

**DISTRICT BUDGET HEARING- MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2024**

**ROBERTA S. OHOTNICKY LITTLE THEATER**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Followed by a SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Regional School District No. 7 Board of Education Mission Statement:**

We believe the public education is an essential component of a free and democratic society. In a partnership of family, school, community, and local and state government, our mission is to enable all students to meet high standards, make productive choices in their personal lives, contribute to a diverse global society and act as responsible citizens.

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**1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

**2.0 PUBLIC PORTION**

**3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- 3.1 April 3, 2024 Third Informal Town Presentation – New Hartford
- 3.2 April 4, 2024 Fourth Informal Town Presentation- Barkhamsted
- 3.3 April 4, 2024 BOE Meeting following the Barkhamsted Presentation

**4.0 REPORTS**

- 4.1 Student Representatives – Owen Langer, Fiona Leon
- 4.2 Principals' Report – F. Amara, G. Franklin
- 4.3 Superintendent's Report- S. LePage
- 4.4 Director of Finance and Operations- J. Gaskins

**5.0 OLD BUSINESS**

- 5.1 2024-2025 Budget Discussion
- 5.2 Updates
- 5.3 BOE Goals

**6.0 NEW BUSINESS**

- 6.1 Adoption of RSD#7 Budget to take to Annual District Budget Meeting – May 6, 2024
- 6.2 Adoption of Call of Annual District Budget Meeting with Referendum
- 6.3 Authorization of Explanatory Text for the 2024-2025 Budget
- 6.4 Appointment of Auditors – James Gaskins
- 6.5 Approval of Early Release on June 14, 2024 – Last Day of School

**7.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

- 7.1 Kelsey Leach – Letter of Resignation

**8.0 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS**

**9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Enclosures: April 3, 2024 BOE Minutes- Third Informal Town Budget Presentation – New Hartford  
April 4, 2024 BOE Minutes- Fourth Informal Town Budget Presentation – Barkhamsted  
April 4, 2024 BOE Meeting Minutes following the Barkhamsted Presentation  
Explanatory Text for the 2024-2025 RSD#7 Budget  
Kelsey Leach – Letter of Resignation

**Next Meetings:**

April 24, 2024 Regular BOE Meeting Library moved to April 22, 2024- NO MEETING  
May 6, 2024 District Budget Meeting NWR7 Little Theater 7:00 p.m.  
May 7, 2024 Referendum  
May 8, 2024 Regular BOE Meeting - NWR7 Library Media Center 6:00 p.m. ~Top 10 Students~  
May 22, 2024 Regular BOE Meeting - NWR7 Library Media Center 6:00 p.m.

We welcome the public to share their comments via [publicinput@nwr7.org](mailto:publicinput@nwr7.org). Your emails will be considered during the Public Comment session of the meeting. Thank you for your participation.

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7**  
**NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL**  
**Informal Budget Presentation - NEW HARTFORD**  
April 3, 2024 –7:00 p.m.  
**DRAFT**

**PRESENT:** Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Mary Duran (B), Superintendent Steven K. LePage, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins.

**Absent:** Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Lisa Fragale(C), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Ms. Kim Crone (N).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Sexton Read began the Informal Budget Presentation at 7:04 p.m.

**PRESENTATION OF RSD#7 PROPOSED BUDGET OVERVIEW 2024-2025**

Ms. Sexton Read began the presentation by reviewing the goals and mission of enabling all students to achieve academic and personal excellence and stating the budget is \$24,270,092. This is an increase of \$814,564 and 3.47% over the 2023-2024 Budget.

Ms. Sexton Read discussed the budget drivers are seeking the right balance with the student needs, with limited resources. Budget drivers include significant increases in Special Education Outplacements, the continued Specialized High School Program Support, the significant increase in the medical benefits renewal, and the Athletic Trainer Requirements with new State Mandates in place. Another budget driver is keeping the department-level funding increase at 0%, deferring spending on school capital needs, and the one new Ag-Ed teacher request is not included in the budget. There are also teaching position reductions. Ms. Sexton Read reviews the fiscal cliff considerations for RSD#7, which include budget elimination of grant funding as of June 30, 2023.

Ms. Sexton Read discussed the Social Security increases during the last five years have averaged 4.14% compared to the average RSD#7 budget increase of only 2.10% and average assessment of 1.83%. Ms. Sexton Read explained when reviewing the District Reference Groups (DRGs), which are a State classification system that groups local and regional public school districts together based on the similar socioeconomic status of their students, RSD#7 High School falls in the 81.3%, and the RSD#7 Middle School falls 78.2% in comparison to similar classified area school districts. Ms. Sexton Read presented the Regional School District No. 7's Smarter Balance Achievement results, the range of current expenditures per pupil in the Berkshire League, PSAT and SAT comparative data, and the percentage of students with AP scores of 3 or higher. Ms. Sexton Read discussed the current and projected member town enrollment and the changes in average daily membership by town.

Ms. Sexton Read presented how RSD#7 focuses on continued excellence by adding the following courses for 2024-2025: Digital Design Studio, Art Classroom Mentorship, Advanced Personal Finance, Business Classroom Mentorship, UConn ECE: If You Love It, Teach It, Journalism II, Zoology, UConn EMT Training (pending approval) and the History of Rock and Roll. Additions to World Language are Adv. Topics in Italian: Honors Film and Honors Novel. Ag Ed and Tech courses offered for the 2024-2025 school year include Ag Business Management and Fisheries Management.

Ms. Sexton Read provided an Object breakdown overview of the budget increases and decreases in salaries, benefits, purchased professional and technical services, purchased property services, supplies, property, and other objects and debt services. Explanation was provided of the major budget drivers. Excess Cost expenditure offsets are reflected in special education, professional and technical services, transportation, and tuition.

Ms. Sexton Read concluded that Regional School District No. 7, the pride of the Northwest Corner, with exceptional teachers, strong administrators and support staff, and outstanding custodial staff, provides a rigorous and comprehensive educational program for all learners and students that graduate with exceptional academic achievement results. The medical insurance cost increase is 0.84% of the total budget increase, special education & outplacement increases are 2.0% of the total budget increase. Outside of the medical insurance and special education outplacement cost increases, RSD#7's total budget increase amounts to only 0.63% (The average contractual increase for all collective bargaining groups is 3.27%). The 0.63% increase over non-negotiable expenses is the result of careful planning, flat-funded or reduced spending in almost all budget accounts, and the reduction of several certified staff members in this budget. A brief discussion followed with questions in regard to the outplacement costs and transportation.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Barrett  
Board Clerk



**Northwestern Regional School District No. 7**  
**Board of Education's Proposed 2024-2025 Budget**  
**Presented: April 3, 2024**

***The Pride of the Northwest Corner***

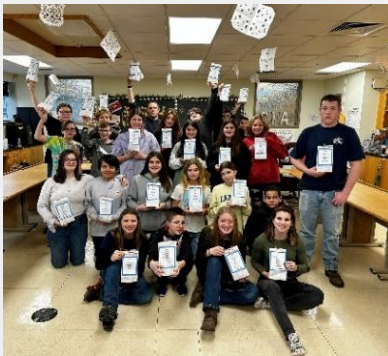


# *Superintendent's Budgeting Commitments:*

*We will:*

- *remain transparent and conscientious in our approach to budget development*
- *request and secure the resources we believe essential to educate and support our students and staff*
- *model our Vision of the Graduate attributes in all budget development practices, and through my leadership practices*
- *do our very best to ensure that Northwestern Regional School District No. 7 remains a model of excellence in the state and on the national level*

# *Northwestern Vision of the Graduate*



*The Pride of the Northwest Corner*



# Proposed Budget: Historical Overview

<u>Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Assessment</u>
• 2019-2020	1.77%	1.54%
• 2020-2021	2.53%	2.49%
• 2021-2022	1.33%	0.38%
• 2022-2023	2.45%	1.97%
• 2023-2024	2.42%	2.79%
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• 2024-2025	3.47%	3.78%

*Prior 5-Year Average Budget Increase: **2.10%***

*Prior 5-Year Average Assessment: **1.83%***

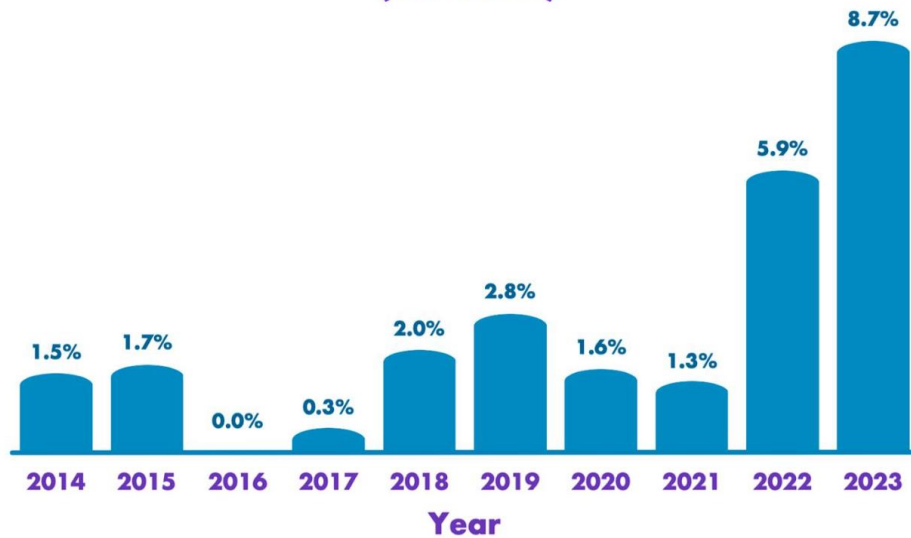
***6-Year Average Budget Increase: 2.33%***

***6-Year Average Assessment: 2.16%***



# Budgeting For Efficiency and Excellence Through Challenging Times

## Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs)



Source: The Social Security Administration

The Motley Fool

Social Security COLA increases from 2019-2023 have averaged 4.14%, compared to NWR7's average budget increase of 2.10%, and assessment increase of 1.83% during the same time period.

## Social Security Cost-Of-Living Adjustments

Year	COLA	Year	COLA	Year	COLA
1975	8.0	1995	2.6	2015	0.0
1976	6.4	1996	2.9	2016	0.3
1977	5.9	1997	2.1	2017	2.0
1978	6.5	1998	1.3	2018	2.8
1979	9.9	1999	2.5	2019	1.6
1980	14.3	2000	3.5	2020	1.3
1981	11.2	2001	2.6	2021	5.9
1982	7.4	2002	1.4	2022	8.7
1983	3.5	2003	2.1	2023	3.2
1984	3.5	2004	2.7		
1985	3.1	2005	4.1		
1986	1.3	2006	3.3		
1987	4.2	2007	2.3		
1988	4.0	2008	5.8		
1989	4.7	2009	0.0		
1990	5.4	2010	0.0		
1991	3.7	2011	3.6		
1992	3.0	2012	1.7		
1993	2.6	2013	1.5		
1994	2.8	2014	1.7		



# Budget Drivers: Seeking the Right Balance

## *Students Needs/Limited Resources*



### Special Education Programming:

- Significant Increase in Special Education Outplacements
- Continue Specialized Middle and High School Program Support

### Regular Education Programming:

- Significant Increase in Medical Benefits Renewal
- Athletic Trainer

### Budget Mitigation Staffing Reductions:

- Department Level funding increase held at 0%
- Deferred spending on school capital needs
- 1 new Ag-Ed Teacher request removed from the budget
- 3.5 Teaching Position Reductions:
  - 2.6 High School (English and World Language)
  - 0.4 Middle School (World Language)
  - 0.5 Library Media Specialist replaced with 1.0 Current NWR7 Social Studies Teacher (Net result is a .5 reduction of a Certified Teacher)

**TOTAL CERTIFIED STAFF REDUCTIONS = 3.5 FTE (Most near or at the top pay step)**

How do our *State Report Card* Results compare to DRG C High Schools?

