Tim Thompson, Penny Jordan) (None)

Speakers:

F. Tostones On-Premises: Beer, Wine, & Spirits Renewal Application

Ordered, the Cape Elizabeth Town Council approves the On-Premises: Beer, Wine & Spirits 2026 license for Tostones, 337 Ocean House Road.

Moved by Councilor Jordan and Seconded by Councilor Swayze

Approve

7 Yes, 0 No Minority (Stephanie Anderson, Caitlin Harriman, Jonathan Sahrbeck, Elizabeth Scifres, Andrew Swayze, Tim Thompson, Penny Jordan) (None)

Speakers:

G. Appointment of Election Wardens and Clerks

Ordered, the Cape Elizabeth Town Council approves the recommendation of the Town Clerk
to appoint the following, who may be considered to serve the Town of Cape Elizabeth as election wardens,
and who may serve as deputy wardens. Said appointments are effective immediately and until successors are sworn.

Christian Cutter
Carol Anne Jordan
Thomas Perkins
James Walsh
Jessica Proctor

It Is Further Ordered: The Cape Elizabeth Town Council appoints the following, who may be considered to serve the
Town of Cape Elizabeth as election clerks for a period of two years and until successors are sworn.

Democrat
Margaret Deslaurier, Sheila Heatley, Carol Anne Jordan, Donna Lamberth, Barbara Lamson,
Becky Malley, Gail Perkins, Thomas Perkins, Jessica Proctor, Tom Stoughton, Doug Babkirk,
Barbara Babkirk, Angela Faherty, Jean Hayes, Jeff Cain, Julia Beckett, Elizabeth Elliott, Rachael Duffy,
Pat Thatcher, Wendy Skillin

Republican
Lois Bamford, Wayne Brooking, Scott Berry, Debra Harney, Linda Winker, Angela Frawley

Unenrolled
Christian Cutter, Jennifer Falk, James Walsh, Martha Parowski, Heather Stone, Diann Giroux

Moved by Councilor Harriman and Seconded by Councilor Sahrbeck

Approve

6 Yes, 0 No Minority, 1 Abstain
(Stephanie Anderson, Caitlin Harriman, Jonathan Sahrbeck, Elizabeth Scifres, Andrew Swayze, Tim Thompson) (None) (Penny Jordan)

Speakers:

10. Citizen Opportunity for Discussion of Items Not on the Agenda

No Public Comment

11. Adjournment

The Town Council decided not to hold a budget workshop on Wednesday, effectively agreeing to open the existing municipal budget for a public hearing, while acknowledging that significant budget reductions are unlikely given the thorough process already completed. Instead, they focused on establishing marching orders for staff, which include updating the pro forma for the public hearing to reflect a $24,000 revenue for property rental to the school and investigating the "land fund" as an alternative way to honor the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust's $50,000 request outside the current budget process. This decision was driven by a shared council sentiment that further last-minute cuts could gut our municipal services and/or negatively impact our schools.

Moved by Caitlin Harriman and Seconded by Andrew Swayze
ORDERED, the Cape Elizabeth Town Council adjourns at 8:53PM

(6 yes) (1 no) (Stephanie Anderson, Caitlin Harriman, Jonathan Sahrbeck, Elizabeth Scifres, Andrew Swayze, Tim Thompson) (Penny Jordan)

Fiscal Year 2026-2027
School Budget
Town Council Update

(4/27/26)

Cape Elizabeth School Department

School Board Strategic Plan Goals (2020 – 2025)

1) Health and Well-Being

Our schools will provide a supportive learning environment in which physical, social, and emotional well-being are valued and promoted.

2) Global Competency

Our students will be personally responsible, aware, empathetic, and engaged local and global citizens.

3) Multiple Pathways and Definitions of Success

Our schools will value, promote, and celebrate multiple pathways and definitions of success.

4) Safe, Sustainable, and Effective Facilities

Our schools will be safe and effective facilities. They will be updated and maintained to meet the needs of students and staff in accordance with long-term financial planning.

5) Environmental Responsibility

The school department will prioritize environmental responsibility, including stewardship and sustainability.

School Board Goals for 2025 – 2026 – Adopted 12.9.2025

1. Create a fiscally responsible budget, through the established budget process, that provides a high-quality education and meets the needs of all students.

2. Monitor and modify our policies, and monitor instructional programs, through the use of data and an equity lens, to ensure a high-quality education for all of our students.
3. Attract, retain, and support our CESD staff.

4. Communicate district news, happenings, and relevant information with all of Cape Elizabeth's community members.
5. Maintain a long-term fiscally responsible plan for updating our school buildings that advances modern teaching approaches, increases learning opportunities, and enhances the climate/culture/safety of our schools.

6. Advance the efficacy of the Board.

7. Foster a supportive and inclusive school and community culture in the areas of academics, extracurriculars, athletics, and social emotional programming.

