



Acushnet Public Schools

FY27 Budget Discussion

April 14, 2026



Mission

The mission of the Acushnet Public Schools in partnership with staff, parents, and community is to promote student success, growth, and learning in a safe and supportive environment.

Vision

The vision of the Acushnet Public Schools is to be a high-performing school district where all students are afforded the opportunities to realize their potential.

Two Schools One District

Strategic Objectives

- Achieving academic excellence for all students
- Creating thriving social and emotional learning experiences (SEL) for all students
- Strengthening partnerships with parents and the larger community



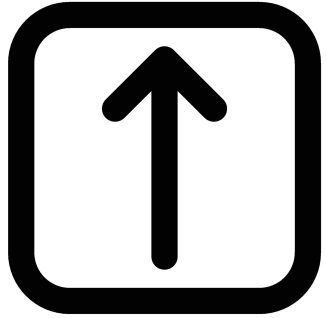
Superintendent's Budget Message

It is our responsibility to create a fiscally responsible budget to provide students with an excellent education in a safe and supportive environment.

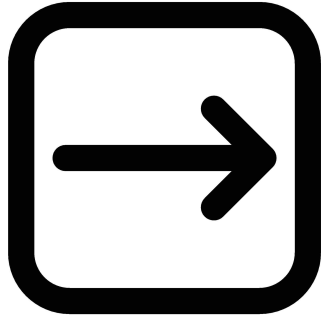


Budget Scenario

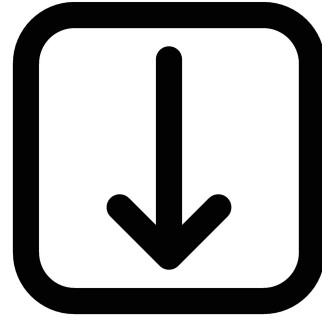
Needs-Driven



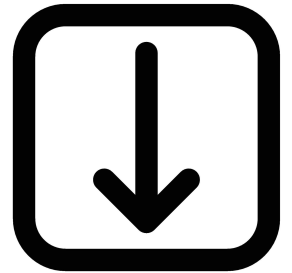
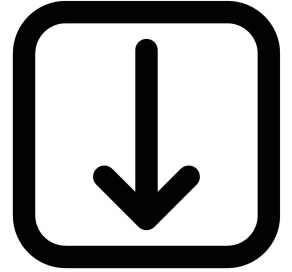
Level Service



Constraint-Driven



Level-Funded



Where We've Been...

2014 DESE District Review Report

Key Challenges



- Lack of coherent planning
- Inconsistent curriculum
- Uneven instruction
- Weak data use
- Ineffective professional development
- Inconsistent student supports



Where We've Been...

2014 DESE District Review Report

Key Recommendations



- Strengthen planning & leadership
- Implement a standards-based curriculum
- Improve instruction
- Use data effectively
- Revamp professional development
- Enhance student support systems



Where We Are!

APS Response & Results

- 2018 - Hired Superintendent, Dr. Bailey
- 2021 - Start of CIA Director position
- 2021 - Implementation of high-quality curricular materials in ELA, math, science
- 2022 - Start of 2 Academic Coaching positions
- 2023 - Implementation of high-quality curricular materials in social studies
- High-quality professional development

MCAS	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations	% Above State								
ELA 3-8	7	12	8	7	5	Covid	5	1	-9
Math 3-8	7	12	10	12	9		-5	3	0
Science 5/8	2	4	7	3	-3		-1	-2	0
Ave. of Diff	5	9	8	7	4		0	1	-3

Where We Are!

Highlights

- Since 2021, The district has been awarded highly competitive grants. \$1.5 million+
- 2022 National ESEA Distinguished School
- Project Lead the Way
- One8 Foundation
- Successfully Navigated Covid Years
- US News Featured APS
- 8th grade civics teacher recipient of Massachusetts Council for the Social Studies for excellence in teaching



Where We Are!

