



Brad Morgan
Superintendent of Schools
NMRSD
66 Brookline Street
Townsend, MA 01469

August 5, 2024

Dr. Morgan,

As Town Administrators of Ashby, Pepperell, and Townsend, we write to you about our long standing concerns about the North Middlesex Regional School District budget and our community's ability to afford the annual assessment.

We understand many of the foundational causes – the state formula, transportation costs, SPED, state and federal mandates. These costs to the schools have analogs in our towns – UGA, salary increases, utilities, and other escalating costs like state and federal mandates for water quality, etc.

A major limiting factor on the towns is our ability to tax. We cannot raise the levy above 2.5% of the previous year's tax base. New growth is modest. State aid and local receipts are also relatively flat and make up about 20% of our budgets. In total, revenue growth is generally limited to around 3% per year.

It is therefore critical that North Middlesex work within our limitations and produce new budget assessments within our projected annual growth. For FY2026, a 3% assessment increase would total \$40,979,991.00 including operating, transportation, and debt service. Any figure above that would require overrides and these have not generally been well received in our communities.

We look forward to working with the schools to resolve our combined financial challenges.

Andrew MacLean
Town Administrator
Pepperell

Ross Perry
Interim Town Administrator
Townsend

Mary Daughraty
Town Administrator
Ashby

Cc: NMRSD School Committee
Pepperell Finance Committee
Townsend Finance Committee
Ashby Select Board
Pepperell Select Board