School Board Goals For This 2026- 2027 Budget

1. Meets the academic, social-emotional, and health needs of all students.

2. Supports recruitment and retention of high-quality personnel.

3. Supports appropriate and on-going building maintenance and repair.

4. Supports the advancement of instructional skills of our staff.

5. Reflects a careful consideration of the effectiveness and efficiency of each line item and position.

6. Strives for clear, transparent, and regular communication with the public throughout the budget process.

Timeline for the Creation of This Budget

- October – November: Administrators met with staff to review budget needs & developed school & program draft budgets
- December: Administrators met with Supt. Record & Finance Director Weeks to review the draft budgets line by line & position by position
- January: Town Council and School Board had a joint budget workshop. Supt. Record & Finance Director Abbott finalized the proposed District Leadership Team budget & presented to the School Board on 2/3/2026
- February – April: School Board & DLT met 4 times to review the budget, answer questions, and make adjustments
- April 14– School Board will vote on the proposed budget
- April 27th: SB/TC Budget Workshop
- May 4th: Town Council public hearing on the budget
- May 6th: Town Council vote on the budget
- June 9th: Citizen Vote on the budget

A Reminder of Budget Cost Drivers
Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Challenges for Fiscal Year 2027:
• Salaries and benefits (84% of total budget) • Maintaining facility funds (C.I.P/Maintenance/Repair) • Health insurance cost increase • Negotiations for two collective bargaining units • State aid contribution $2,387,448 – reduction of state contribution by $162,836 in late January ($981,983 cumulative in two years)

Original Budget Requests by the DLT: 2.3.2026

Items Included in this Original Budget Request (2/3/2026)

- **Existing contracts for salaries and benefits (84% of total budget)**
- **Debt service (2.78% of total budget and last year it was 2%) – includes new school construction debt**
- **Facilities costs for fuel, electricity and repair and maintenance**
- **All original operating request by administrators (.83% increase this year)**
- **All new position requests = $38,235**
- **Found out a reduction of state contribution by $162,836 in late January ($981,983 cumulative in two years)**
- **Unknown: Health insurance ceiling and two unknown collective bargaining contracts**

- **DLT recognized at this point that reductions would need to be made over the coming months upon collaboration with the School Board**

Revision on 3.31.2026
to Budget Requests by DLT:

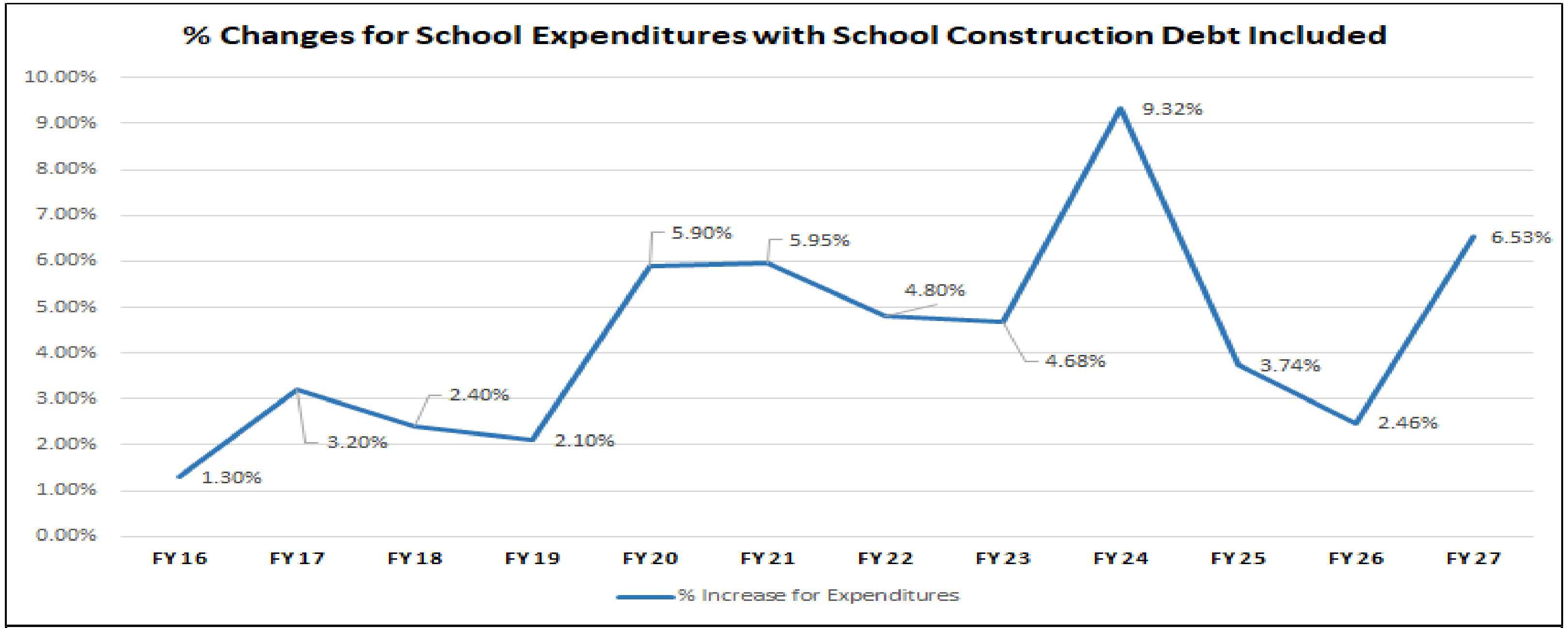
Total Budget $ Operating	% Expenditure Increase	% Total Town/County/School Property Tax Rate Increase
$38,842,748	6.95%	7.26%