Highlights

- Patrick Tutwiler - Former Secretary of Education Keynote speaker for Acushnet Public Schools
- Jeff Riley - Former Massachusetts Commissioner of Education
- Regina Robinson - Deputy Commissioner of Education
- Community Partners
 - Fun 107
 - PJKeating
 - Why Not a Pear
 - Safe Routes to School & Acushnet Bicycle Pedestrian Committee
 - Family of Judith Ford Loutit
 - Acushnet Police, Fire, EMS
 - Acushnet Library



Budget Funding Sources

- **Town Appropriation**
 - Required by the State = \$9,654,882
 - Generally the Town “funds” approximately 57% of the School District’s operating budget
 - In addition, the Town incurs additional operating and other expenses within the Town’s operating budget of approx. \$2,000,000 – these expenditures represent Town Administration, Insurance (Active and Retiree) and Medicare costs
- **State Aid - Chapter 70 Funding**
 - Preliminary funded at \$7,545,822
 - Generally Chapter 70 Aid “funds” approximately 43% of the School District’s operating budget
- **Federal and State Grants**
 - Entitlement Grants and Competitive Grants
 - Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Grants = ~\$131,853 being reduced to \$121,474 for FY27
 - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Grants = ~\$314,595 waiting for confirmation
- **Circuit Breaker Reimbursement**
 - Reimbursement of Special Education related expenses base on state formula and reimbursement rate = ~\$283,333
- **Revolving Funds & Other offsets**
 - School Food Service Fund – Funds 100% of our Food Service Program = ~\$100,000
 - School Rental Fund = ~\$15,000
 - Preschool Tuition Fund = ~\$50,000

FY26 Budget

OTHER EXPENSES

1.5%

SUPPLIES/MATERIALS

3.5%

OUT OF DISTRICT TUITION

20.8%

CONTRACTED SERVICES

15.0%

PARA, CUSTODIAN, TECH

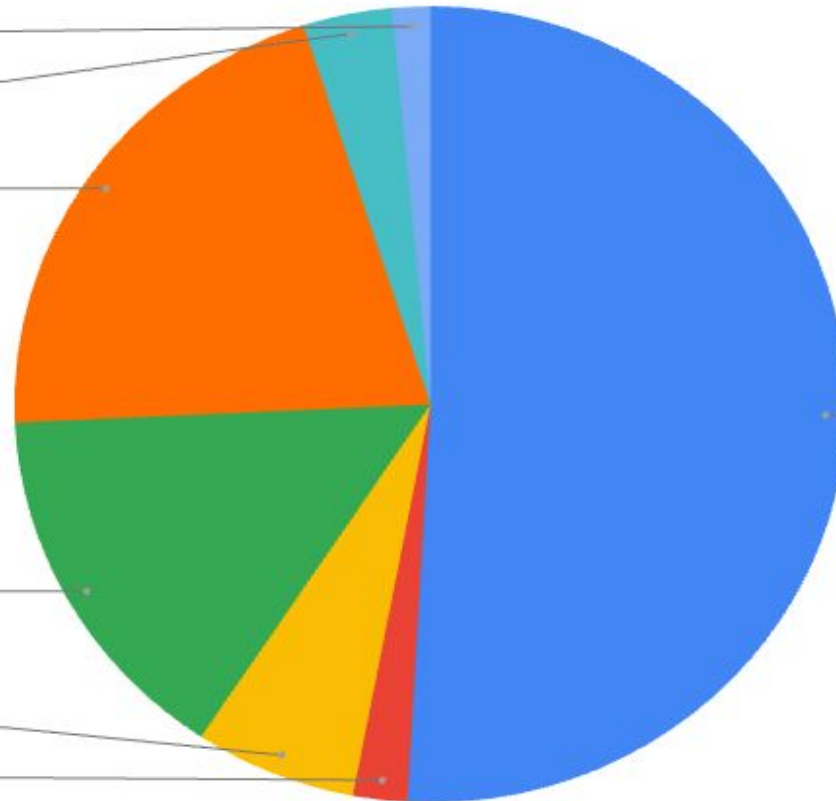
6.3%

CLERICAL SALARIES

2.1%

PROFESSIONAL SALARIES

50.9%



Budget Scenario Impact Analysis

Needs-Driven

Increase
\$1,931,539

Impact Level:

No Reductions

3 Additions

Level Service

Increase
\$1,524,012

Impact Level:

No Reductions

No Additions

Constraint-Driven

Increase
\$1,001,812

Impact Level:

8 Staff Reductions

Budget reductions in
operations,
maintenance,
professional
development

Level-Funded

Increase
\$0

Impact Level:

21 Staff Reductions

Major budget
reductions in
operations,
maintenance,
professional
development

Superintendent's Recommended Needs-Driven Budget

Includes full Level Service Budget

- Maintains all current programs and services

Strategic Additions

- 1 Elementary Reading Specialist
- 2 Behavior Technicians
- Additional investments in:
 - Professional Development
 - Training in reading interventions (including support for students with dyslexia)