School:	Student #	Grades	F.T.E.	F.T.E./Student Ratio	Accountability Index Score:
Northwestern HS	564	9-12	67.6	8.3	81.3
Canton HS	464	9-12	50.0	9.3	81.6
Ellington HS	737	9-12	77.4	9.5	77.4
Oxford HS	527	9-12	51.9	10.2	75.0
Somers HS	384	9-12	57.9	6.6	75.8
Reg. 4 Valley HS	489	9-12	58.0	8.4	75.1
Reg. 8 RHAM HS	819	9-12	92.0	10.6	77.0
Reg. 10 Lewis Mills HS	648	9-12	71.7	9.0	77.0
Reg. 13 Coginchaug HS	359	9-12	49.2	7.3	77.6
Reg. 12 Shepaug HS	494	9-12	59.8	8.3	75.1
<i>The Gilbert School</i>	410	9-12	49.8	8.2	61.3
<i>Reg 1 Housatonic Reg. HS</i>	319	9-12	49	6.5	68.5

# How do our *State Report Card* Results compare to DRG C Middle Schools?

School:	Student #	Grades	F.T.E.	F.T.E./Student Ratio	Accountability Index Score:
<b>Northwestern MS</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>78.2</b>
<b>Canton MS</b>	247	7-8	25.2	9.8	<b>62.3</b>
<b>Ellington MS</b>	398	7-8	41.4	9.6	<b>67.4</b>
<b>Oxford MS</b>	410	7-8	41.6	9.9	<b>58.8</b>
<b>Somers MS</b>	304	6-8	33.3	9.1	<b>72.3</b>
<b>Suffield MS</b>	445	6-8	56.5	7.9	<b>66.5</b>
<b>Tolland MS</b>	519	7-8	53.3	9.7	<b>74.4</b>
<b>Reg. 4 MS</b>	238	7-8	26.3	9.0	<b>57.7</b>
<b>Reg. 8 RHAM MS</b>	369	7-8	39.8	9.3	<b>62.3</b>
<b>Reg. 10 Har-Bur MS</b>	653	5-8	72	9.1	<b>75.9</b>





# *Northwestern Middle School*





# Middle School Points of Pride



# Northwestern Middle School

## Smarter Balanced Achievement Results

	2021	2022	2023
<b>ELA</b>	58%	62%	<b>68%</b>
<b>Math</b>	34%	50%	<b>61%</b>
<b>NGSS</b>	58%	64%	<b>71%</b>

Percentage of students that met/exceeded goal



# Our Northwestern MS Students' Satisfaction With Their School

## 9 PASS Factors

1. Feelings about school
2. Perceived learning capability
3. Self-regard as a learner
4. Preparedness for learning
5. Attitudes to teachers
6. General work ethic
7. Confidence in learning
8. Attitudes to attendance
9. Response to curriculum

High satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 31st - 100th percentile
Moderate satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 21st - 30th percentile
Low moderate satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 6th - 20th percentile
Low satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the lowest 5% of responses

## Fall 2023 Overall:

Factor	Feelings about school	Perceived learning capability	Self-regard as a learner	Preparedness for learning	Attitudes to teachers	General work ethic	Confidence in learning	Attitudes to attendance	Response to curriculum demands
Percentile score	62.1	56.3	60.0	46.3	57.9	64.6	55.3	49.6	51.9



# Go Highlanders!



# PSAT COMPARATIVE 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

	Total Students	Mean Score	Mean ERW Score	Mean Math Score
Class of 2025	153	971	494	477
<b>Class of 2024</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>499</b>
Class of 2023	144	983	503	480



# SAT DATA COMPARATIVE

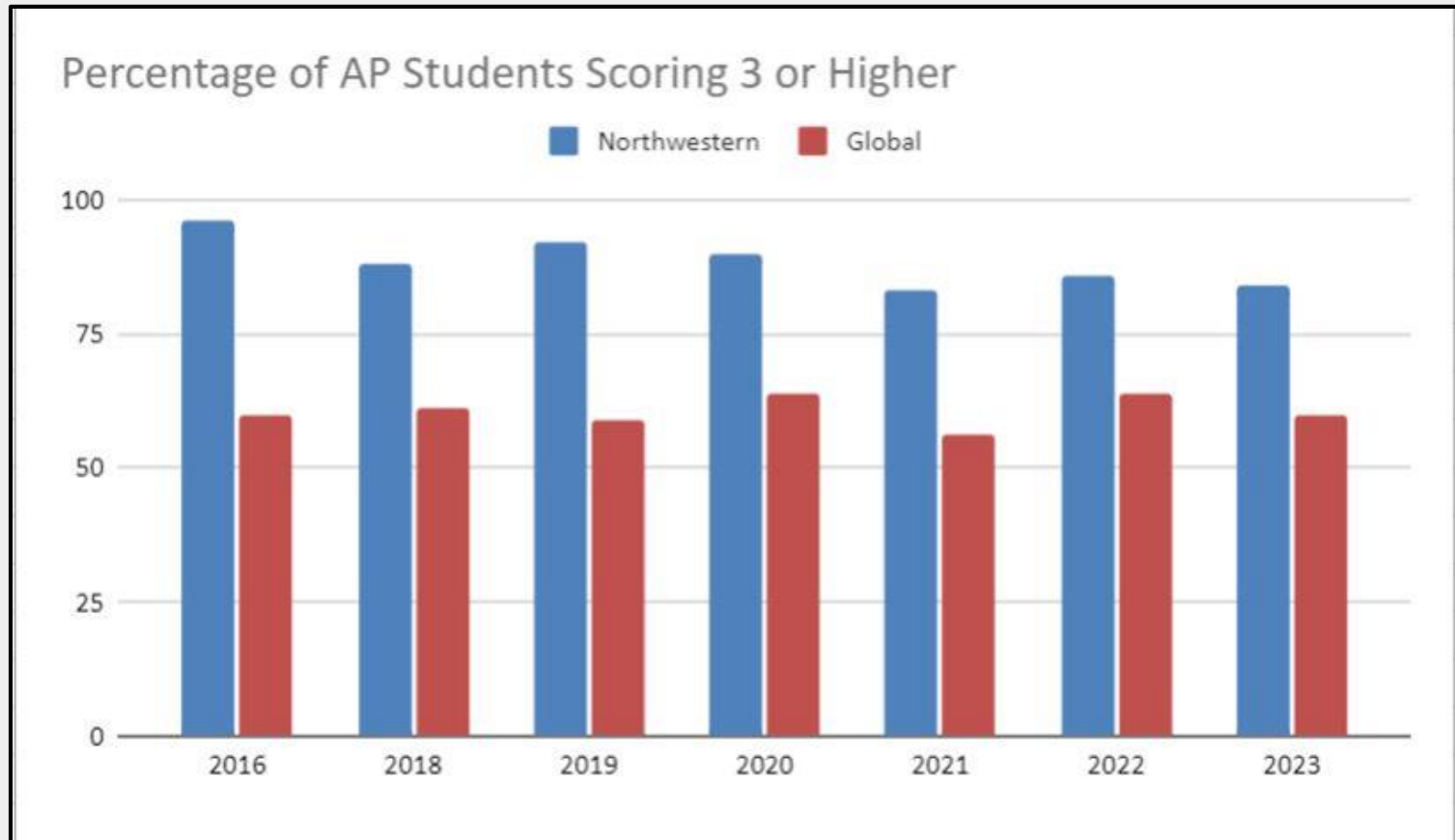
	Ave. Test Score	ERW Score	Math Score
<b>Class of 2024</b>	<b>1060</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>528</b>
Class of 2023	1023	523	500
Class of 2022	1081	546	535

## SAT DATA – CLASS OF 2024 STATE COMPARATIVE

Group	Avg. Test Score	ERW Score	Math Score
<b>NWR7 Class of 2024</b>	<b>1060</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>528</b>
NWR7 Class of 2023	1023	523	500
State of CT	975	493	482

# Percentage of AP Students Scoring 3 or Higher

*83 Northwestern students took 137 AP exams*



- *12 UConn ECE Courses will also be offered next year!*
- *58 Students Currently enrolled in UConn Courses*

# Northwestern High School



Exemplary High Performance

# Northwestern High School

*focused on expanded opportunities and excellence*

## Additional Course Offerings

- **Agricultural Education**
  - Ag Business Management
  - Fisheries Management
- **Art**
  - Digital Design Studio
  - Art Classroom Mentorship
- **Business**
  - Advanced Personal Finance
  - Business Classroom Mentorship
- **Education**
  - UConn ECE: If You Love It, Teach It
- **English**
  - Journalism II
- **PE/Wellness**
  - UConn ECE: Exercise and Wellness for Everyone
- **Science**
  - Zoology
  - UConn EMT Training (pending approval)
- **Social Studies**
  - History of Rock and Roll
- **World Language**
  - Adv. Topics in Italian: Honors Film
  - Adv. Topics in Italian: Honors Novel

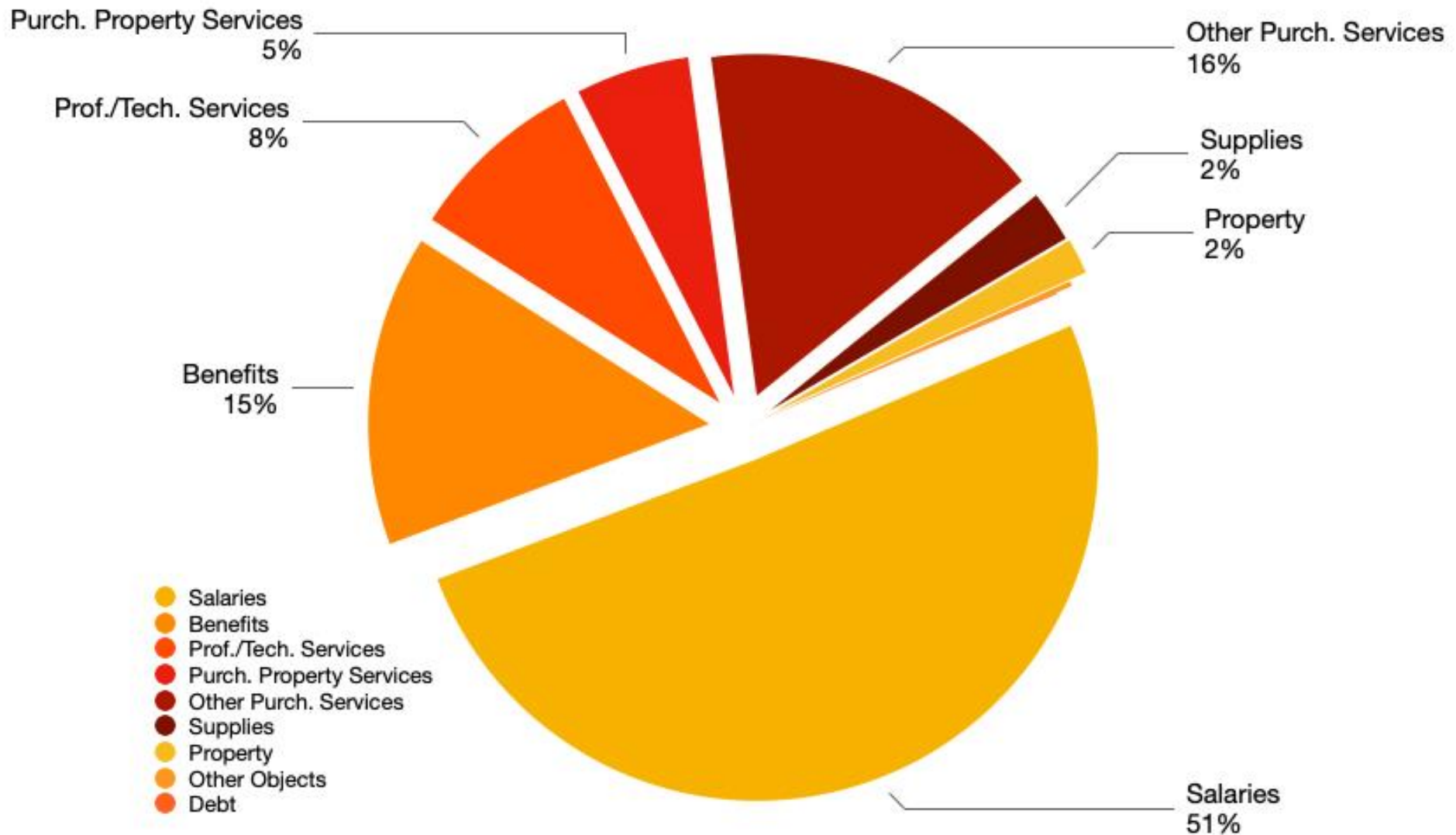




# Budget Overview

# Object Breakdown

**\$24,270,092**



\*Values above are rounded to the nearest

# 100

## Salaries

### Increase of \$223,156 or 1.85%

#### **Increases:**

- Contractual Salary Increases
- New Athletic Trainer +1.0 FTE (Offset by reduction in Contracted Services)
- Increase .50 FTE Library Media Specialist

#### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Reduce 2 Teachers from H.S. English
- Reduce 1 Teacher from H.S./M.S. World Language
- Reduce 1 Teacher from H.S. Social Studies
- Reduce .05 Bookkeeping Asst. (reduced hours)
- School Based Mental Health Grant used to fund SEL/Academic Support in MS and HS
- Any new personnel requests were denied (including 1.0 Agriscience teacher)

# 200

## Benefits

### Increase of \$209,028 or 6.20%

#### **Increases:**

- Medical Health Insurance Renewal: 10.95%

#### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Reduced benefits for 3 staff members
- Life Insurance Renewal at 0%
- Unemployment Renewal at 0%
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Renewal at 0%