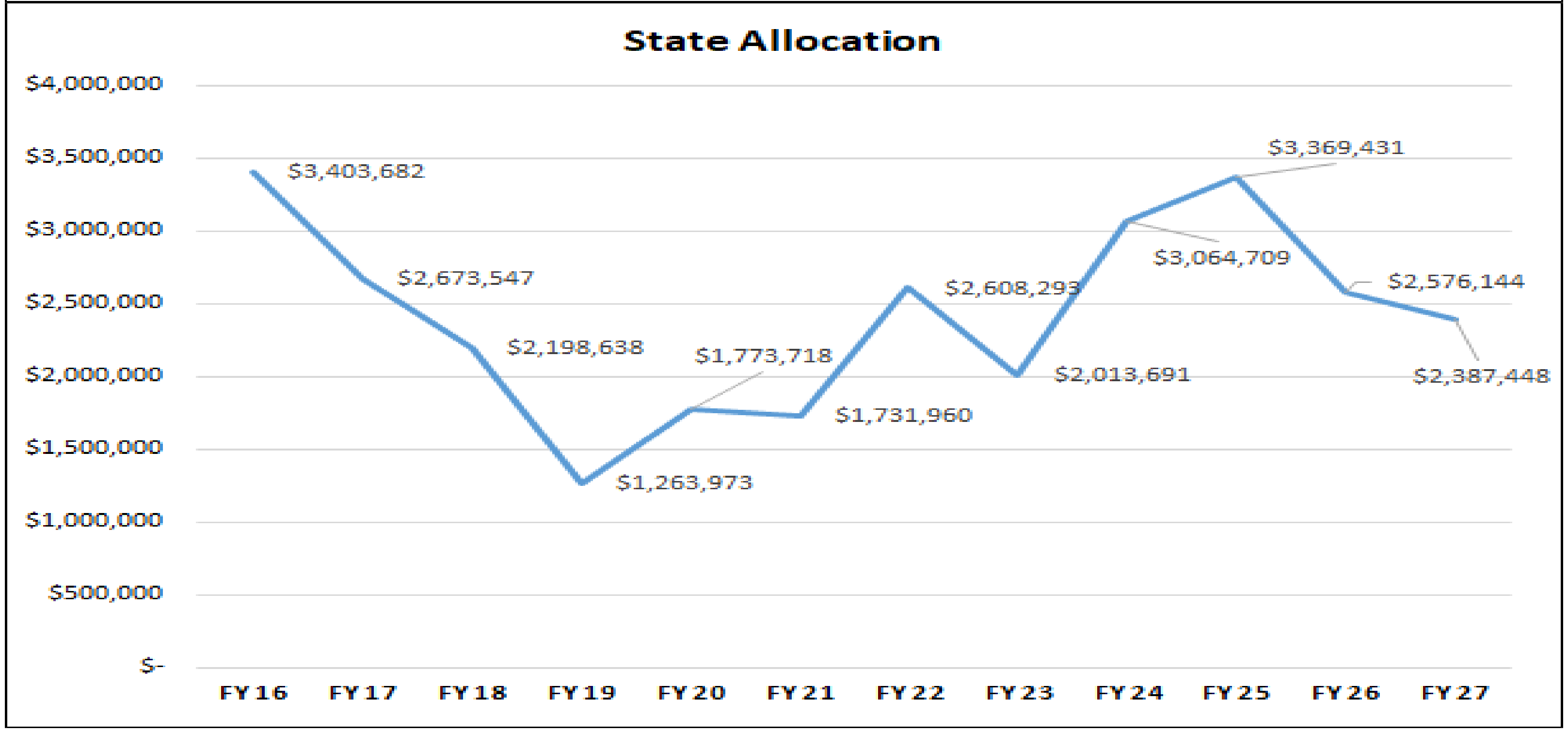
DLT Reductions to Expenditures:

- Central Office – reduce legal services amount
- Central Office – reduce evaluation software costs
- Technology – reduce security and AV replacement line
- Reduce C.I.P inflation increase $17,500 (2.5%) (Board decided to put back in the budget on 4/7)
- Reduce Middle School Curriculum request (purchase in current year)
- Savings from transition services from CDS to SAUs: net savings from additions and changes to teaching positions
- 3 unfilled Ed Tech positions
- 1 unfilled Central Office Support position
- 1 unfilled Pond Cove teaching position
- 1 unfilled Tech Integrator position at Pond Cove
- New position request at the Middle School for an Ed tech III, meeting needs with current staffing
- Health insurance ceiling announced at 11.5%
- Health insurance number announced on 4/3/26 to be 8.10% increase resulting in the budget reduction below

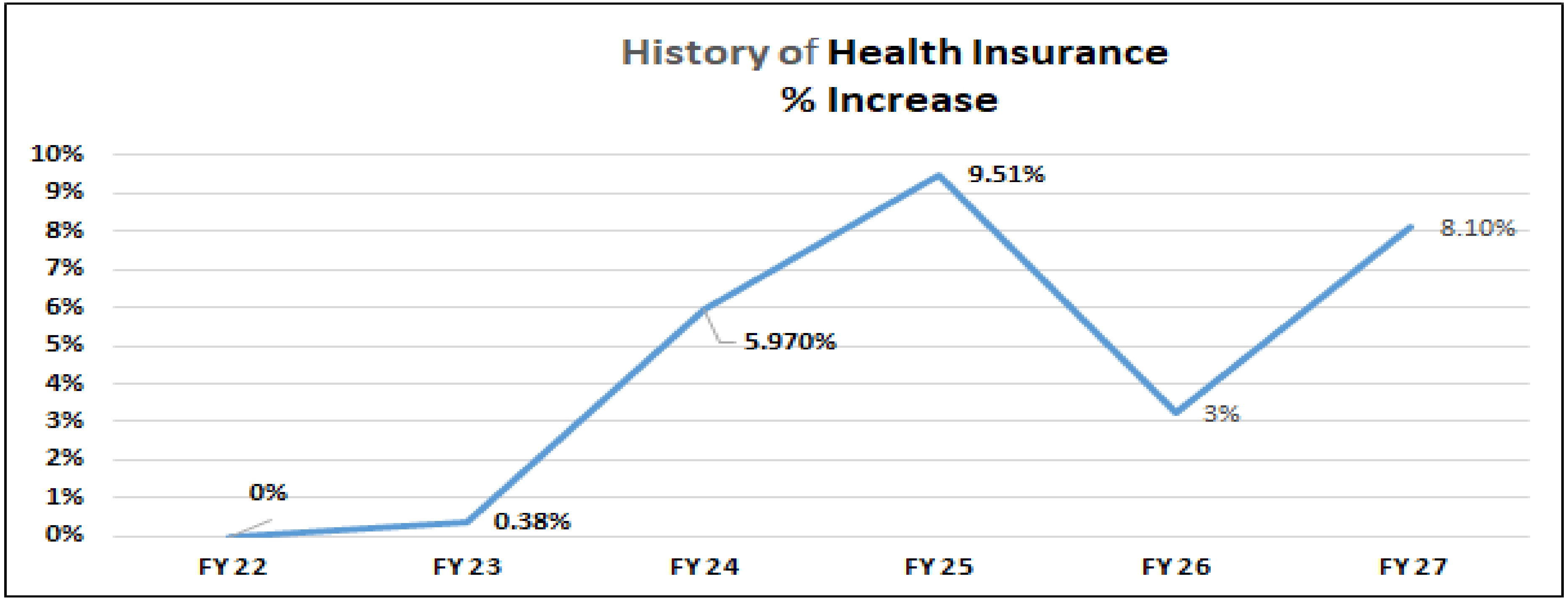
New Total Budget $ Operating	New % Expenditure Increase	New % Total Town/County/School Property Tax Rate Increase
3.31.2026 $38,673,007	6.48%	6.90%
4.07.2026 $38,690,507	6.53%	6.93%

Added back C.I.P inflation increase of $17,500 (2.5%)