Purpose

- Strengthen student support systems
- Improve literacy outcomes
- Address increasing behavioral and academic needs

Bottom Line

- Builds on maintaining services while making targeted, high-impact investments
- Focused on meeting student needs and improving outcomes

FY27 Needs-Driven Budget Reduction

A **needs driven** budget would require an increase of

\$1,931,539

**This would result in zero staff reductions, no loss in services and
and increase in programs and supports for students**

Budget Realities

Budget Context & Challenges

- Local revenue is flat, limiting the Town's ability to keep up with rising costs
- State aid increases remain minimal and are not keeping pace with inflation
- Greater financial burden is shifting to local resources

Ongoing Financial Pressures

- This is a continuing, multi-year challenge
- The district has been asked to plan level-funded budgets despite rising costs
- A level service request would be: \$1.52M (9.1%)

Limited Flexibility

- ~90% of the budget is fixed
(salaries, transportation, insurance, mandated services)
- Leaves very little room for adjustments

Superintendent's Recommendation: Level Service Budget

What is a Level Service Budget?

- A level service budget maintains current programs and services
 - It does not add new initiatives

Recent Context

- In recent years, we have not received full level service funding
- Prior budgets have required reductions in services

Our Request

- We are not asking to restore past cuts
- We are asking to:
 - Maintain current services
 - Avoid further reductions

Bottom Line

- This request reflects a fiscally responsible approach
- Focused on preserving what we currently provide for students

FY27 Level Service Budget

A **level service** budget would result in an increase of

\$1,524,012

This would result in zero staff reductions and no loss in services and programs for students. This will not fully meet the needs of all students.

FY27 Contractual Budget Area Increases
These are fixed costs

Special Education Costs	\$173,978	60.33%
Energy & Utilities	\$250,000	35.41%
SPED Out of District Tuitions	\$209,684	19.40%
Transportation of Students	\$274,081	17.65%
Other Combined Expenses	\$ 50,028	11.69%
High School Tuitions	\$279,941	10.80%
Salaries	\$286,301	2.96%
TOTAL Increases	\$1,524,012	

Town's Recommendation: Level Funded Budget

Level Funding: What It Means

- No increase from prior year
- Requires ~\$1.9M in reductions
- Rising costs mean maintaining services actually requires more funding

Fixed Cost Pressures

- Majority of budget is fixed
- Costs continue to rise:
 - a. Out-of-District (OOD) placements
 - b. Special Education costs
 - c. Energy/utility costs
 - d. Transportation costs
 - e. High School Tuitions
 - f. Staff salaries & contractual increases

Impact

- Deep cuts to staff and programs
- Direct impact on students and services

Bottom Line

- Level funding $\neq$ level services
- Leads to significant reductions despite responsible budgeting

FY27 **Level Funded** Budget Reduction

A **Level Funded** budget would require cutting a reduction of

\$1,931,539

Resulting in an estimated
Reduction of 21+ positions (16% staff reduction)

These cuts would **severely impact the district & student services**

Reluctant Recommendation: Constraint-Driven Budget

Constraint-Driven Budget

- Maintains a fiscally responsible approach
- Requires reductions to stay within available resources
- Includes no new positions, additions, or restoration

Required Reductions

- 8 staffing cuts from current levels
- Additional reductions in: Operations, Maintenance, Professional Development

Impact

- Fewer resources and diminished student enrichment
- Reduced capacity for:
 - Building maintenance and operations
 - Staff training and growth
- Increased strain and few supports for existing staff and services

Bottom Line

- Preserves more than deeper cuts, but still results in significant impacts
- Reflects a balance between fiscal constraints and student needs

FY27 **Constraint-Driven** Budget

A **Constraint-Driven** budget would result in an increase of

\$1,001,812

This would result in staff reductions, loss in programs for students. This will not fully meet the needs of all students.

FY27 Constraint-Driven Budget Reductions

The constraint-driven budget is a compromise that will have an impact on students - resulting in larger class size, loss of programming, and learning quality for our students.

