

# NORTH READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*“Pursuit of Excellence”*

June 21, 2024

Dear North Reading School Committee Member:

The Fiscal Year 2025 Final Budget for the North Reading Public Schools is a balanced budget that meets the available revenues of the community within the proposition 2.5% tax levy. The School and Town sought approval of an override, which would have been the first override since 2005. The override was approved at the June 10<sup>th</sup> annual town meeting but failed at the ballot on June 18, 2024. Due to the failed override vote the final budget would be considered less than level services budget and includes \$1,200,507 reductions to existing personnel and services.

The Final Budget appropriation for FY 2025 is \$38,772,128, this reflects an increase of \$1,452,533 or 3.9% over the FY 2024 budget figure of \$37,319,595. Several factors account for the increase in the overall Final Budget as presented:

- Contractual obligations with employees and employee unions;
- Large fixed cost increases especially in the areas of student transportation, utilities, maintenance and instructional software;
- Increasing special education out-district-costs for tuitions and transportation;
- Operational cost increases to properly maintain all five schools and surrounding campuses.

The FY 2025 Final Budget includes funding needed to provide as close to a level services budget as possible despite the \$1,200,507 reductions to personnel and expense budgets. It is noteworthy that the budget as approved, fails to support level services and the new proposed positions driven by the school district’s strategic plan. The reason for this is rooted in the recognition of the fiscal challenges that the community currently faces. Despite the budget challenges, failed override vote, and budget reductions the School Department worked hard to ensure the adopted budget would protect key education services and priorities to the greatest extend possible in fiscal year 2025.

I remain grateful to the citizens of North Reading for continued support of the North Reading School Department and out educational mission in these challenging times. In closing, I wish to acknowledge the efforts of the district administrators, for their many contributions to the development of the Fiscal Year 2025 Final Budget for the North Reading Public Schools.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Patrick C. Daly'.

Dr. Patrick C. Daly, Superintendent

## INTRODUCTION

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TO: North Reading School Committee

Dr. Patrick Daly, Superintendent

FROM: Michael A. Connelly, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations

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Enclosed is the North Reading Public School's final budget for fiscal year 2025.

The adoption of the fiscal year 2025 final school budget included a failed operating tax override on June 18, 2024. The failed override vote is resulting in the need for the school department to proceed with \$1,200,507 in reductions to existing personnel and services which include 15 positions.

The final approved budget for FY 2025 is \$38,772,128 which reflects a \$1,452,533 increase over FY 2024, reflecting an increase of 3.9%. The school budget is a budget that currently meets Finance Planning Team's guideline budget amount within the proposition 2.5% tax levy and is less than what would be considered a level services budget for the school department with reductions to existing personnel and services.

The FY 2025 operating budget documents are presented in three different "views." The first view is in line with the template that has been provided in the past and displays the budget salary and expense detail by DESE function code. The next view is a budget sorted by major category of expenditure: salaries, contracted services, supplies/materials, professional development expenses, transportation, utilities, tuitions, and small capital and equipment. This view helps clarify the percentage of the budget spent on salaries, utilities, tuitions and instructional supplies. This is included in the *Operating Budget* section of the budget book. The final view is the budget sorted, by major DESE cost centers including district administration, instructional, student services, operations and fixed charges, community services, equipment, and tuitions. A summary of the budget by major cost center is included in the *Operating Budget* section of the budget book. I have also included additional information in the budget book to allow for further analysis and discussion.

I want to acknowledge all of the work that was done by the Principals and Directors, and by my colleagues on the Administrative Council, who worked so very hard to discuss student needs, think creatively, and make difficult decisions that ultimately affect the quality of the student experience in the North Reading Public Schools.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This budget has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines of the School Committee and Finance Planning Team and includes a balanced budget proposal that is within the proposition 2.5% tax levy. Due to the failed override ballot vote the budget includes reductions to personnel and services in the amount of \$1,200,507 to achieve a balanced budget. The final budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year is \$38,772,128. This represents a \$1,452,533 increase, which is 3.9% higher than this year’s appropriation. The school department has, for the last several fiscal years, operated under a modified level services budget philosophy. This means that the spending has essentially been the same as the previous year except for modifications due to shifts in enrollment, contractual salary obligations, operational fixed costs, and modest enhancements driven by the school district’s educational strategic plan, “NRPS 2025,” to make continuous improvements to the school department’s educational programs. This approach has not been achieved for fiscal year 2025, as the budget adopted included a reduction to existing personnel and expenses.