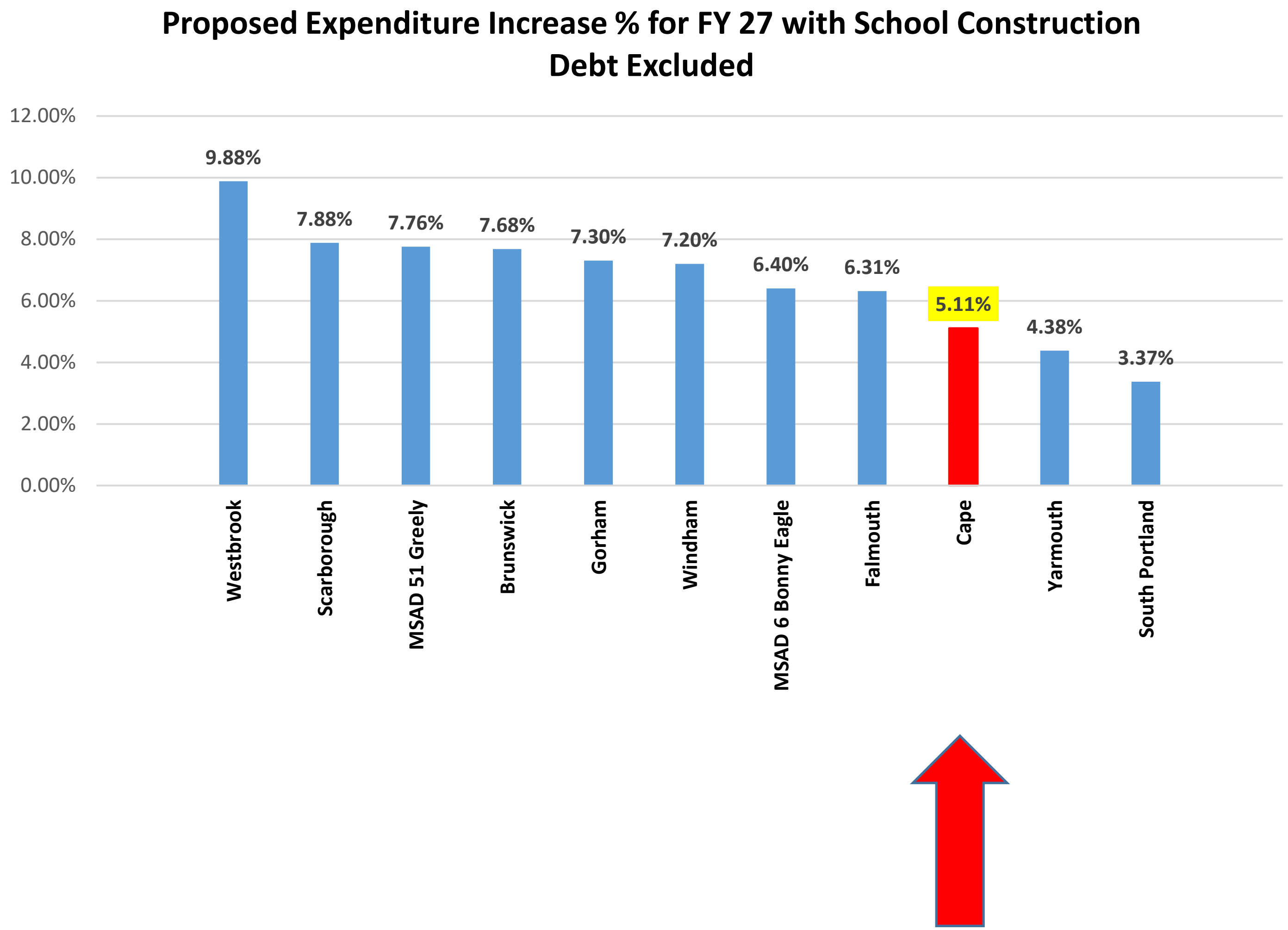

% Changes for School Expenditures with School Construction Debt Included
10.00%
9.00%
8.00%
7.00%
6.00%
5.00%
4.00%
3.00%
2.00%
1.00%
0.00%
1.30%
3.20%
2.40%
2.10%
5.90%
5.95%
4.80%
4.68%
9.32%
3.74%
2.46%
6.53%
FY16
FY17
FY18
FY19
FY20
FY21
FY22
FY23
FY24
FY25
FY26
FY27
% Increase for Expenditures


State Allocation
$4,000,000
$3,500,000
$3,000,000
$2,500,000
$2,000,000
$1,500,000
$1,000,000
$500,000
$-
$3,403,682
$2,673,547
$2,198,638
$1,263,973
$1,773,718
$1,731,960
$2,608,293
$2,013,691
$3,064,709
$3,369,431
$2,576,144
$2,387,448
FY16
FY17
FY18
FY19
FY20
FY21
FY22
FY23
FY24
FY25
FY26
FY27

Historic Health Insurance Increase (%)