# **300 Professional/Technical Services**

## **Increase of \$7,311 or .36%**

### **Increases:**

- Medical Advisor Increase
- Shared Services Assessment up 3%

### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Many accounts held to current funding levels
- Reduction in Contracted Services (Athletic Trainer)
- Use of \$30,000 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Special Education expenditures through Shared Services
- Use of \$50,000 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Special Education Professional and Technical Services

# **400 Property Services**

## **Increase of \$1,230 or 0.09%**

### **Account Factors:**

- Most accounts held to 0%
- Energy, Fuel, and Utilities Adjustments
- Snow Removal/Ice Management Increase



**500**

## **Other Purchased Services**

### **Increase of \$383,574 or 10.70%**

**Increases:**

- Additional Special Education Outplacements Increase the Tuition and Transportation Costs
- Rising Special Education Costs

**Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Most accounts held to 0% increase
- Excess Cost Offset for Special Education Transportation \$53,800
- Excess Cost Offset for Special Education Outplacements \$420,000

**600**

## **Supplies**

### **Decrease of -\$1,970 or -0.33%**

**Increases:**

- Library Supplies, Building Maintenance Supplies

**Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Departments held to 0% increase (reallocations within Department)
- Textbooks Reduced

**700**

## **Property**

**Decrease of -\$6,921 or -1.66%**

### **Decreases:**

- Reduced Instructional Equipment Replacements
- Reduced Special Education Capital Outlay

**800**

## **Other Objects**

**Decrease of -\$844 or -1.44%**

- No new borrowing since 2012
- Adjustments to Dues/Fees

**900**

**Other Funds**

**\$0 or 0%**

**No New Borrowing**

- No changes



# 2024-2025 Proposed Budget Increase of \$814,564



# Excess Cost Expenditure Offset

Code	Description	2023-2024	2024-2025
325	Shared Services	\$30,000	\$30,000
326	Professional/Tech Services	\$55,000	\$50,000
511	Transportation-Special Education	\$55,000	\$53,800
562	Tuitions – Special Education (H.S. & M.S.)	\$257,000	\$420,000
	TOTAL	\$397,000	\$553,800

- Districts are reimbursed by the state for the expenses associated with educating special education students with a cost above 4.5x the per pupil expenditure (\$25,453)\*. For us, that cost is \$114,539\*. If a student's educational costs **do not** reach that threshold, the district pays the full amount.
- The state covers **a percentage of the amount in excess of \$114,539**. New legislation decreased the reimbursement percentage for our district to 88% of excess cost; **however, the Appropriations Committee habitually underfunds this critical grant.**
- **The Board adjusted the originally budgeted 82% in excess cost grant offsets to 71% based on newly released state information regarding this year's reimbursement rate of 71%, and the full expectation of ongoing underfunding of this account.**

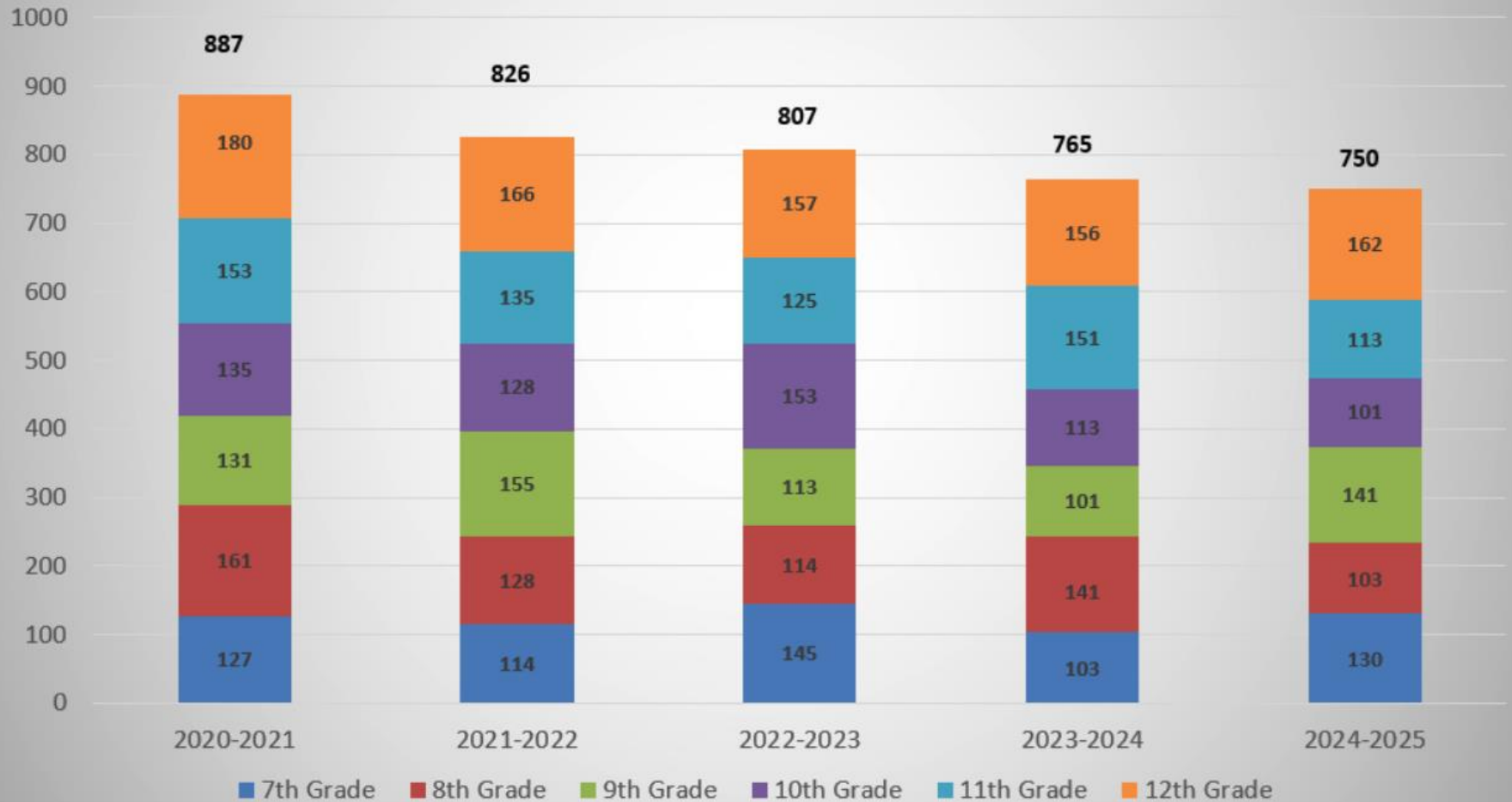
# Revenues & Assessments

Description	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Estimated	Difference
Tuition-Regular	\$657,150	\$540,480	(\$116,670)
Tuition-Special Ed	\$0	\$0	\$0
Tuition – Ag Ed	\$354,796	\$185,979	(\$168,817)
Rental Income	\$7,500	\$10,500	\$3,000
Interest Income	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
Sprint Contract	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ag Ed Grant	<u>\$624,480</u>	<u>\$793,500</u>	<u>\$169,020</u>
<u>Subtotal Revenues</u>	<u>\$1,658,926</u>	<u>\$1,545,459</u>	<u>(\$113,467)</u>
Budget Variance	\$688,578	\$819,700	\$131,122
<u>Subtotal with Offset</u>	<u>\$2,347,504</u>	<u>\$2,365,159</u>	<u>\$17,655</u>
Budget	\$23,455,528	\$24,270,092	\$814,564
<u>Assessments</u> (Budget minus Subtotal with offset)	\$21,108,024	\$21,904,933	\$796,909



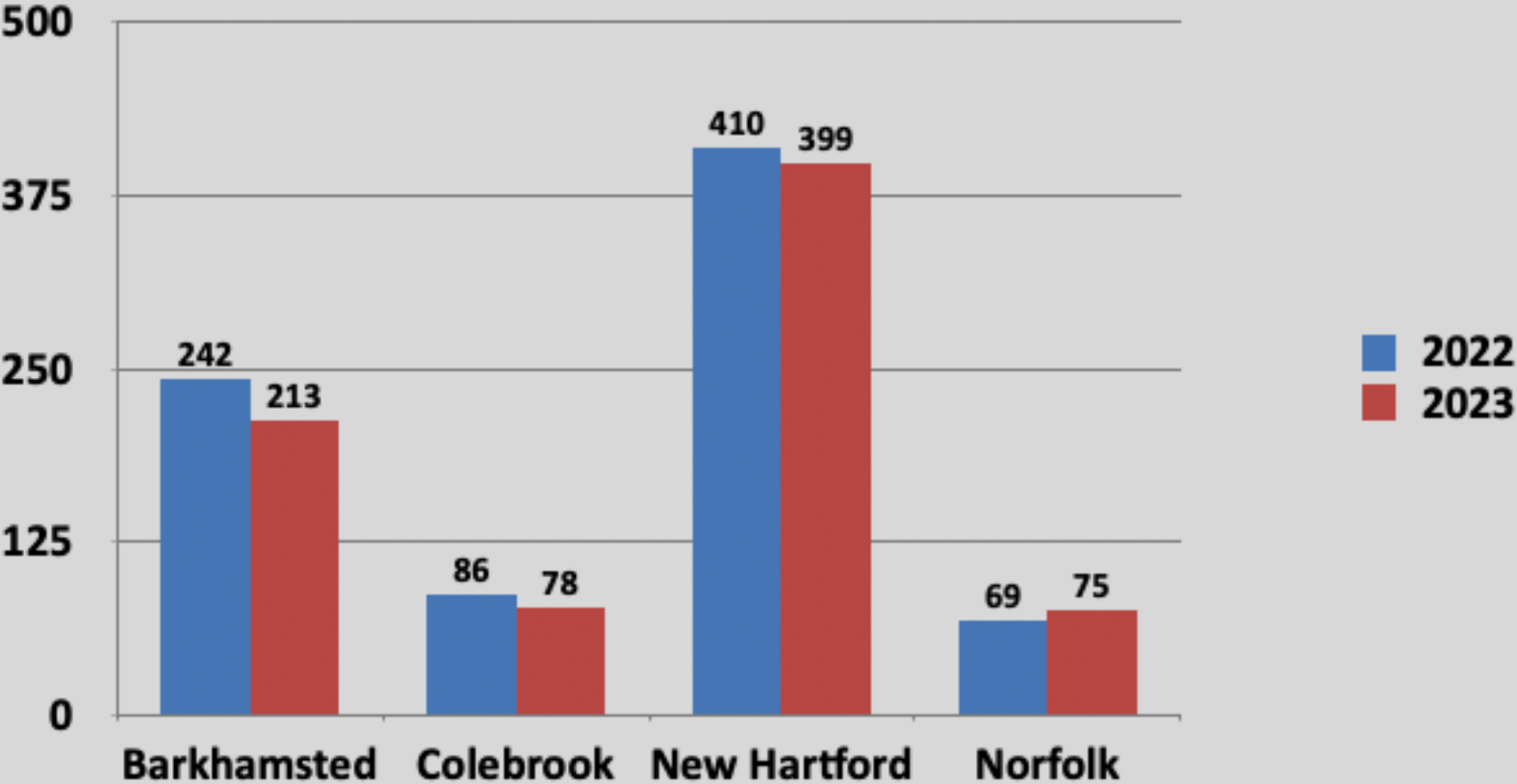
# Straight Line ADM – Member Towns

## Current and Projected



\*Based on Oct. 1, 2023

# Change in Average Daily Membership By Town



\* Based on October 1, 2023 CSDE

# A Look at Total District Enrollment

October 1, 2023

Grade 7:	108
Grade 8:	145
Grade 9:	116
Grade 10:	132
Grade 11:	176
Grade 12:	146
<u>HTA:</u>	<u>19</u>

Our member town students are joined by Agricultural Education and tuition paying students from: Winsted, Hartland, Torrington, Canton, and Granby.