REDUCTION IN FORCE WITH CONSTRAINT-BASED BUDGET			
		FTE	Savings
	FTE Reductions	7	\$589,1044
	Administrator	1	\$100,000
<i>District Wide</i>			
	Operations & Maintenance Reductions		\$240,623
	Total Reductions	8	\$929,727

Position Reductions FY 25-27

FY25	FY26	FY27
2 Building Based Subs	FMS Spanish	8 FTE's
FMS SPED Teacher	AES Reading Interventionist	
Grade 8 Math	FMS PE Teacher	
Grade 5 Science	AES Technology Teacher	
Admin Asst. Float	K Special Education Teacher	
FMS Math Interventionist	FMS SPED Para	
Grade 7/8 ELA	(*LPN - nurse)	
	(*Grade 1 Teacher)	
8	(*8) 6	8

(*Originally cut from budget but brought back via town meeting)

Total Reductions FY 25-27 = 22

Our Solution...

Budget Approach & Priorities

- Limited revenue and state aid require ongoing, strategic reductions to maintain a balanced budget
- Decisions aligned with district mission, vision, and core values

We prioritized:

- Minimizing impact on students
- Academic excellence
- Social-emotional learning
- Safe, inclusive environments
- Family & community partnerships

Our approach:

- Avoided across-the-board cuts
- Used data-driven staffing and service adjustments for long-term sustainability
- Possible relocation of fifth grade to AES
- Continued collaboration with the Town, families, and staff to advocate for adequate funding and responsible resource use



Our Commitment

It is our responsibility to create a fiscally responsible budget to provide students with an excellent education in a safe and supportive environment.



Superintendent's Constraint-Driven Budget Request - FY27

FY27 Total School Budget for Net School Spending	\$ 17,313,524	
FY27 Total School Budget for Non-Net School Spending	\$ 1,812,660	
FY27 Offsets to Reduce the Budget request		
Title 1 Grant Funds	-\$ 90,000	
IDEA Grant Funds	-\$ 60,000	
Solar Electricity Credits	-\$ 75,000	
Circuit Breaker Funds	-\$ 280,000	
Proposed Budget Reductions	<u>-\$ 929,727</u>	
FY27 Town Appropriation Request	\$17,691,457	→ \$17,691,457
		Budget Request from the Town

Funding Reality & Responsibility

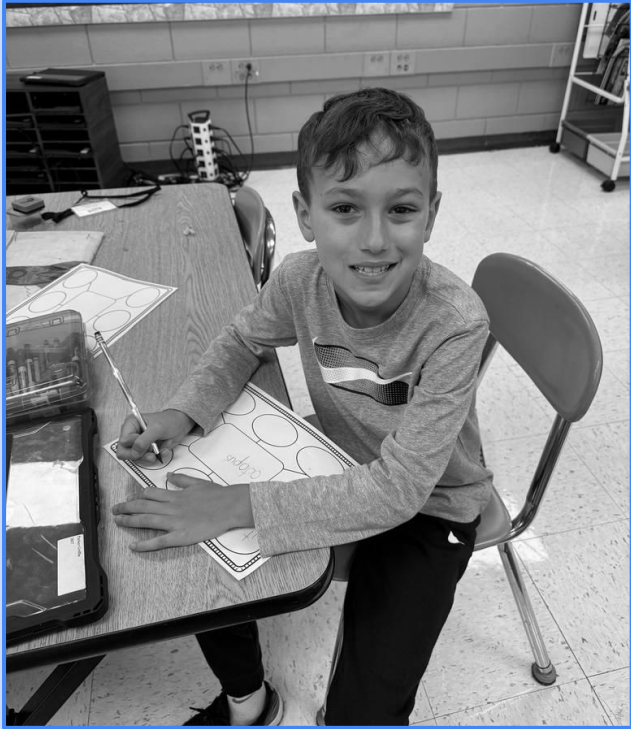
Funding Reality:

- Revenue opportunities are limited
- Primary funding comes from Chapter 70 aid and town support
- External sources (grants, Circuit Breaker, partnerships) are actively pursued but limited

Our Commitment:

- Maintain district momentum
- Present a fiscally responsible budget
- Support all students while maximizing available resources

Next Steps: Constraint-Driven Budget



- Identify and communicate necessary reductions
- Plan for possible relocation of grade 5
- Support staff through transition planning
- Adjust schedules as needed
- Monitor class sizes and service levels