<b>FY 2024 Budget</b>	<b>FY 2025 Final Budget</b>	<b>% Increase</b>
<b>\$37,319,595</b>	<b>\$38,772,128</b>	<b>3.9%</b>

***Finance Planning Team Guidelines***

The Finance Planning Team meets regularly and reviews the revenue and expense forecasts based on the most up-to-date information for the FY 2025 revenue picture at the state and local levels. These forecasts impact the recommended revenue amounts that are available for both the town and the school budgets after fixed costs for expenses, which among other expenses include debt service, employee benefits, liability insurances, and regional school assessment costs. The FY 2025 final budget meets the guidelines set forth by the Finance Planning Team and is within the proposition 2.5% tax levy with the failed override budget vote on June 18, 2024.

***Key Budget Assumptions***

Below is a list of key budget assumptions that were made as part of the FY 2025 budget proposal.

***General Revenue Assumptions:***

- Increases in unrestricted local aid and Chapter 70 are applied based on the most recent information in the state budget;
- Standard Federal and State entitlement grants budget offsets are assumed to be funded at the same level as FY 2024;
- Elimination of all ESSER federal relief grants that will be spent at the end of FY 2024 and are no longer available. (\$213,000 financial impact)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- State Circuit Breaker program is assumed to be funded with a 75% reimbursement rate, which is the estimated rate based on the most recent information in the state budget.
- The plan to continue to phase out the full-day kindergarten tuition fee reducing the tuition rate from \$2,500 to \$1,500 next school year has been put on hold in FY'2025.

### ***Salary Assumptions:***

- Includes all step, lane, and longevity contractual increases to meet contractual obligations for current administration and support staff;
- Includes a reduction of \$175,000 for anticipated savings for staff retirements, resignations and attrition;
- Includes a salary pool for the financial impact of negotiated cost of living adjustments with the North Reading Teachers Association (NREA) whose contract was recently settled and approved on May 13, 2024.

### ***The following reductions to existing personnel and services:***

Description	FTE	Amount
Reduction of Elementary Classroom Teachers	3.0	240,000
Reduction of MS/HS Classroom & Special Ed. Teachers / Educators	6.0	480,000
Reduction of District School Nursing Services	0.5	40,000
Reduction of Technology Staffing & Support	0.5	32,500
Reduction of Academic Support Tutors Elementary Level	1.2	56,800
Reduction of Custodial Cleaning Staff	1.0	51,000
Reduction of Athletic Coaching Staff		20,000
Reduction of General Classroom Kindergarten Support	3.0	105,000
Reduction of School & District Expense Budgets		35,207
Reduction of Special Education / Transportation Increases		40,000
Shift Costs: Utilities, Custodial Cleaning Costs to Food Service Revolving Account		60,000
Increased User Fees to Families: Busing Program (\$500/\$800)		40,000
<b>Total Administration Proposed Reductions</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>1,200,507</b>

### ***Fixed Cost Assumptions:***

- 6.5% increase in the assessment for the district from the Middlesex County Retirement System by the Town;
- 14% increase in health insurance costs;
- 3% increase in Regional School Assessment for North Reading students attending both the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School and Essex Technical High School;
- 3.0% Increase in Worker's Compensation and General Liability Insurance;
- 4% increase in School Medicare costs.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### ***Special Education:***

- Assumes the circuit breaker reimbursement amount received in FY '24 for FY '23 expenses. This amount of \$1,413,492 will represent the FY '25 budgetary offset amount. Assumes the circuit breaker program will continue to be fully funded at a 75% reimbursement rate and includes new funding proposed as part of the Student Opportunities Act which now includes reimbursement for transportation costs;
- Assumes a 5% COLA increase in special education outside placements and transportation costs;
- Assumes \$150,000 of out-of-district tuitions will be prepaid with FY 2024 year-end funds which is allowed per state finance regulations.