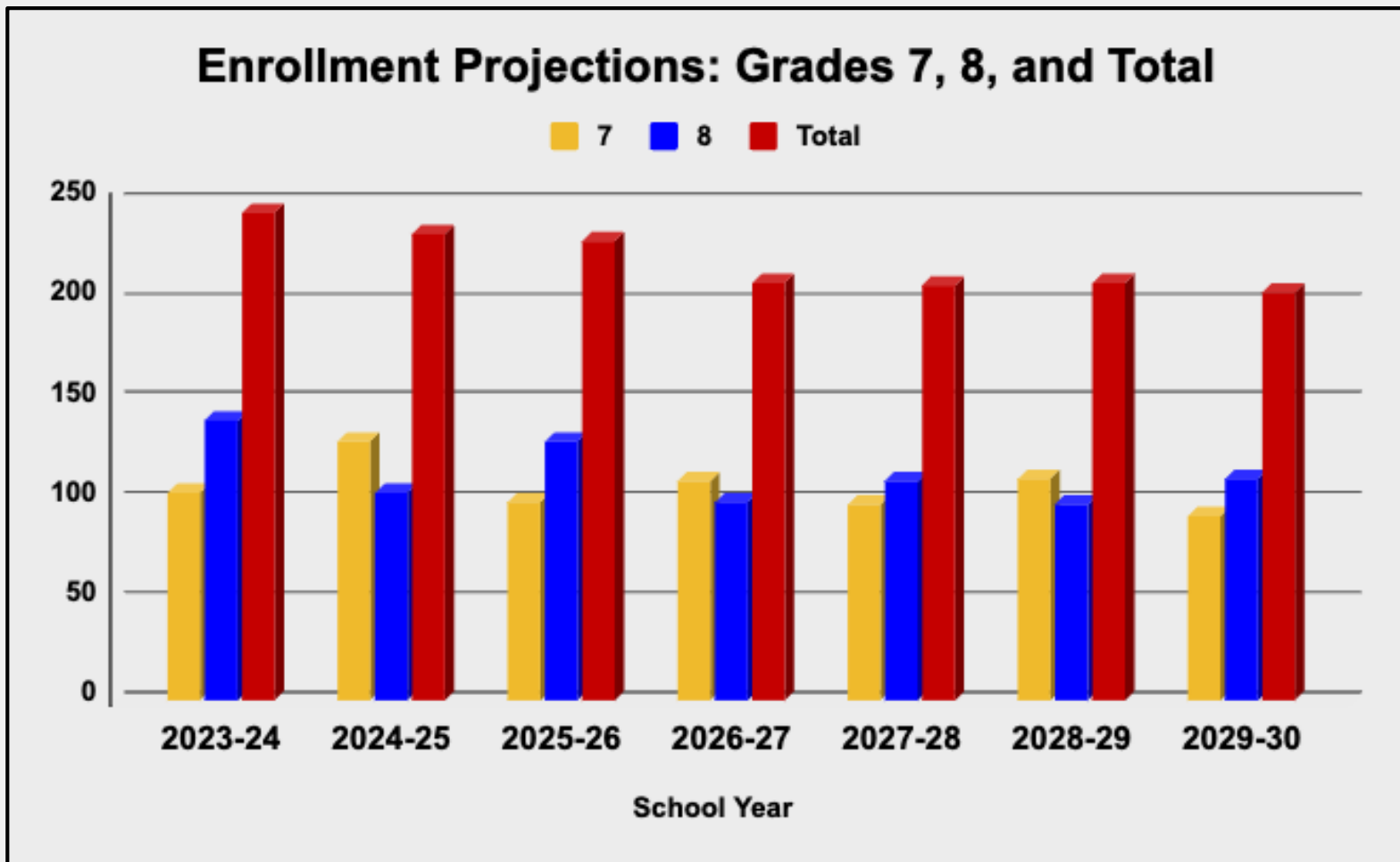
Total includes magnet schools and outplacements.

Total:	842
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# Middle School Enrollment Outlook

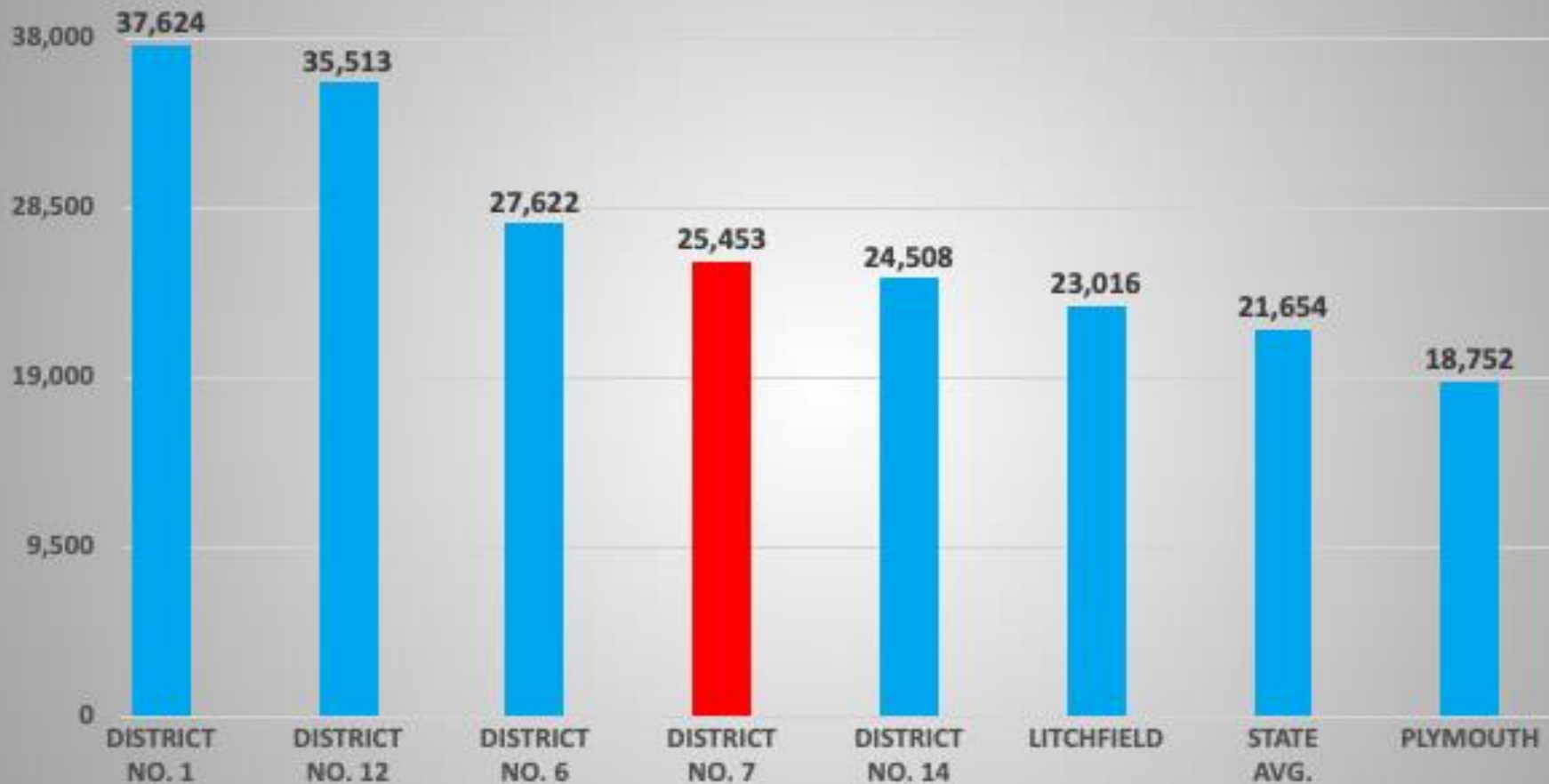
Grade	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
7	104	130	100	110	98	112	93
8	141	104	130	100	110	98	112
Total:	245	234	230	210	208	210	205

\*Oct. 2023





## Range of Net Current Expenditures Per Pupil Berkshire League\*



\*Data for Gilbert Unavailable  
Source: CSDE 3/19/2024

# 2024-25 Assessment Explanation

Budget 24/25	\$24,270,092	3.47%
Revenue	\$1,545,459	(6.84%)
Assessment Offset	\$819,700	19.04%
NET ASSESSMENT	\$21,904,933	3.78%

# Historical Perspective on Assessments

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	5 Year Average
Barkhamsted	-0.84%	5.24%	0.01%	0.65%	-3.66%	0.28%
Colebrook	2.49%	4.01%	8.37%	2.79%	-0.70%	3.39%
New Hartford	7.44%	-2.12%	1.20%	3.69%	6.55%	3.35%
Norfolk	-12.02%	-5.41%	6.43%	5.26%	18.95%	2.64%
Total Assessment Increase:	2.49%	0.38%	1.97%	2.79%	3.78%	2.28%
Average of Total Assessment Increase ~ 2.28%						
Total Expenditure Increase:	2.53%	1.33%	2.45%	2.42%	3.47%	2.44%
5-Year Average of Total Expenditure Increases ~ 2.44%						

## In Summary...

- Regional School District No. 7 provides a rigorous and comprehensive educational program for all learners.
- We know and care about all of our students, and helping to prepare them for a successful and rewarding life is our top priority.
- We develop strong and meaningful relationships between faculty, staff, and the student body.
- We hire and retain extraordinary teachers and support staff who work alongside strong, experienced administrators.
- Northwestern High School seniors graduate with exceptional experiences and are well prepared for their future.
- Our students demonstrate excellence across all disciplines, including our Agriscience program, and in the fine and performing arts.
- RSD7 develops and supports high performing student athletic programs and athletes across all sports.
- Our school community values kindness and is focused on the emotional well-being of all.
- We provide a high-value, high-quality education and enjoy overwhelming community support.
- RSD7's per pupil expenditures are in the midrange of the Berkshire League with exceptional academic results.
- We would like to thank our facilities team for taking such good care of our buildings and grounds.

***Regional School District No. 7***  
***The Pride of the Northwest Corner***





# Budget Highlights Summary



2023-2024 Budget: **\$23,455,528**

2024-2025 Budget: **\$24,270,092**

Total Budget Increase: **\$814,564**

Percentage Increase: **3.47%**

- *Medical Insurance Cost Increase = **0.84% of our total budget increase***
- *Special Education & Outplacement Increases = **2.0% of our total budget increase***
- ***Outside of medical insurance and special education outplacement cost increases, our total budget increase amounts to only 0.63%***

*(The average contractual increase for all collective bargaining groups is **3.27%**)*

***Our 0.63% increase over non-negotiable expenses is the result of careful planning, flat-funded or reduced spending in almost all budget accounts, and the reduction of several certified staff members in this budget.***



# District Budget Meeting

**MAY 6, 2024**

**NORTHWESTERN REGIONAL SCHOOL**

**Dr. Roberta Ohotnicky Little Theater**

**7:00 PM**



## BUDGET REFERENDUM

**MAY 7, 2024**

**Town Polling Locations**

**Hours may vary by town**

**For budget details, visit:**

**[www.nwr7.com](http://www.nwr7.com)**

**Thank You for Your Support!**



**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7**  
**BARKHAMSTED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**Informal Budget Presentation - BARKHAMSTED**

April 4, 2024 –7:00 p.m.

**DRAFT**

**PRESENT:** Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Mary Duran (B), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Ms. Kim Crone (N), Superintendent Steven K. LePage, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins.

**Absent:** Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Lisa Fragale (C).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Sexton Read began the Informal Budget Presentation at 7:03 p.m.

**PRESENTATION OF RSD#7 PROPOSED BUDGET OVERVIEW 2024-2025**

Ms. Sexton Read began the presentation by reviewing the goals and mission of enabling all students to achieve academic and personal excellence and stating the budget is \$24,270,092. This is an increase of \$814,564 and 3.47% over the 2023-2024 Budget.

Ms. Sexton Read discussed the budget drivers are seeking the right balance with the student needs, with limited resources. Budget drivers include significant increases in Special Education Outplacements, the continued Specialized High School Program Support, the significant increase in the medical benefits renewal, and the Athletic Trainer Requirements with new State Mandates in place. Another budget driver is keeping the department-level funding increase at 0%, deferring spending on school capital needs, and the one new Ag-Ed teacher request is not included in the budget. There are also teaching position reductions. Ms. Sexton Read reviews the fiscal cliff considerations for RSD#7, which include budget elimination of grant funding as of June 30, 2023.

Ms. Sexton Read discussed the Social Security increases during the last five years have averaged 4.14% compared to the average RSD#7 budget increase of only 2.10% and average assessment of 1.83%. Ms. Sexton Read explained when reviewing the District Reference Groups (DRGs), which are a State classification system that groups local and regional public school districts together based on the similar socioeconomic status of their students, RSD#7 High School falls in the 81.3%, and the RSD#7 Middle School falls 78.2% in comparison to similar classified area school districts. Ms. Sexton Read presented the Regional School District No. 7's Smarter Balance Achievement results, the range of current expenditures per pupil in the Berkshire League, PSAT and SAT comparative data, and the percentage of students with AP scores of 3 or higher. Ms. Sexton Read discussed the current and projected member town enrollment and the changes in average daily membership by town.

Ms. Sexton Read presented how RSD#7 focuses on continued excellence by adding the following courses for 2024-2025: Digital Design Studio, Art Classroom Mentorship, Advanced Personal Finance, Business Classroom Mentorship, UConn ECE: If You Love It, Teach It, Journalism II, Zoology, UConn EMT Training (pending approval) and the History of Rock and Roll. Additions to World Language are Adv. Topics in Italian: Honors Film and Honors Novel. Ag Ed and Tech courses offered for the 2024-2025 school year include Ag Business Management and Fisheries Management.

