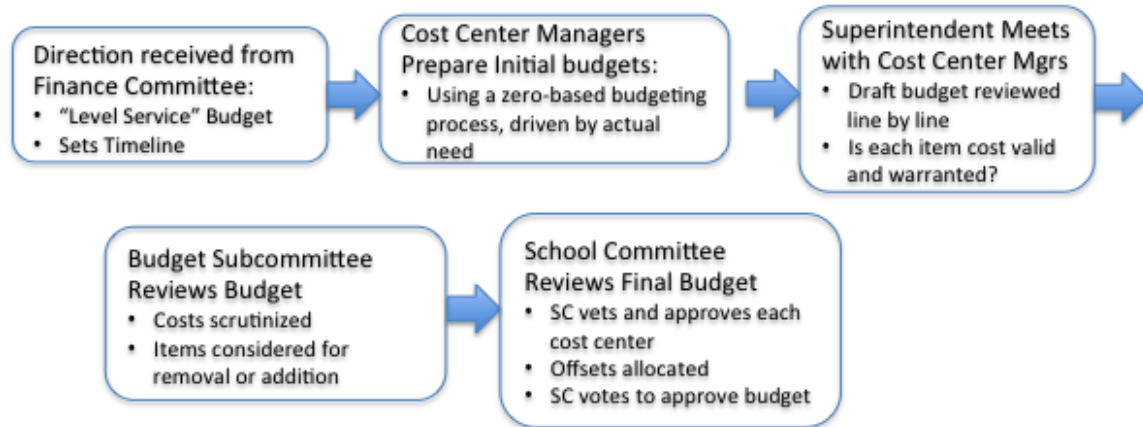


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The School Committee and the Harvard Public School Administration present this summary booklet containing details of their proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget. In the pages that follow you will find expenses broken down by our six core cost centers; Central Office, Facilities, Hildreth Elementary School, The Bromfield School, Special Education and Technology. Itemized detail is available on request at the Superintendent's Office. The budget process is outlined below:



During each of these steps, the budget is further refined and often pared down to ensure it is indeed a level-service budget, and that any new/additional expenses are indeed necessary to maintain the level of service consistent with Harvard's commitment to academic excellence. The School Committee also considers the use of outside funding sources (Devens tuitions, School Choice tuitions and various grants) to cover both salaries and program needs as well as capital items critical to the curriculum or facility maintenance and upgrades. Throughout the process the district's following core value is used to assess the validity of expenses: *"We appreciate that the Harvard community provides the necessary resources to best serve our students, and we hold ourselves responsible for the appropriate use of those resources."*

The final budget is then sent to the Finance Committee for their review and approval. The School Committee and Superintendent hold a public hearing each spring before ATM during which questions and input regarding the budget are welcome. The final presentation is done at ATM where the budget approval requires a majority vote.

This year's budget of \$12,606,640 represents an increase of \$332,035 (2.71%) over last year's budget. Off-sets to the budget total nearly \$3 million bringing total school expenditures to \$15,560,997. The bulk of the offsets (\$1.19 million) comes from fees paid by Mass Development for the education of students from Devens and goes primarily towards salaries (\$900k) and technology (\$251k).

Nearly \$10 million of the total budget is for salaries, which rose district-wide by 2.38%. With most of the salary costs driven by contracts, the administration works hard to manage the remaining expenses totaling \$2.59 million which include costs for technology, curriculum, capital equipment, building maintenance, supplies, professional development and pupil services. Significant purchases/increases in the 16/17 budget are listed below with a short explanation:

- Bromfield's textbook/curriculum line is increasing \$23,798 to fund new textbooks in several curriculum areas.
- Bromfield's library media line is increasing \$4,212 to fund an on-line researching tool.
- Central Office professional development stipends are up \$13,040 to increase the summer curriculum work of teachers.
- School Facility's contract services is increasing \$16,207 due to specialized services required for repairs on elevators, fire alarm, security, safety, indoor air quality testing, and waste pumping.
- Pupil Services' out of district tuitions is increasing by \$173,984 due to the individual needs of students.

Outside of the Omnibus Budget the schools are seeking approval from the town for two items. The first is \$500,000 for a design and feasibility study of the Hildreth Elementary School. In January of 2016 the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) approved Harvard's request for inclusion in their funding program for school building initiatives. The renovations to the building will address major upgrades to the Kindergarten wing of the school which was built in the 1950's and contains a mold hazard which was discovered in 2003 and has since been contained. Additional upgrades to the entire building are anticipated to bring it up to code, meet ADA requirements and improve energy efficiency. If approved at All Town Meeting(ATM), reimbursement for the feasibility study from MSBA will be 44.67%.

A second capital expense of \$31,000 is for a new tractor/snow-blower to be used by the schools, replacing a current vehicle which is over 10 years old.

Lastly, the School Committee voted in January to expend \$275,000 out of the Devens tuitions to cover the cost of upgrading and paving The Bromfield School parking lot. This project, on the town's improvement list for over ten years, includes grading, paving, lighting and installation of water treatment measures to protect Bare Hill pond from run-off. Construction will take place over the summer and will significantly increase safety and ease of use for not only the staff and students, but also for attendees of the many school and town events held at Bromfield.

One major commitment of the School Committee, to reduce user fees, goes unfunded at this time. While the Committee recognizes the need to look to families to bear the cost of some of the schools services (busing, athletics, Kindergarten, music), they are keenly aware of the financial strain this causes for some. No obvious solution for

reducing this strain while maintaining our academic strengths has yet been found, but it remains an intention of the Committee to look for possibilities in the future.

In closing, the School Committee and the administration wish to express their sincere appreciation to an exceptionally talented and dedicated staff. We are grateful to and recognize all of our parents for their engagement and passionate support of their children's education. We are indebted to the entire community of Harvard for the continued commitment to public education. We celebrate our students' successes and aim to provide them with the means and learning to lead fulfilling lives that make a difference.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Linda Dwight (Superintendent) and the School Committee: Maureen Babcock, Jennifer Bedford, SusanMary Redinger, Nancy Lancellotti, Mary Traphagen, Kirsten Wright