### ***Other Expenses and Contractual Services:***

- School expense budgets include adjustments due to inflationary increases and to ensure a funding level at above the five-year per pupil funding average at each school.
- Utility budgets are projected on a three-to five-year trend analysis based on usage, pricing and based on rate and usage information that is known at this time.
- Known contractual increases have been applied to contractual services, including regular transportation; audit services, legal services, print and copy machine management services; and other human resources and student management software increases have also been applied;
- Continuation of preventative maintenance service contracts to maintain the four school campuses including HVAC, Energy Management Systems, lighting controls, security equipment, are included in the budget proposal;
- Contractual increases have been applied to the district operational maintenance and on-call labor contracts for the following trades have been applied: HVAC, Electrical, Plumbing, Heating and Boiler maintenance, Roofing maintenance, Fire and alarm system monitoring, Elevator and lift maintenance, Fire and sprinkler system maintenance, and security equipment maintenance.
- Waste Water Treatment Plant operational contractual increases have been applied to ensure continuation of successful operation of the Middle/High School's Waste Water Treatment Facility;
- Increases for other maintenance and grounds service agreements for landscaping, athletic field treatment and snow removal services have been applied.

### ***Revenue and Budget Offsets/Subsidies:***

- The transportation revolving account offset will increase to \$440,00 which assumes the district will have \$150,000 of carry over funds available and the user fee will increase to \$500 for an individual pass and \$800 for a family pass;
- The athletic revolving account offset is estimated to be \$300,000 annually from revenue generated from user fees and gate receipts. This offset assumes the district will have up to \$30,000 of carry over funds available and represents 40% of all athletic expenses and supports all the non-salary related athletic program expenses including transportation, trainer, game officials and workers, team supplies and equipment, ice, pool, tennis and other rental costs, dues and membership fees;

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

scouting and other software systems. The budget assumes due to increases costs in in several areas including for bus transportation and athletic trainer the user fee will increase to the following: \$420 first sport, \$300 for a second and third sport. The family cap remains unchanged at \$1,300. The costs for the athletic director, secretary, and coaches' salaries, are supported be the general operating budget.

- The extra-curricular revolving account offset will be \$60,000. The budget assumes this user fee will remain at \$200 for middle and high school students.
- The performing arts user fee that was introduced in FY 2024 at each level the budget assumes this remain the same, which is \$200 1<sup>st</sup> Activity, \$100 2<sup>nd</sup> Activity, \$50 3<sup>rd</sup> Activity at the High School, and \$150 1<sup>st</sup> Activity, \$75 2<sup>nd</sup> Activity, \$50 3<sup>rd</sup> Activity at the Middle School, and \$100 at the elementary level. This accounts for a total general fund budget offset of \$28,500.
- The building rental offset will remain at \$75,000, the proposed rental fee rate scheduled remains unchanged;
- The detailed assumptions of school revenue budget offsets used in the FY 2025 budget, including federal and state grant levels, are included in the budget document. All federal and state entitlement grant awards are expected to remain the same in FY 2024.

### ***Major Budget Drivers***

#### **Contractual Salary Obligations**

Funds are included to meet all required contractual salary obligations for the district's professional and support staff. Personnel services and salary obligations represent 83% of the total FY 2025 modified level services budget request. This includes the cost for steps, lane movements, and longevity increases for all eligible staff. The administrators, paraprofessionals, custodians, administrative assistants and other non-union staff members' contracts are settled through FY 2025. The North Reading School Committee recently settled a new contract with the North Reading Teachers Association and the budget includes the needed increase to cover the newly negotiated contract for North Reading's Teachers. A turnover amount is also calculated and subtracted from the FY 2025 total salary budget based on historical trend data. The turnover reduction takes into account the anticipated retirements, resignations, and leaves of absences, which historically occur after the budget is approved but prior to the start of the school year. In the rare event that no unanticipated turnover is realized, the school department's personnel service budget request would be underfunded.

#### **Special Education Costs**

Funds needed to support anticipated out-of-district tuitions and transportation costs are expected to increase in FY 2025. The district anticipates an increase in the number of students requiring out-of-district placements and transportation in FY 2025. The FY 2024 budget included out-of-district placement and transportation costs for 37 students. The FY 2025 budget anticipates the amount will increase by three students, and the district will have 40 students in out-of-district placements. In addition, to additional students being educated outside the district to meet their needs, the Operational Services Division (OSD) who sets the

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

tuition prices for Massachusetts approved private special education programs for cities and towns has approved a tuition rate increase at 5% for FY '25. Although not as high as last year's 14% mark, this rate increase is still significant. In North Reading, this rate increase accounts for almost a \$70,000 increase in the out-district-tuition budget next year.