Ms. Sexton Read provided an Object breakdown overview of the budget increases and decreases in salaries, benefits, purchased professional and technical services, purchased property services, supplies, property, and other objects and debt services. Explanation was provided of the major budget drivers. Excess Cost expenditure offsets are reflected in special education, professional and technical services, transportation, and tuition.

Ms. Sexton Read concluded that Regional School District No. 7, the pride of the Northwest Corner, with exceptional teachers, strong administrators and support staff, and outstanding custodial staff, provides a rigorous and comprehensive educational program for all learners and students that graduate with exceptional academic achievement results. The medical insurance cost increase is 0.84% of the total budget increase, special education & outplacement increases are 2.0% of the total budget increase. Outside of the medical insurance and special education outplacement cost increases, RSD#7's total budget increase amounts to only 0.63% (The average contractual increase for all collective bargaining groups is 3.27%). The 0.63% increase over non-negotiable expenses is the result of careful planning, flat-funded or reduced spending in almost all budget accounts, and the reduction of several certified staff members in this budget. A brief discussion followed with questions in regard to the hiring of the Athletic Trainer.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Barrett  
Board Clerk



**Northwestern Regional School District No. 7**  
**Board of Education's Proposed 2024-2025 Budget**  
**Presented: April 4, 2024**

***The Pride of the Northwest Corner***



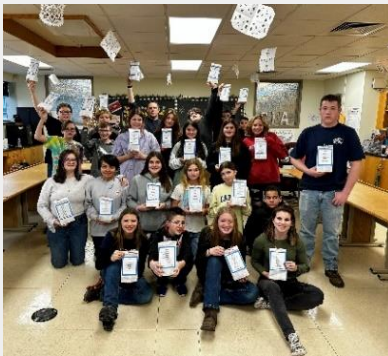
# *Superintendent's Budgeting Commitments:*

*We will:*

- *remain transparent and conscientious in our approach to budget development*
- *request and secure the resources we believe essential to educate and support our students and staff*
- *model our Vision of the Graduate attributes in all budget development practices, and through my leadership practices*
- *do our very best to ensure that Northwestern Regional School District No. 7 remains a model of excellence in the state and on the national level*



# *Northwestern Vision of the Graduate*



*The Pride of the Northwest Corner*

# Proposed Budget: Historical Overview

<u>Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Assessment</u>
• 2019-2020	1.77%	1.54%
• 2020-2021	2.53%	2.49%
• 2021-2022	1.33%	0.38%
• 2022-2023	2.45%	1.97%
• 2023-2024	2.42%	2.79%
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• 2024-2025	3.47%	3.78%

*Prior 5-Year Average Budget Increase: **2.10%***

*Prior 5-Year Average Assessment: **1.83%***

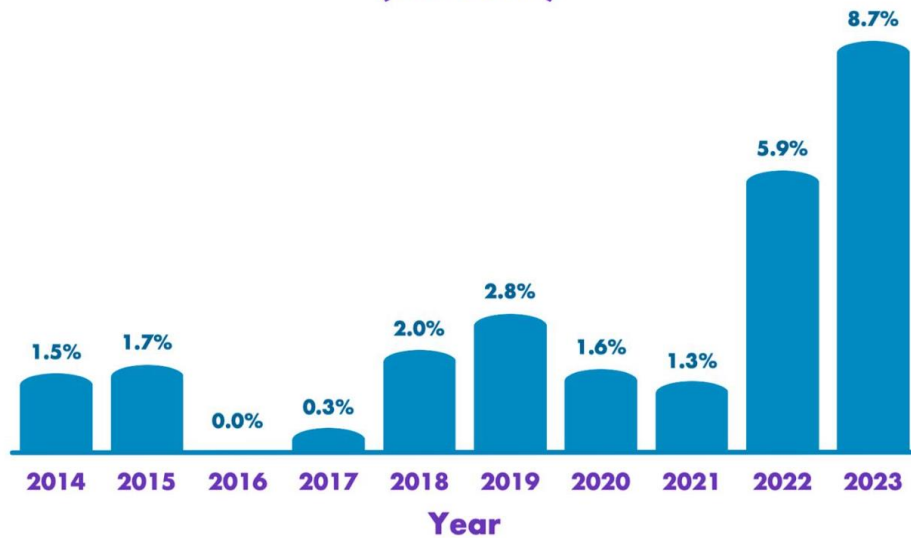
***6-Year Average Budget Increase: 2.33%***

***6-Year Average Assessment: 2.16%***



# Budgeting For Efficiency and Excellence Through Challenging Times

## Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs)



Source: The Social Security Administration

The Motley Fool

Social Security COLA increases from 2019-2023 have averaged 4.14%, compared to NWR7's average budget increase of 2.10%, and assessment increase of 1.83% during the same time period.

## Social Security Cost-Of-Living Adjustments

Year	COLA	Year	COLA	Year	COLA
1975	8.0	1995	2.6	2015	0.0
1976	6.4	1996	2.9	2016	0.3
1977	5.9	1997	2.1	2017	2.0
1978	6.5	1998	1.3	2018	2.8
1979	9.9	1999	2.5	2019	1.6
1980	14.3	2000	3.5	2020	1.3
1981	11.2	2001	2.6	2021	5.9
1982	7.4	2002	1.4	2022	8.7
1983	3.5	2003	2.1	2023	3.2
1984	3.5	2004	2.7		
1985	3.1	2005	4.1		
1986	1.3	2006	3.3		
1987	4.2	2007	2.3		
1988	4.0	2008	5.8		
1989	4.7	2009	0.0		
1990	5.4	2010	0.0		
1991	3.7	2011	3.6		
1992	3.0	2012	1.7		
1993	2.6	2013	1.5		
1994	2.8	2014	1.7		



# Budget Drivers: Seeking the Right Balance

## *Students Needs/Limited Resources*



### Special Education Programming:

- Significant Increase in Special Education Outplacements
- Continue Specialized Middle and High School Program Support

### Regular Education Programming:

- Significant Increase in Medical Benefits Renewal
- Athletic Trainer

### Budget Mitigation Staffing Reductions:

- Department Level funding increase held at 0%
- Deferred spending on school capital needs
- 1 new Ag-Ed Teacher request removed from the budget
- 3.5 Teaching Position Reductions:
  - 2.6 High School (English and World Language)
  - 0.4 Middle School (World Language)
  - 0.5 Library Media Specialist replaced with 1.0 Current NWR7 Social Studies Teacher (Net result is a .5 reduction of a Certified Teacher)

**TOTAL CERTIFIED STAFF REDUCTIONS = 3.5 FTE (Most near or at the top pay step)**

How do our *State Report Card* Results compare to DRG C High Schools?

School:	Student #	Grades	F.T.E.	F.T.E./Student Ratio	Accountability Index Score:
Northwestern HS	564	9-12	67.6	8.3	81.3
Canton HS	464	9-12	50.0	9.3	81.6
Ellington HS	737	9-12	77.4	9.5	77.4
Oxford HS	527	9-12	51.9	10.2	75.0
Somers HS	384	9-12	57.9	6.6	75.8
Reg. 4 Valley HS	489	9-12	58.0	8.4	75.1
Reg. 8 RHAM HS	819	9-12	92.0	10.6	77.0
Reg. 10 Lewis Mills HS	648	9-12	71.7	9.0	77.0
Reg. 13 Coginchaug HS	359	9-12	49.2	7.3	77.6
Reg. 12 Shepaug HS	494	9-12	59.8	8.3	75.1
<i>The Gilbert School</i>	410	9-12	49.8	8.2	61.3
<i>Reg 1 Housatonic Reg. HS</i>	319	9-12	49	6.5	68.5



# How do our *State Report Card* Results compare to DRG C Middle Schools?

School:	Student #	Grades	F.T.E.	F.T.E./Student Ratio	Accountability Index Score:
<b>Northwestern MS</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>78.2</b>
<b>Canton MS</b>	247	7-8	25.2	9.8	<b>62.3</b>
<b>Ellington MS</b>	398	7-8	41.4	9.6	<b>67.4</b>
<b>Oxford MS</b>	410	7-8	41.6	9.9	<b>58.8</b>
<b>Somers MS</b>	304	6-8	33.3	9.1	<b>72.3</b>
<b>Suffield MS</b>	445	6-8	56.5	7.9	<b>66.5</b>
<b>Tolland MS</b>	519	7-8	53.3	9.7	<b>74.4</b>
<b>Reg. 4 MS</b>	238	7-8	26.3	9.0	<b>57.7</b>
<b>Reg. 8 RHAM MS</b>	369	7-8	39.8	9.3	<b>62.3</b>
<b>Reg. 10 Har-Bur MS</b>	653	5-8	72	9.1	<b>75.9</b>



# *Northwestern Middle School*





# Middle School Points of Pride



# Northwestern Middle School

## Smarter Balanced Achievement Results

	2021	2022	2023
<b>ELA</b>	58%	62%	<b>68%</b>
<b>Math</b>	34%	50%	<b>61%</b>
<b>NGSS</b>	58%	64%	<b>71%</b>

Percentage of students that met/exceeded goal

# Our Northwestern MS Students' Satisfaction With Their School

## 9 PASS Factors

1. Feelings about school
2. Perceived learning capability
3. Self-regard as a learner
4. Preparedness for learning
5. Attitudes to teachers
6. General work ethic
7. Confidence in learning
8. Attitudes to attendance
9. Response to curriculum

High satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 31st - 100th percentile
Moderate satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 21st - 30th percentile
Low moderate satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 6th - 20th percentile
Low satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the lowest 5% of responses

## Fall 2023 Overall:

Factor	Feelings about school	Perceived learning capability	Self-regard as a learner	Preparedness for learning	Attitudes to teachers	General work ethic	Confidence in learning	Attitudes to attendance	Response to curriculum demands
Percentile score	62.1	56.3	60.0	46.3	57.9	64.6	55.3	49.6	51.9



# Go Highlanders!





# PSAT COMPARATIVE 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

	Total Students	Mean Score	Mean ERW Score	Mean Math Score
Class of 2025	153	971	494	477
<b>Class of 2024</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>499</b>
Class of 2023	144	983	503	480

# SAT DATA COMPARATIVE

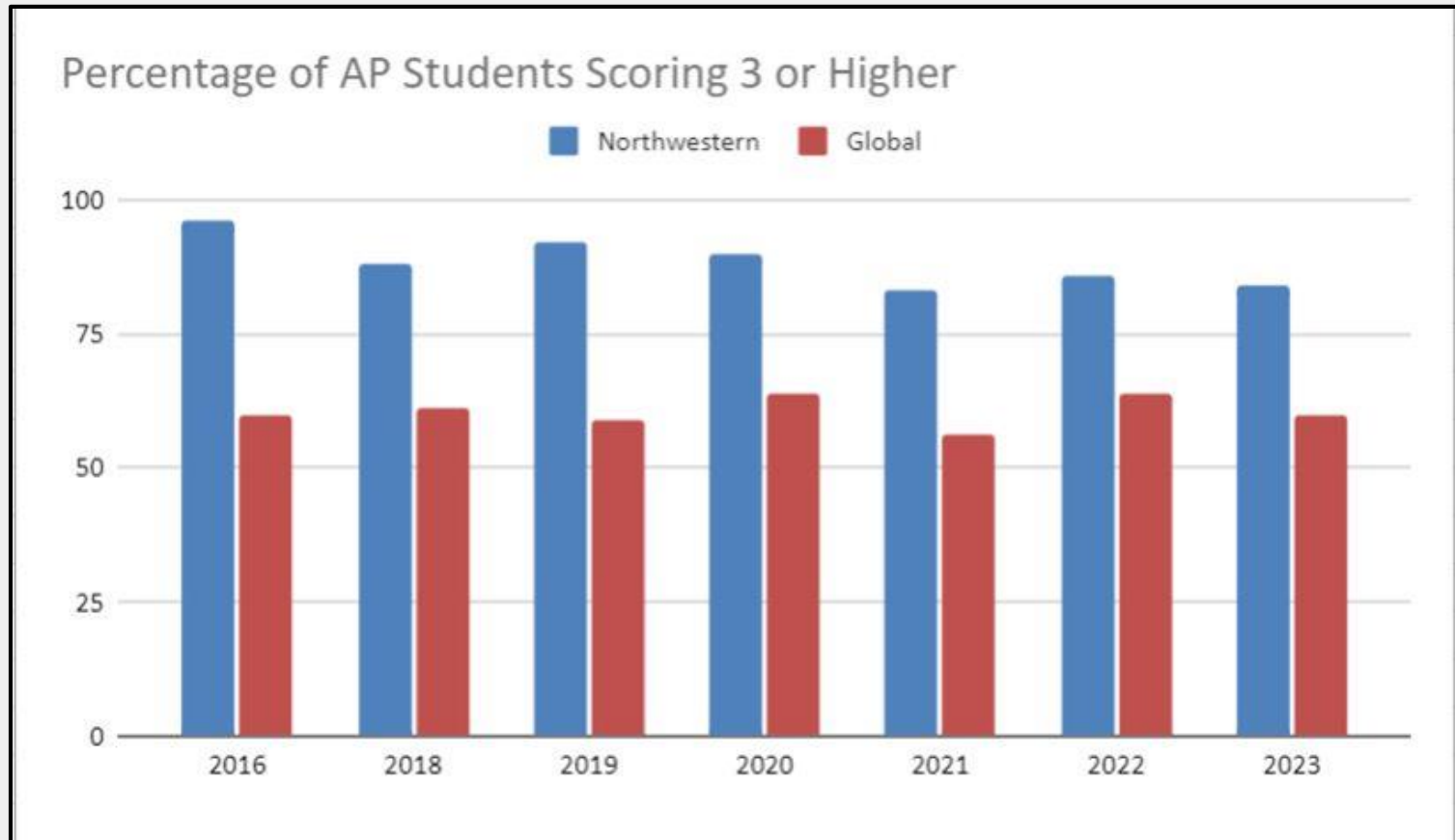
	Ave. Test Score	ERW Score	Math Score
<b>Class of 2024</b>	<b>1060</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>528</b>
Class of 2023	1023	523	500
Class of 2022	1081	546	535