Funds Returned to the Town

	FY25	FY24	FY23
Unable to Procure - Actual Returned to Town	108,885	50,069	175,000
(% of total budget)	(.06%)	(0.3%)	(1.1%)
SPED Supplemental Appropriation	186,026	0	0
SPED Stabilization Transfer	193,508	0	0
High School Excess Tuitions	81,959	0	0
Prepaid Out-of-District Tuition	0	362,626	0
Fairhaven Billing Error	0	217,728	0
Other	0	915	0
Total	\$570,378	\$631,338	\$175,000

Acushnet is not Alone in Facing Revenue Constraints

Tax increases set as possible solution to Lakeville's \$2.6 million budget gap



Return to Last page
For Questions or Assistance Email us at:

Data Analytics and Resources Bureau

Proposition 2½ Stabilization Fund Override Votes
Data current as of 04/13/2026

al Years: Select
Departments: id 5 Selected
Select Win / Loss: WIN, LOSS
Submit Export Table

Department	Description	Amount
ILIC WORKS & UTILITIES	Funding Sewer System Stabilization Fund	750,000
ILIC WORKS & UTILITIES	Funding The Taking, Layout And Improvement Of Certain Private Ways As Town Ways	3,000,000
SCHOOL	Funding High School Student Stabilization Fund	800,000
SCHOOL	Funding High School Student Stabilization Fund	820,000
SCHOOL	Funding High School Student Stabilization Fund	840,500
SCHOOL	Funding High School Student Stabilization Fund	861,513
SCHOOL	Funding High School Student Stabilization Fund	883,051

Berkley officials warn of drastic cuts without override

Emma Rindlisbacher
The Taunton Daily Gazette
Updated Jan. 23, 2026, 1:11 p.m. ET

The town of Berkley is staring down the barrel of a would impact its schools, police, fire, and other public services. A letter from Berkley Public Schools Superintendent

Rochester Schools E

on February 22, 2026

The Rochester School Committee Superintendent's Conference Room challenges, potential cuts, and potential cuts. Parents attended the hybrid-style meeting with some expressing worries of

Fairhaven considers \$760K override to prevent service cuts. What to



LEXINGTON SCHOOLS ANNOUNCE STARTING CUTS

did definitely took the opportunity to voice their



TAXES

Why communities across Mass. may soon vote to raise property taxes

OVERVIEW

- Raises \$4,915,700 over 3 years:
- \$2,615,700 in Year 1 (FY27)
- \$1,300,000 in Year 2 (FY28)
- \$1,000,000 in Year 3 (FY29)
- Supports level services for the town, Public Safety, and Public Schools

Acushnet is not Alone in Facing Revenue Constraints

- Many communities across the state, including Southeastern Massachusetts are facing structural budget challenges driven by limited revenue growth.
- As costs rise faster than the 2.5% tax limit, many towns, are considering or pursuing overrides to maintain school and municipal services
- Statewide data shows that hundreds of Massachusetts communities have brought override questions to voters, reflecting a common response to ongoing fiscal pressure
- Like our neighboring towns, we hope to collaborate with town officials to identify sustainable solutions to support next year's budget and maintain services for students

How Do We Manage The School Budget And What Is The Impact On The Town?



Acushnet is ranked 389 out of 395 Districts in Massachusetts for per pupil expenditures. Only 6 other districts in the state spend less per pupil.

Acushnet maintains lower per-pupil expenditures through strategic management. Chapter 70 funds, Grants, etc.

This lowers the impact on town.

DESE data 2024

**Less support + fewer
opportunities =
diminished student
experience**



Closing Remarks

Collaborative Process:

- Developed through collaboration with Budget Sub-Committee, leadership, and staff
- Ongoing input from School Committee, public, and Town Administration

Strategic Alignment - Every item in the budget can be aligned to strategic objectives in the District Strategic Plan:

- Academic excellence for all students
- Social-emotional learning (SEL)
- Family and community partnerships

Key Reality:

- Budget does **not** maintain level services

Closing Remarks

Your Voice Matters:

- We encourage staff, families, and community members to stay engaged
- Input is critical as decisions are made for schools and all Town departments
- Stronger decisions come from diverse stakeholder perspectives

Understanding the Impact:

- 1% of the budget $\approx$ \$191,262
- Equivalent to: ~2–3 teachers, ~2 school buses, or Chapter 70 aid for ~12 students
- Every budget decision has real consequences for students and staff

Key Reminder:

- *“Just because a need goes unfunded does not mean the need has gone away.”*

Questions