The district continues to evaluate its special education programs and, where appropriate, has reallocated current resources to provide additional student support services and increased social and emotional support. These programs assist with reducing the potential need for outside placements and special education services. Currently, 18.4% of our student population, including students being educated outside the district, receive special education services. The 18.4% statistics is right below the state average of 20.2%, which is reflected in the table below. The table below illustrates that North Reading students in outside placements have ranged anywhere between 28 and 37 students over the last six years, currently representing 1.0% of all students being placed in out-of-district programs; which is right at the current state average of 1.1%. The anticipated 40 students in out-of-district placements in FY '25 would represent the most students being educated outside the District since the 2009-10 school year. In addition, currently, 8.5% of students receiving special education services are educated outside the District. Many Districts in the area has seen this number increase significantly especially since the Covid-19 pandemic to above 10%. The average of over 12 north-shore communities recently polled was 9.5%. In North Reading, special education costs account for 22% of all net school spending costs, which is also at the state average of 22%.

Academic Year	Total Oct. 1 In-District Enrollment	# of Students on IEP's	% of Students on IEP's	% of Students Statewide on IEP's	# of Students Out of District
2008-09	2,792	428	15.1%	17.1%	34
2009-10	2,735	426	15.3%	17.0%	42
2010-11	2,675	435	16.0%	17.0%	36
2011-12	2,636	438	16.4%	17.0%	37
2012-13	2,606	445	17.2%	17.0%	34
2013-14	2,612	479	18.0%	17.0%	39
2014-15	2,560	465	17.7%	17.1%	33
2015-16	2,532	457	17.2%	17.2%	30
2016-17	2,499	439	17.9%	17.4%	34
2017-18	2,493	450	18.9%	17.7%	36
2018-19	2,398	477	19.4%	18.1%	34
2019-20	2,397	441	18.2%	18.4%	32
2020-21	2,309	422	18.1%	18.2%	29
2021-22	2,321	416	18.8%	18.9%	28
2022-23	2,354	425	19.1%	19.4%	32
2023-24	2,317	433	18.4%	20.2%	37
2024-25 Projected	2,377	445	18.7%	20.5%	40

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Operational Building and Fixed Costs**

The district ensures the operating budget includes the operational costs needed to adequately maintain the four school campuses. The District has identified since FY 2024 more funds to account for these costs. Below is a breakdown of the operational maintenance costs the district has reallocated to adequately maintain all schools. In recent years, these costs have stabilized, as the District has been able to control increases in its operational costs and implement energy efficient measures including LED lighting fixtures and modulating its energy management heating and cooling systems.

Description of Service	Increased Amount
Energy Management Contract	\$10,000
Landscaping Services / Athletic Field Grass Maintenance	\$25,000
Plumbing Services	\$16,000
Boiler Maintenance Services	\$15,000
Security Camera Maintenance	\$15,000
Waste Water Treatment Plant Operations	\$200,000
Elevator Inspections and Services	\$24,000
HVAC Maintenance Services	\$75,000
Increased snow removal outside contractor costs	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$430,000</b>