## SAT DATA – CLASS OF 2024 STATE COMPARATIVE

Group	Avg. Test Score	ERW Score	Math Score
<b>NWR7 Class of 2024</b>	<b>1060</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>528</b>
NWR7 Class of 2023	1023	523	500
State of CT	975	493	482

# Percentage of AP Students Scoring 3 or Higher

*83 Northwestern students took 137 AP exams*



- *12 UConn ECE Courses will also be offered next year!*
- *58 Students Currently enrolled in UConn Courses*

# Northwestern High School



Exemplary High Performance

# Northwestern High School

*focused on expanded opportunities and excellence*

## Additional Course Offerings

- **Agricultural Education**
  - Ag Business Management
  - Fisheries Management
- **Art**
  - Digital Design Studio
  - Art Classroom Mentorship
- **Business**
  - Advanced Personal Finance
  - Business Classroom Mentorship
- **Education**
  - UConn ECE: If You Love It, Teach It
- **English**
  - Journalism II
- **PE/Wellness**
  - UConn ECE: Exercise and Wellness for Everyone
- **Science**
  - Zoology
  - UConn EMT Training (pending approval)
- **Social Studies**
  - History of Rock and Roll
- **World Language**
  - Adv. Topics in Italian: Honors Film
  - Adv. Topics in Italian: Honors Novel

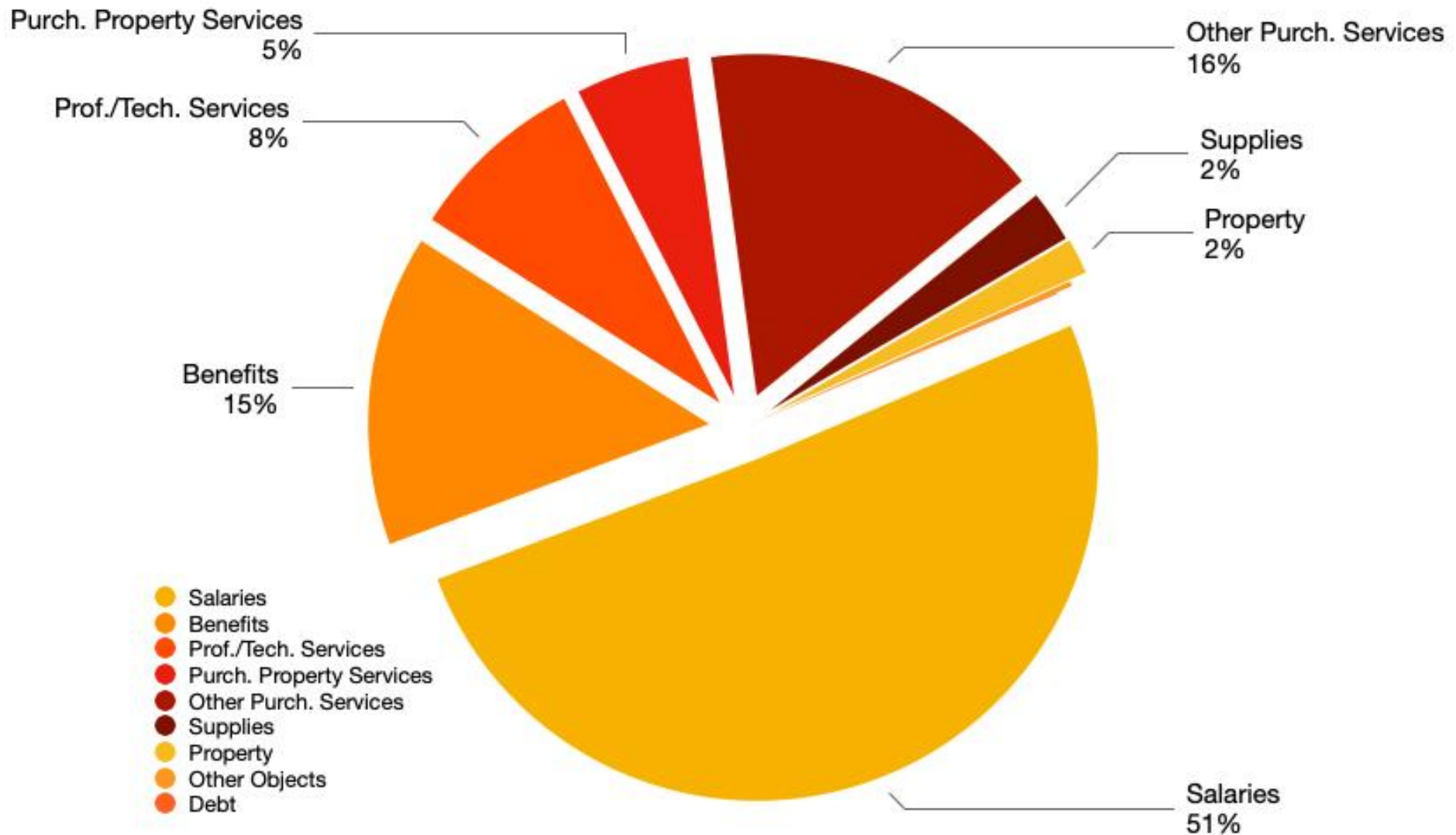


# Budget Overview



# Object Breakdown

**\$24,270,092**



\*Values above are rounded to the nearest

# 100

## Salaries

### Increase of \$223,156 or 1.85%

#### Increases:

- Contractual Salary Increases
- New Athletic Trainer +1.0 FTE (Offset by reduction in Contracted Services)
- Increase .50 FTE Library Media Specialist

#### Budget Mitigation Actions:

- Reduce 2 Teachers from H.S. English
- Reduce 1 Teacher from H.S./M.S. World Language
- Reduce 1 Teacher from H.S. Social Studies
- Reduce .05 Bookkeeping Asst. (reduced hours)
- School Based Mental Health Grant used to fund SEL/Academic Support in MS and HS
- Any new personnel requests were denied (including 1.0 Agriscience teacher)

# 200

## Benefits

### Increase of \$209,028 or 6.20%

#### Increases:

- Medical Health Insurance Renewal: 10.95%

#### Budget Mitigation Actions:

- Reduced benefits for 3 staff members
- Life Insurance Renewal at 0%
- Unemployment Renewal at 0%
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Renewal at 0%

# **300 Professional/Technical Services**

## **Increase of \$7,311 or .36%**

### **Increases:**

- Medical Advisor Increase
- Shared Services Assessment up 3%

### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Many accounts held to current funding levels
- Reduction in Contracted Services (Athletic Trainer)
- Use of \$30,000 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Special Education expenditures through Shared Services
- Use of \$50,000 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Special Education Professional and Technical Services

# **400 Property Services**

## **Increase of \$1,230 or 0.09%**

### **Account Factors:**

- Most accounts held to 0%
- Energy, Fuel, and Utilities Adjustments
- Snow Removal/Ice Management Increase

**500**

## **Other Purchased Services**

**Increase of \$383,574 or 10.70%**

### **Increases:**

- Additional Special Education Outplacements Increase the Tuition and Transportation Costs
- Rising Special Education Costs

### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Most accounts held to 0% increase
- Excess Cost Offset for Special Education Transportation \$53,800
- Excess Cost Offset for Special Education Outplacements \$420,000

**600**

## **Supplies**

**Decrease of -\$1,970 or -0.33%**

### **Increases:**

- Library Supplies, Building Maintenance Supplies

### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Departments held to 0% increase (reallocations within Department)
- Textbooks Reduced

**700**

## **Property**

**Decrease of -\$6,921 or -1.66%**

### **Decreases:**

- Reduced Instructional Equipment Replacements
- Reduced Special Education Capital Outlay

**800**

## **Other Objects**

**Decrease of -\$844 or -1.44%**

- No new borrowing since 2012
- Adjustments to Dues/Fees



**900**

**Other Funds**

**\$0 or 0%**

**No New Borrowing**

- No changes

# 2024-2025 Proposed Budget Increase of \$814,564



# Excess Cost Expenditure Offset

Code	Description	2023-2024	2024-2025
325	Shared Services	\$30,000	\$30,000
326	Professional/Tech Services	\$55,000	\$50,000
511	Transportation-Special Education	\$55,000	\$53,800
562	Tuitions – Special Education (H.S. & M.S.)	\$257,000	\$420,000
	TOTAL	\$397,000	\$553,800

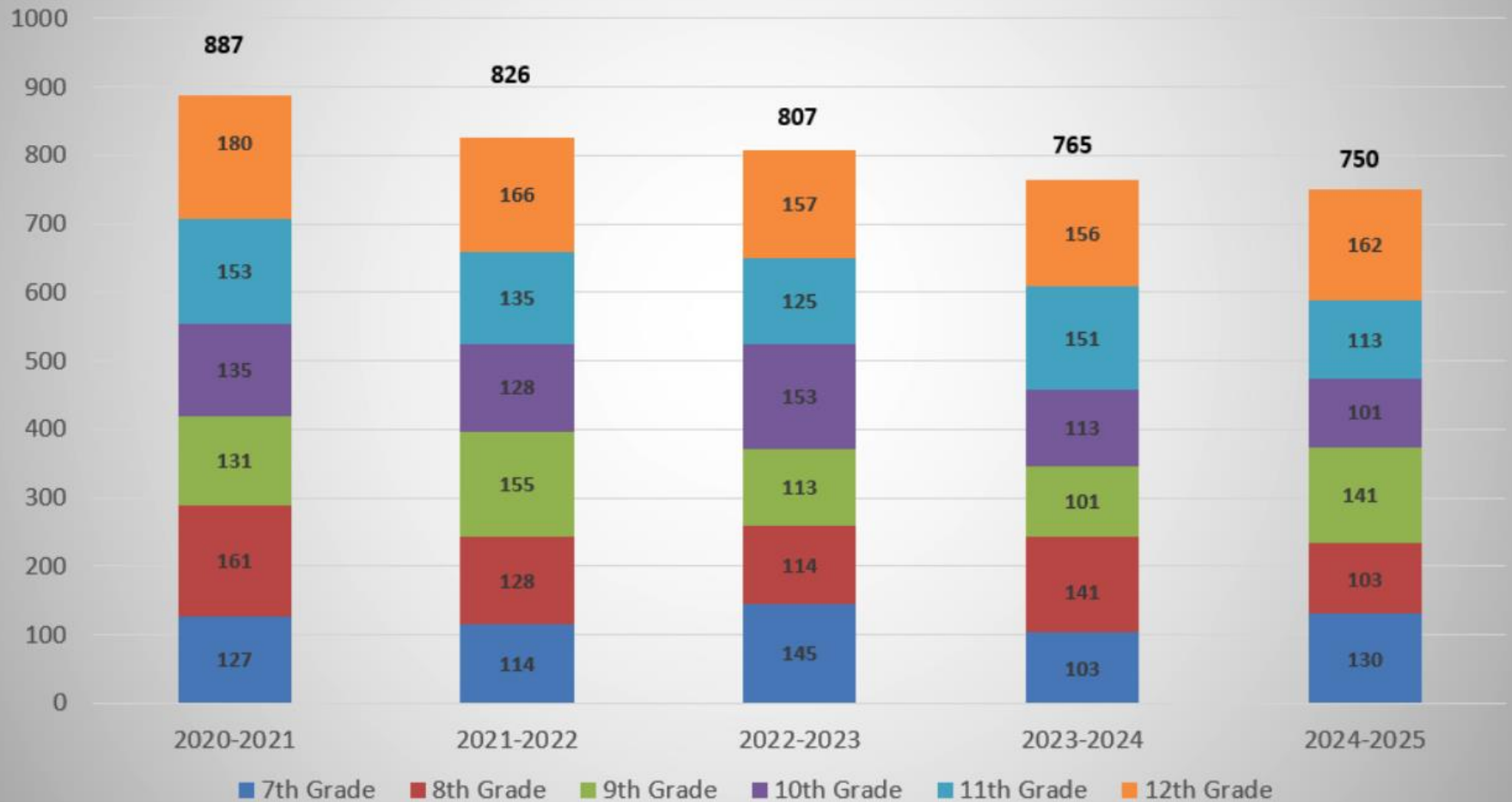
- Districts are reimbursed by the state for the expenses associated with educating special education students with a cost above 4.5x the per pupil expenditure (\$25,453)\*. For us, that cost is \$114,539\*. If a student's educational costs **do not** reach that threshold, the district pays the full amount.
- The state covers **a percentage of the amount in excess of \$114,539**. New legislation decreased the reimbursement percentage for our district to 88% of excess cost; **however, the Appropriations Committee habitually underfunds this critical grant.**
- **The Board adjusted the originally budgeted 82% in excess cost grant offsets to 71% based on newly released state information regarding this year's reimbursement rate of 71%, and the full expectation of ongoing underfunding of this account.**