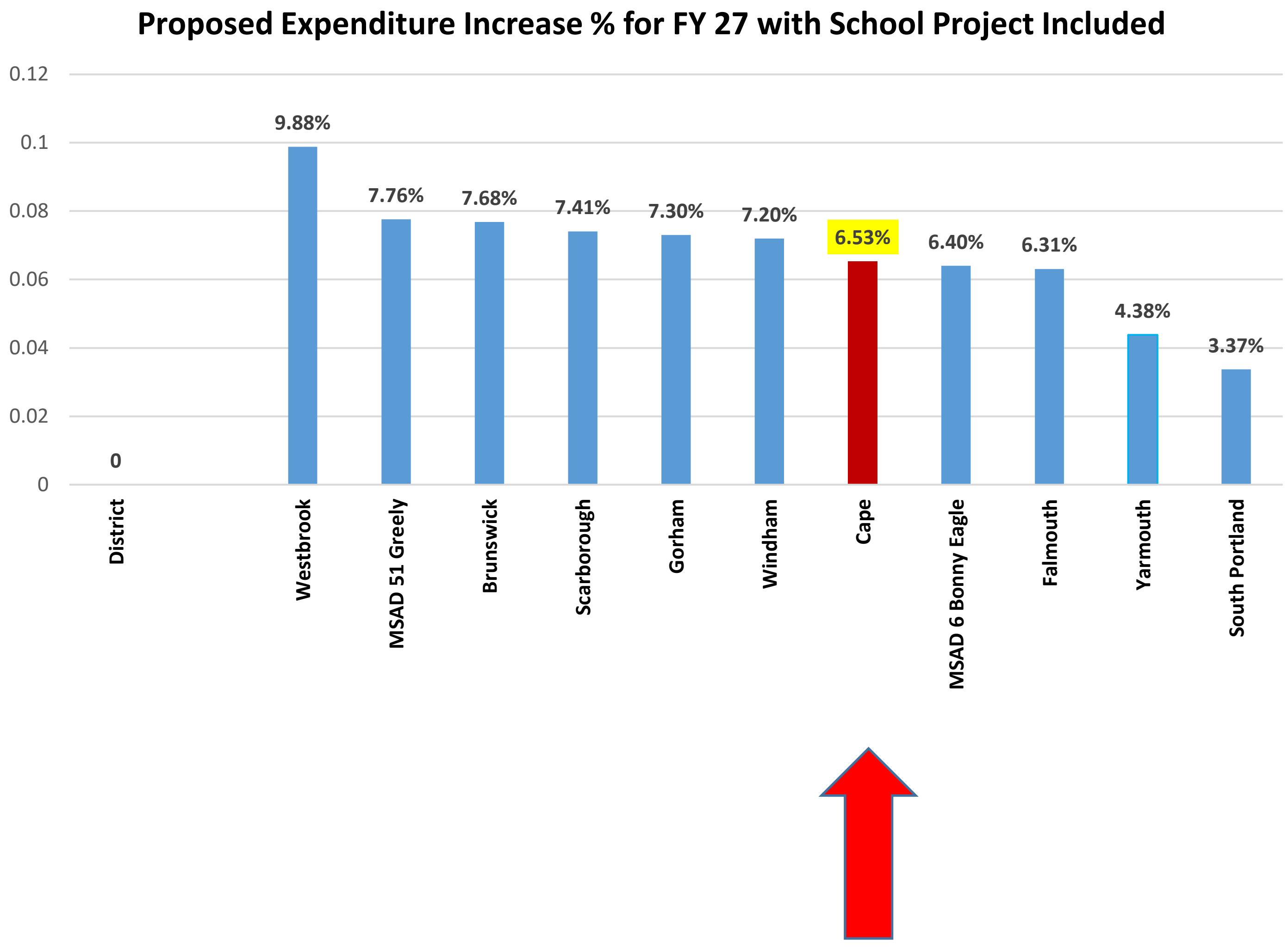
Cumberland County School District Projected Expenditure Increases for FY27 Budget – SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION DEBT EXCLUDED



Cape Elizabeth is the third lowest in Cumberland County with the school debt excluded

Cape Elizabeth last year was lowest in Cumberland County at 2.46%

Cumberland County School District Projected Expenditure Increases for FY27 Budget -SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION DEBT INCLUDED



Cape Elizabeth is the fifth lowest in Cumberland County with the school debt included

This column is for budget reference – not calculated in final end of year fund balance

School General Fund Audited Fund Balance Report 4.3.2026						
Fiscal Year	Beg of Year Fund Balance (as of 7/1)	Applied Use of Fund Balance for Budget Offset	Carryover		End of Year Audited Fund Balance (as of 6/30)	
2018-2019	342,058	400,000	(103,244)		238,814	
2019-2020	238,814	300,000	1,302,583		1,541,397	
2020-2021	1,541,397	400,000	978,002		2,519,399	
2021-2022	2,519,399	740,000	376,745		2,896,144	
2022-2023	2,896,144	750,000	355,793		3,251,937	
2023-2024	3,251,937	500,000	492,160		3,744,097	
2024-2025	3,744,097	650,000	(342,906)	*	3,401,191	not finalized from audit
2025-2026 *	3,401,191	1,000,000	(500,000)	*	2,901,191	* estimated
2026-2027 *	2,901,191	650,000	(300,000)	*	2,601,191	* estimated
	Estimated Fund Balance by 6.30.2027 would equal to 7.16%					
	* estimated					