The chart below illustrates the increase in building operational costs the district has experienced to maintain the four campuses depicted in the table above. The district believes it is critical to take the proper steps to ensure that appropriate preventative maintenance measures are in place. Funds allocated to the maintenance of buildings and grounds have more than doubled since FY 2014 as shown in the graph below. However, in recent years beginning in FY '20 these costs have leveled out as you can see when looking the below chart indicating current funding levels are now adequate to maintain all four campuses.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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2014-15	2,560	465	17.7%	17.1%	33
2015-16	2,532	457	17.2%	17.2%	30
2016-17	2,499	439	17.9%	17.4%	34
2017-18	2,493	450	18.9%	17.7%	36
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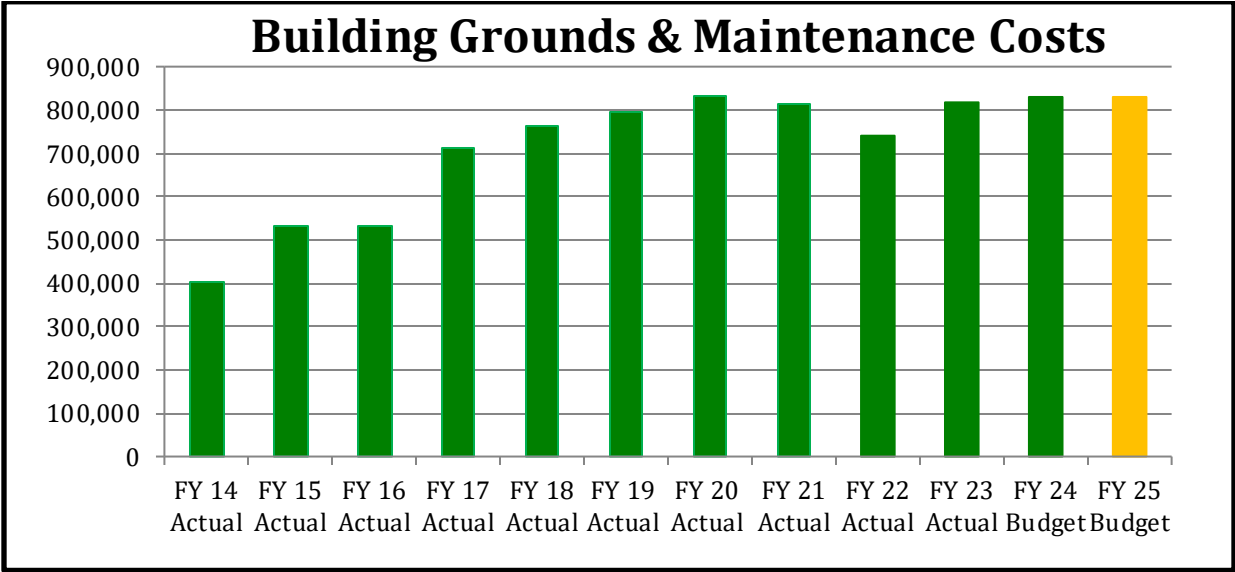
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Operational Building and Fixed Costs**

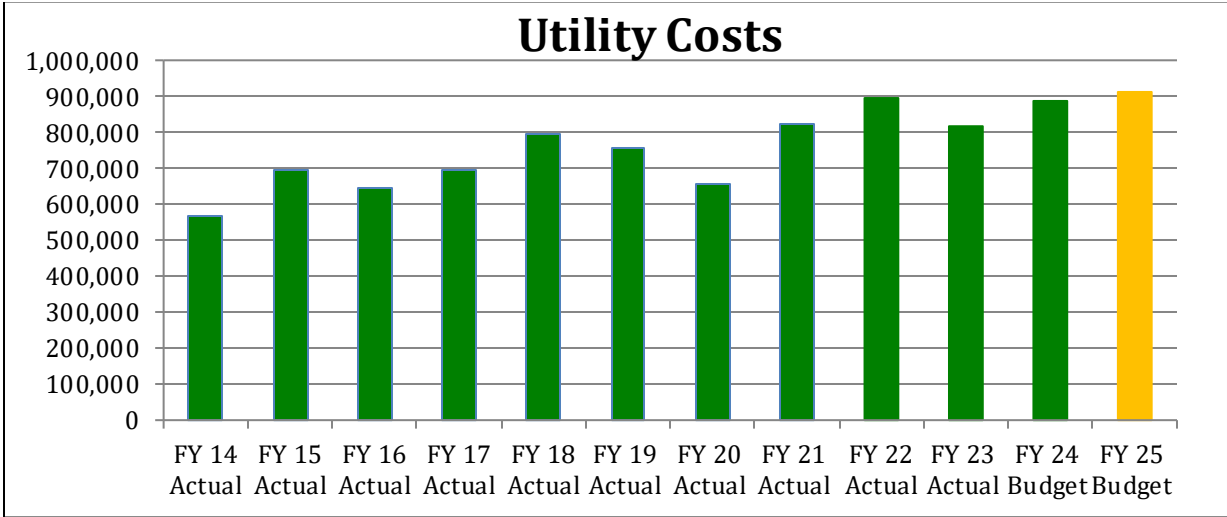
The district ensures the operating budget includes the operational costs needed to adequately maintain the four school campuses. The District has identified since FY 2024 more funds to account for these costs. Below is a breakdown of the operational maintenance costs the district has reallocated to adequately maintain all schools. In recent years, these costs have stabilized, as the District has been able to control increases in its operational costs and implement energy efficient measures including LED lighting fixtures and modulating its energy management heating and cooling systems.