# Revenues & Assessments

Description	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Estimated	Difference
Tuition-Regular	\$657,150	\$540,480	(\$116,670)
Tuition-Special Ed	\$0	\$0	\$0
Tuition – Ag Ed	\$354,796	\$185,979	(\$168,817)
Rental Income	\$7,500	\$10,500	\$3,000
Interest Income	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
Sprint Contract	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ag Ed Grant	<u>\$624,480</u>	<u>\$793,500</u>	<u>\$169,020</u>
<u>Subtotal Revenues</u>	<u>\$1,658,926</u>	<u>\$1,545,459</u>	<u>(\$113,467)</u>
Budget Variance	\$688,578	\$819,700	\$131,122
<u>Subtotal with Offset</u>	<u>\$2,347,504</u>	<u>\$2,365,159</u>	<u>\$17,655</u>
Budget	\$23,455,528	\$24,270,092	\$814,564
<u>Assessments</u> (Budget minus Subtotal with offset)	\$21,108,024	\$21,904,933	\$796,909

# Straight Line ADM – Member Towns

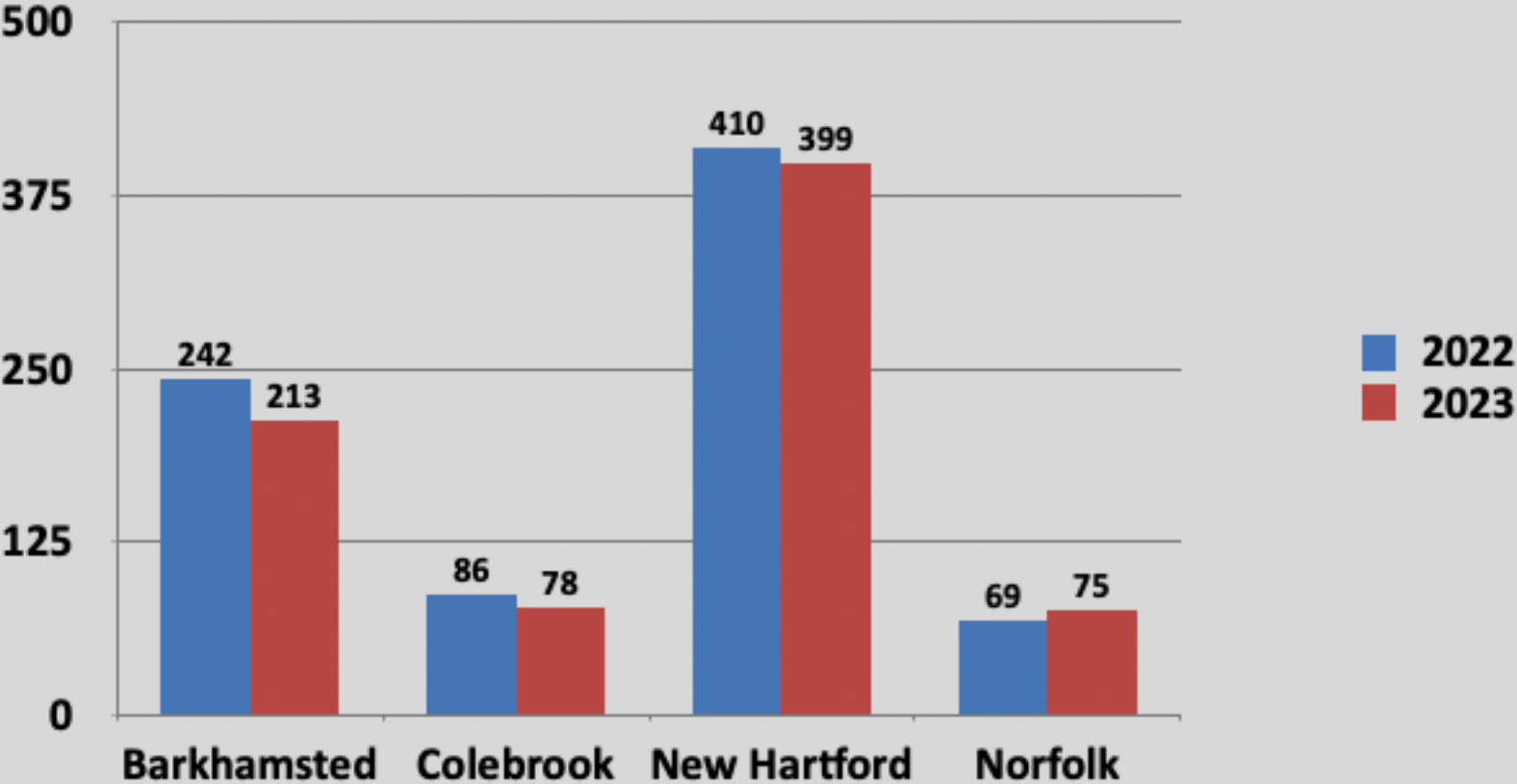
## Current and Projected



\*Based on Oct. 1, 2023



# Change in Average Daily Membership By Town



\* Based on October 1, 2023 CSDE

# A Look at Total District Enrollment

October 1, 2023

Grade 7:	108
Grade 8:	145
Grade 9:	116
Grade 10:	132
Grade 11:	176
Grade 12:	146
<u>HTA:</u>	<u>19</u>

Our member town students are joined by Agricultural Education and tuition paying students from: Winsted, Hartland, Torrington, Canton, and Granby.

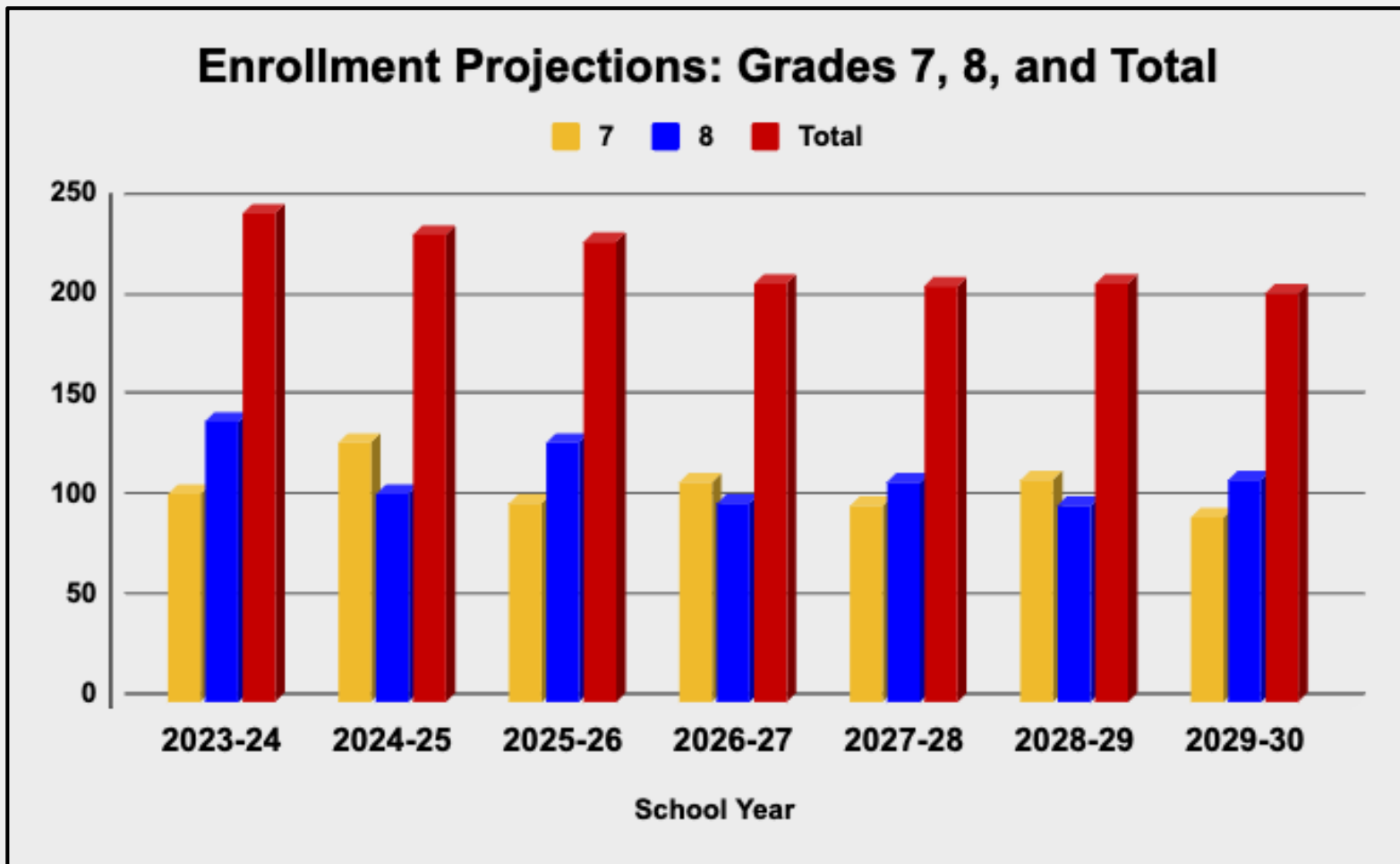
Total includes magnet schools and outplacements.

Total:	842
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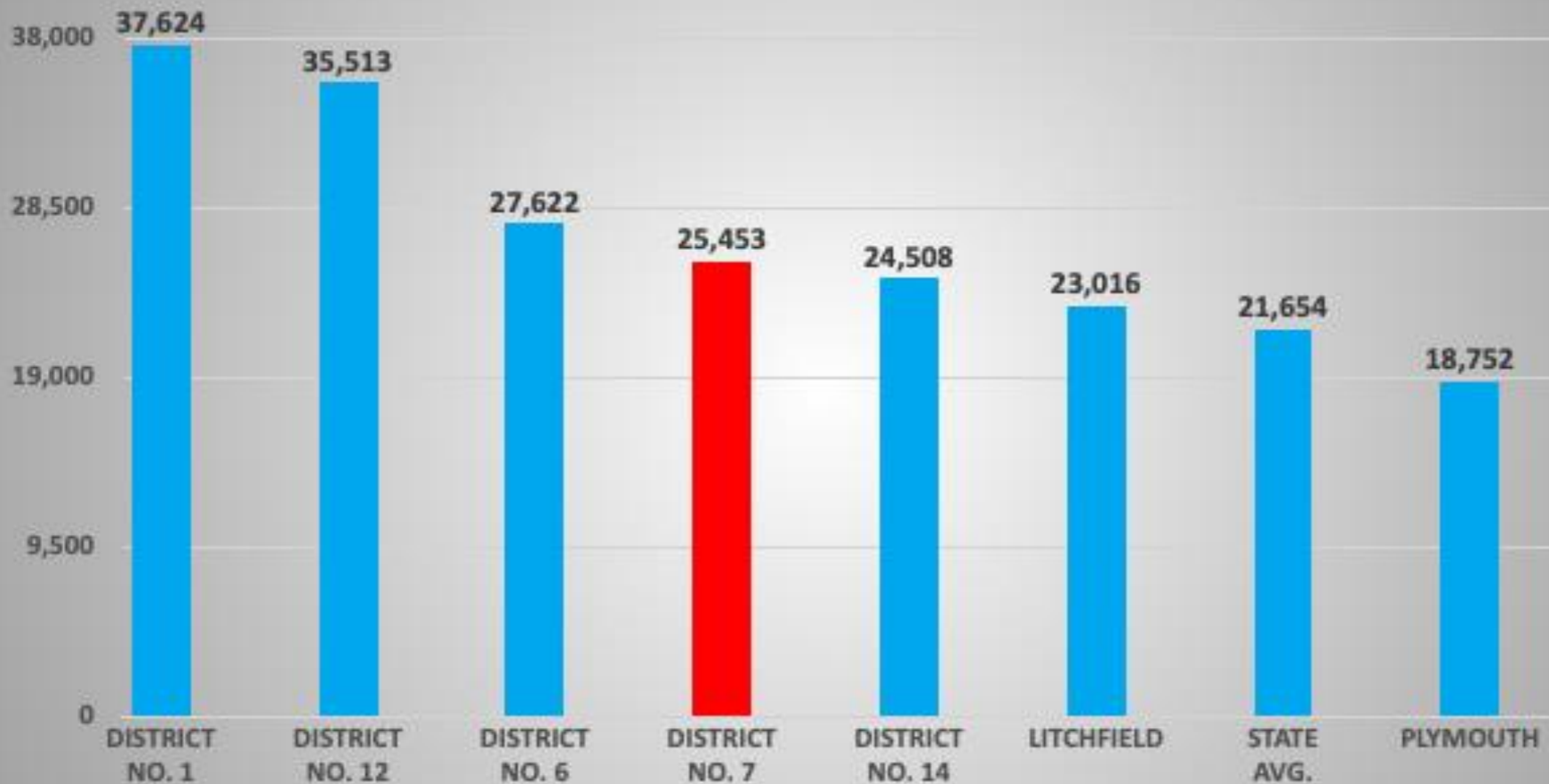
# Middle School Enrollment Outlook