MANAGER'S DRAFT PROFORMA 4/3/26
Use of Fund Balance $650,000

FY 2 BUD	FY 2026 BUDGET		FY 2027 BUDGET	$ CHANGE FY26 TO FY27	% CHANGE FY26 TO FY27
TAX RATE VALUATION BASIS	$ 3,883,457,807		$ 3,893,457,807	10,000,000	0.26%
EXPENSES					
MUNICIPAL EXPENSES	$ 19,550,647		$ 20,192,516	641,869	3.28%
TIF	182,903		190,000	7,097	3.88%
OVERLAY	140,405		100,000	(40,405)	-28.78%
COUNTY TAX EXPENSE	2,188,380		2,349,180	160,800	7.35%
SCHOOL EXPENSES	36,318,456		38,176,034	1,857,578	**5.11%**
SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION DEBT SERVICE	-		514,473	514,473	**1.42%**
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$ 58,380,791**		**$ 61,522,203**	**3,141,412**	**5.38%**
REVENUES					
MUNICIPAL REVENUES	$ 9,159,584		$ 9,602,261	442,677	4.83%
MUNICIPAL FUND BALANCE	$ -		$ -	-	0.00%
SCHOOL REVENUES	2,654,644		2,465,948	(188,696)	-7.11%
SCHOOL FUND BALANCE	1,000,000		650,000	(350,000)	-35.00%
TOTAL REVENUES	**$ 12,814,228**		**$ 12,718,209**	**(96,019)**	**-0.75%**
TAXES TO BE RAISED					
MUNICIPAL	$ 10,391,063		$ 10,590,255	199,192	1.92%
TIF	182,903		190,000	7,097	3.88%
OVERLAY	140,405		100,000	(40,405)	-28.78%
COUNTY	2,188,380		2,349,180	160,800	7.35%
SCHOOL	32,663,812		35,574,559	2,910,747	8.91%
TOTAL TAXES TO BE RAISED	**$ 45,566,563**		**$ 48,803,994**	**3,237,431**	**7.10%**
TAX RATES					
MUNICIPAL	$ 2.73		$ 2.80	$ 0.07	2.71%
COUNTY	0.57		$ 0.60	0.03	5.79%
SCHOOL	8.43		$ 9.14	0.71	8.37%
TOTAL TAX RATE (ESTIMATED)	**$ 11.73**		**$ 12.54**	**0.81**	**6.93%**

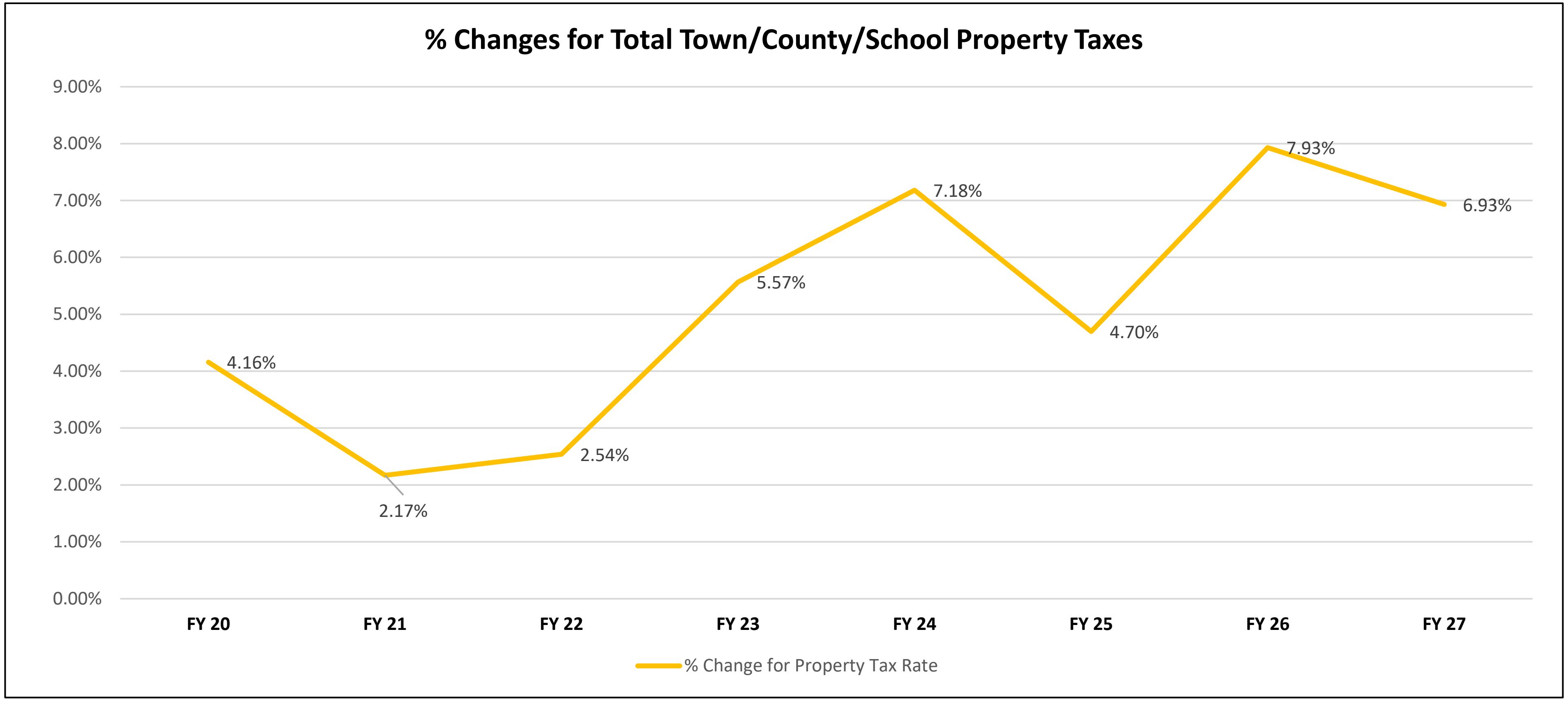
*Property value growth is a prelimary estimate.
*The School expenses and revenues are preliminary estimates.

