

A Message from the Superintendent



November 4, 2020

Dear Duxbury School Committee and Duxbury Residents,

Please find enclosed my proposed FY'22 School Department Budget. This document contains a broad overview as well as a detailed explanation of the District's budget requests. It is organized into three sections:

- **Slide Presentation:** This serves as an Executive Summary and the "story" of our budget. I chose to use this format to make it as transparent and accessible as possible for all readers. It is intended to be read in the order in which it is presented.
- **Financial Exhibits:** There are six financial exhibits for your review. Each one summarizes the budget in a slightly different way and in varying degrees of depth and detail.
- **Line Item Detail:** There are almost 400 line items in the School Department Budget, organized into 46 Cost Centers. This section of the budget is the most detailed and technical. It is contained herein to provide a maximum level of transparency.

This is the fourth budget I have developed since I became Superintendent in 2017, and unfortunately, the fiscal climate is not improving. This year is perhaps the most difficult, since we were tasked by the Town to create a level-funded budget (i.e. 0% increase). After reviewing the document, you will see that this level of funding is not adequate to preserve even core services. Even more importantly, it is not commensurate with the expectations of the community to provide a high-quality, top-tier educational experience for all students. My proposed FY'22 budget request of \$37,498,353 represents a 0% increase over FY'21, and results in a reduction of 18.6 FTE (full-time equivalent personnel).

To be fair, the lack of available funding should not be construed as a lack of community support for the Duxbury Public Schools. Quite the contrary, the pride that the Duxbury community takes in its schools is unparalleled, and we have a rich history and strong traditions. However, from a budgetary perspective, we have reached a tipping point, and I question how long we can sustain our program levels without additional resources.

I readily acknowledge the fiscal restraints our Town faces, yet as Superintendent I am also resolved to vigorously advocate for our students, faculty, and staff. The "do more with less" narrative needs to shift, as it has landed us in a place where we are forced to implement draconian budget cuts. This is not sustainable, and I am certain that the schools cannot provide what the community expects without an infusion of funding in the very near future. I am hopeful that the FY'22 budget discussion - throughout the town and by all committees - will be focused on developing a long-term funding solution for school and town services. In particular, in the absence of additional local revenue, it is time to have a thoughtful conversation about a Proposition 2 ½ tax override and how that aligns with our strategic goals.

As always, I look forward to partnering with the School Committee and other Town officials to best position the Town of Duxbury and the Duxbury Public Schools for continued success. Thank you.