Grade	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
7	104	130	100	110	98	112	93
8	141	104	130	100	110	98	112
Total:	245	234	230	210	208	210	205

\*Oct. 2023



## Range of Net Current Expenditures Per Pupil Berkshire League\*



\*Data for Gilbert Unavailable  
Source: CSDE 3/19/2024

# 2024-25 Assessment Explanation

Budget 24/25	\$24,270,092	3.47%
Revenue	\$1,545,459	(6.84%)
Assessment Offset	\$819,700	19.04%
NET ASSESSMENT	\$21,904,933	3.78%



# Historical Perspective on Assessments

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	5 Year Average
Barkhamsted	-0.84%	5.24%	0.01%	0.65%	-3.66%	0.28%
Colebrook	2.49%	4.01%	8.37%	2.79%	-0.70%	3.39%
New Hartford	7.44%	-2.12%	1.20%	3.69%	6.55%	3.35%
Norfolk	-12.02%	-5.41%	6.43%	5.26%	18.95%	2.64%
Total Assessment Increase:	2.49%	0.38%	1.97%	2.79%	3.78%	2.28%
Average of Total Assessment Increase ~ 2.28%						
Total Expenditure Increase:	2.53%	1.33%	2.45%	2.42%	3.47%	2.44%
5-Year Average of Total Expenditure Increases ~ 2.44%						

## In Summary...

- Regional School District No. 7 provides a rigorous and comprehensive educational program for all learners.
- We know and care about all of our students, and helping to prepare them for a successful and rewarding life is our top priority.
- We develop strong and meaningful relationships between faculty, staff, and the student body.
- We hire and retain extraordinary teachers and support staff who work alongside strong, experienced administrators.
- Northwestern High School seniors graduate with exceptional experiences and are well prepared for their future.
- Our students demonstrate excellence across all disciplines, including our Agriscience program, and in the fine and performing arts.
- RSD7 develops and supports high performing student athletic programs and athletes across all sports.
- Our school community values kindness and is focused on the emotional well-being of all.
- We provide a high-value, high-quality education and enjoy overwhelming community support.
- RSD7's per pupil expenditures are in the midrange of the Berkshire League with exceptional academic results.
- We would like to thank our facilities team for taking such good care of our buildings and grounds.

***Regional School District No. 7***  
***The Pride of the Northwest Corner***



# Budget Highlights Summary



2023-2024 Budget: **\$23,455,528**

2024-2025 Budget: **\$24,270,092**

Total Budget Increase: **\$814,564**

Percentage Increase: **3.47%**

- *Medical Insurance Cost Increase = **0.84% of our total budget increase***
- *Special Education & Outplacement Increases = **2.0% of our total budget increase***
- ***Outside of medical insurance and special education outplacement cost increases, our total budget increase amounts to only 0.63%***

*(The average contractual increase for all collective bargaining groups is **3.27%**)*

***Our 0.63% increase over non-negotiable expenses is the result of careful planning, flat-funded or reduced spending in almost all budget accounts, and the reduction of several certified staff members in this budget.***



# District Budget Meeting

**MAY 6, 2024**

**NORTHWESTERN REGIONAL SCHOOL**

**Dr. Roberta Ohotnicky Little Theater**

**7:00 PM**



## BUDGET REFERENDUM

**MAY 7, 2024**

**Town Polling Locations**

**Hours may vary by town**

**For budget details, visit:**

**[www.nwr7.com](http://www.nwr7.com)**

**Thank You for Your Support!**



REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7  
BARKHAMSTED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**

April 4, 2024 – Immediately following the Barkhamsted Informal Budget Presentation

**DRAFT**

**PRESENT:** Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Kim Crone (N), Ms. Mary Duran (B), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Superintendent Steven K. LePage, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins.

**Absent:** Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Lisa Fragale(C),

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Sexton Read called the Board of Education meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **APPROVE** the March 27, 2024, Board of Education Second Informal Budget Presentation- Norfolk Meeting Minutes, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

**MOTION** by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **APPROVE** the March 27, 2024, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes, as amended. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

### **REPORTS**

#### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**Athletic Trainer Update:** Superintendent LePage communicated to the BOE that the Athletic Trainer was hired as of 7/1/2024.

**Unified Sound Program:** Superintendent LePage would like to compliment the instructors behind the Unified Sound Program – Charlotte D'Aleo, High School Band Director, and Megan Ficke, Links Program Coordinator, for an outstanding job. This program pairs regular education student band members with students with special needs to assist/teach the students with special needs how to play an instrument.

**Eclipse Preparation:** RSD#7, regarding the authorization of CIAC and the school meteorologist, states that all sports will be moving forward on the day of the eclipse, 4.8.2024. All coaches were advised to communicate to all students not to stare at the sun during the eclipse timeframe.

**Consideration of Certified Staff Members' Children as Reduced-Tuition Students:** Superintendent LePage explained he had sent a template for the certified staff members' children attending RSD#7 at a reduced tuition rate for the BOE to review. A brief discussion followed.

#### **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS**

**Budget Update 2023-2024 –** Mr. Gaskins expressed that the salary line for the 2023-2024 budget is in deficit due to new hires being hired over the budgeted salary for the particular positions. Due to this situation, the special education outplacements, the shortfalls in the tuition, AG-ED state funding shortfalls, and the excess cost grant shortfalls, Mr. Gaskins is recommending a spending freeze for all RSD#7 departments for the rest of the 2023-2024 school year. A brief discussion followed.

## OLD BUSINESS

**Board Discussion on 2024-2025 Working Budget:** Ms. Sexton Read communicated that she is comfortable recommending bringing the 2024-2025 RSD#7 Budget to the Annual Regional Budget Hearing on April 22, 2024. A brief discussion followed.

**Updates:** Ms. Sexton Read acknowledged the FOIA request from a resident of the four feeder towns. Ms. Sexton Read explained her consultation with Mark Sommaruga, RSD#7's Attorney. A brief discussion followed.

**BOE Goals:** None

## NEW BUSINESS

### Adoption of the RSD#7 2024-2025 Budget to take to Annual Regional Budget Hearing

**MOTION** by Mr. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ADOPT** the RSD#7 2024-2025 Budget of \$24,270,092, representing a 3.47% increase above the 2023-2024 Adopted Budget to take to the Annual Regional Budget Hearing on Monday, April 22, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Roberta S. Ohotnicky Little Theater. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

### Approval of BOE Transfers

**MOTION** by Ms. Duran, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **APPROVE** the BOE Transfer report dated 1/1/24 to 3/31/24, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

## CORRESPONDENCE

Erick Wildes – Letter of Resignation

**MOTION** by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ACCEPT** Mr. Wildes's letter of resignation with regret and appreciation, as presented. The RSD#7 BOE greatly appreciates Mr. Wildes twenty years of service to the RSD#7 students, staff and the community with sincere gratitude and wishes him all the best. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

## OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

None.

## ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION** by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ADJOURN** at 8:13 p.m. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

The next meeting will be on April 22, 2024~ the Regional Budget Hearing in the RSD#7 Little Theater at 7:00 p.m. A Regular BOE Meeting will immediately follow.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Barrett  
Board Clerk



**VOTE – TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024**  
**NORTHWESTERN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7**

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**Budget Explanatory Text**

**Overview**

On Monday, May 6, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the Roberta S. Ohotnicky Little Theater, the Regional School District No. 7 Board of Education (the “Board”) will hold a District Meeting on its proposed 2024-2025 budget. No vote will be taken at this meeting. A budget referendum will be held on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, and voters are encouraged to participate.

The budget development process began in October. The Superintendent worked with District staff over a six-month period. The Board then worked on the budget during the months of February, March and April.

The total budget request of \$24,270,092 is an increase of \$814,564, or 3.47 percent more than the current budget of \$23,455,528. The increase is due primarily to: an increase of \$223,156 in the Salary account due to contractual obligations along with staffing changes and staff reductions; an increase in Benefits of \$209,028 primarily due to a 10.95 percent increase in health insurance; an increase of \$7,311 in Professional/Technical Services mostly attributable to Special Education requirements; an increase of \$1,230 in Property Services attributed mainly to energy, fuel and utilities; an increase of \$383,574 in Other Purchased Services from an increase in Special Education outplacement tuitions and transportation for outplaced students; a decrease in Supplies of \$1,970; a decrease in Property of \$6,921; and a decrease in Other Objects and Other Use of Funds of \$844 due to no new borrowing since 2012.

<b>VOTE – TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024</b>
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**Salaries and Benefits**

Salaries are based on 134.80 full-time equivalent positions (FTE) – including 101.0 certified positions. The Benefits section includes a 10.95 percent renewal increase from health insurance renewal costs.

**Revenues**

The overall 2024-2025 revenues are anticipated to decrease by an estimated \$113,467. This is primarily due to a decrease in Regular Education Tuition revenues, and a decrease in the Vo-Ag enrollment and state funded Vo-Ag Operating Grant.

**VOTE – TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024**  
**NORTHWESTERN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7**

**Budget Explanatory Text**

**Explanatory Text**

**VOTE – TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024**

**Member Town Allocations**

Revenues are derived from taxation, state grants and other sources. The primary source is the taxpayers. The budget allocations are as follows:

	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2024-2025</b>	<b>Change</b>
Barkhamsted	\$6,330,297	\$6,098,334	\$-231,963
Colebrook	\$2,250,115	\$2,234,303	\$-15,812
New Hartford	\$10,722,876	\$11,425,613	\$702,737
Norfolk	\$1,804,736	\$2,146,683	\$341,947
Other Sources	\$2,347,504	\$2,365,159	\$17,655

**Budget Summary:**

**Expenditures by Category**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2024-2025</b>
Salaries	\$12,310,296
Benefits	\$ 3,577,832
Purchased Professional Services	\$ 2,054,067
Purchased Property Services	\$ 1,310,074
Other Purchased Services	\$ 3,966,915
Supplies	\$ 595,754
Property	\$ 410,026
Other Objects	\$ 57,628
Other Use of Funds	\$ -12,500
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$24,270,092</b>

Increase of 3.47%

**Average Daily Membership**

**(Enrollment of each town)**

Percentage of budget (allocations) paid by each town is based on Average Daily Membership (10/1/2023).

	<b>Students</b>	<b>% Allocation</b>
Barkhamsted	213	27.84%
Colebrook	78	10.20%
New Hartford	399	52.16%
Norfolk	75	9.80%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

April 12, 2024

Kelsey Leach  
128 Woodruff Street  
Litchfield, Connecticut 06759  
[Kelsey.leach@gmail.com](mailto:Kelsey.leach@gmail.com)  
(860)417-8283

Dear Superintendent Lepage, Principal Franklin, and Mr. DeCerbo,

I am writing to formally give notice on, April 12, 2024, of my resignation of my position as a science teacher at Northwestern Regional District No. 7 high school effective June 14, 2024. It has been a privilege and honor to be part of this wonderful community and contribute to the growth and education of our students.

I am grateful for the opportunities and experiences I have had here, but after careful consideration, I have decided to stay at home and raise my daughter, Mackenzie. She is truly a blessing and has changed my life in so many lovely ways in such a short time.

I am committed to ensuring a smooth transition and would be more than willing to assist in any way possible during this process. I would also love to continue to be a part of the Northwestern community by substituting.

Thank you once again for the support, guidance, and camaraderie during my tenure at Northwestern. I am confident that the students at Northwestern will continue to thrive under the guidance of the dedicated faculty and staff. It has been a pleasure to have been part of the Northwestern family for so long.

Sincerely,



Kelsey Leach