School Property Tax Rate Comparison

Pro Forma Compared to Adopted Budget

Fiscal Year	Tax School Rate at time of Budget Adoption	Tax Rate at time of Final Pro Forma in August
Fiscal Year 2027	8.37	
Fiscal Year 2026	8.51	8.43
Fiscal Year 2025	8.10	8.26
Fiscal Year 2024	16.98	16.93
Fiscal Year 2023	16.04	15.98
Fiscal year 2022	15.58	15.28
Fiscal Year 2021	15.07	15.06
Fiscal Year 2020	14.52	14.30

Town/County/School Property Tax % Change History As of 4.14.2026



Summary of Reductions for Two Years

DLT Reductions to Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

- **Eliminated increased curriculum request (not necessary for FY 26)**
- **5% line reduction for supplies and books**
- **5% line reduction for online subscriptions**
- **5% line reduction for equipment**
- **Pond Cove curriculum request for ELA materials purchase w/ current budget**
- **Athletics – reduce professional services**
- **Not fill the new position request for the CEMS administrative assistant**
- **Reduce retirement stipend line**
- **Eliminated increased curriculum request (not necessary for FY 26)**
- **5% line reduction for supplies and books**
- **5% line reduction for online subscriptions**
- **5% line reduction for equipment**
- **Pond Cove curriculum request for ELA materials purchase w/ current budget**
- **Athletics – reduce professional services**
- **Not fill the new position request for the CEMS administrative assistant**
- **Reduce retirement stipend line**

Summary of Reductions for Two Years

DLT Reductions to Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2025-2026
• Transportation – not fill vacant 30 hour/week driver • Maintenance – not fill one vacant position • Custodian – not fill one vacant position • Not fill vacant special education reading specialist (we meet this need another way) • Not fill three open ed tech positions • Shifting one teacher to fill a vacancy • Central Office – reduce hours of a support staff

Summary of Reductions for Two Years

DLT Reductions to Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2026-2027
• Central Office – reduce legal services amount • Central Office – reduce evaluation software costs • Technology – reduce security and AV replacement line • Reduce Middle School Curriculum request (purchase in current year) • Savings from transition services from CDS to SAUs: net savings from additions and changes to teaching positions • 3 unfilled Ed Tech positions • 1 unfilled Central Office Support position • 1 unfilled Pond Cove teaching position • 1 unfilled tech integrator position at Pond Cove • New position request at the Middle School for an Ed tech III, meeting needs with current staffing • Health insurance ceiling announced at 11.5% • Final health insurance number at 8.10% increase

Reminder of FY27 School Budget As of 4.14.2026 Funding/Revenue Sources:

Revenue Description	Amount
State Funding	$2,387,448 (down $162,837) (down $981,983 over two years)
Applied Fund Balance	$650,000
Property Taxes	$35,574,559
Other Revenue	$78,500
Total	$38,690,507

We Are Very Proud of This FY27 Budget Because…

- **Maintains our excellent educational standards that our community supports & expects**
- **There are <u>No</u> educational program cuts**
- **There are <u>No</u> teacher or staff cuts to any currently filled positions**
- **Maintains facilities funding for C.I.P./Maintenance/Repairs**
- **Meets SB budget goals, w/a fiscally responsible 6.53% expenditure increase (including new school construction debt), resulting in a 6.93% projected total town/county school tax rate**

What Our Budget is Really All About…



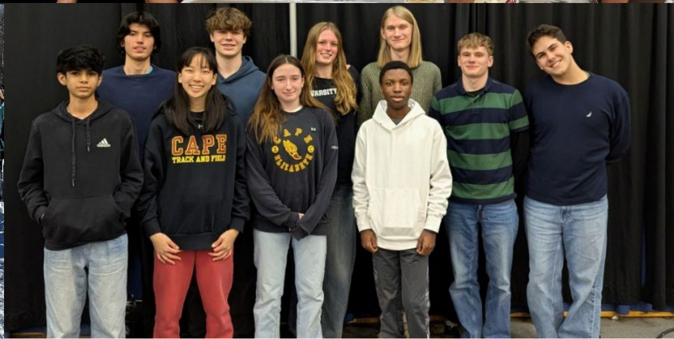












Comments or Questions – Further Guidance