<b>Description of Service</b>	<b>Increased Amount</b>
Energy Management Contract	\$10,000
Landscaping Services / Athletic Field Grass Maintenance	\$25,000
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Boiler Maintenance Services	\$15,000
Security Camera Maintenance	\$15,000
Waste Water Treatment Plant Operations	\$200,000
Elevator Inspections and Services	\$24,000
HVAC Maintenance Services	\$75,000
Increased snow removal outside contractor costs	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$430,000</b>

The chart below illustrates the increase in building operational costs the district has experienced to maintain the four campuses depicted in the table above. The district believes it is critical to take the proper steps to ensure that appropriate preventative maintenance measures are in place. Funds allocated to the maintenance of buildings and grounds have more than doubled since FY 2014 as shown in the graph below. However, in recent years beginning in FY '20 these costs have leveled out as you can see when looking the below chart indicating current funding levels are now adequate to maintain all four campuses.



The district has also experienced a significant increase in its utility costs since FY 2014, driven by an increase in electricity costs and the demands of the four school campuses. The district’s utility costs have increased significantly in recent years, accounting for a larger portion of the school budget. Over the past two fiscal years, funds have also begun to level out indicating the District has been able to better control new increases in operational costs by taking on energy efficient measures including retrofitting all fixtures with new LED lights in all buildings.



**End of Covid-19 Federal Relief Grants (ESSER)**

The Covid-19 pandemic drastically changed the needs and priorities of the School District and added significant new costs to address the public health, safety, technology, mental health and learning loss needs. Many new positions were added with Covid-19 federal grants and they included the following: School Adjustment Counselors, a Digital Learning Technician, and a Floater School Nurse as depicted in the chart below. These positions have been all or partially funded from Covid-19 federal grant since FY '21 and the District

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

anticipates the need for these positions in fiscal year 2025. The FY '25 budget reflects these positions being reallocated to the operating budget to ensure their continuation as part of the District's educational program. They have become an integral part of district's academic process.

School /Dept.	Covid-19 Related Positions Carry-Over	Amount	Funding Source
Middle / High	1.0 FTE School Adjustment Counselor	60,000	ESSER III Carry-Over
Elementary	1.0 FTE School Adjustment Counselor	60,000	ESSER III Carry-Over
District	1.0 FTE Digital Learning Technician	50,000	ESSER III Carry-Over
District	1.0 Floater School Nurse	43,000	ESSER III Carry-Over
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.0 FTE</b>	<b>213,000</b>	

The Floater School Nurse position and the Digital Learning Technician position above have been reduced to part-time 0.50 FTE due to a need to balance the FY 2025 budget.

### Enrollment Driven and Special Program Needs

The enrollment at the elementary level is anticipated to increase next school year by 73 students from 1,156 to 1,229. The majority of this increase is in grade 5 leading to the need to increase staffing. Below are the new positions being proposed next school year to account for the increase in enrollment and to maintain class sizes within recommended guidelines of 18 to 22 students at the elementary level and meet the demand of specialist sections and offerings at each school.

School /Dept.	Enrollment	Amount	NEED
Elementary	1.0 FTE Grade Level Teacher	78,176	Enrollment
Batchelder School	0.50 FTE Kindergarten Teacher	39,088	Enrollment
Elementary	0.50 FTE Music, Art, PE/Health	44,777	Enrollment
Hood School	0.5 FTE Special Education Teacher	37,945	Enrollment
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.4 FTE</b>	<b>199,986</b>	

The grade level position at the elementary level and the increases to the Music, Art, and PE/Health classes at the Elementary level will not take place given a need to balance the FY 2025 budget.

### Strategic Plan “NRPS 2025/2030” Initiatives

The FY '25 final budget request included the additional of 1.6 FTE new positions guided by the District's strategic plan for continuous academic achievement. The new positions requested included:

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

School /Dept.	NRPS: 2025 Needs	Amount	NRPS 2025 Strategy
Elementary	0.6 FTE School Adjustment Counselor	52,635	Student Support / Equity
MS / Elementary	1.0 FTE Academic Interventionist	78,176	Teaching & Learning / Support
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.6 FTE</b>	<b>\$130,811</b>	

In Year 5 of the strategic budget vision, the proposal as presented would have resulted in an expenditure of \$130,811 which accounts for a 0.4% increase to the budget.

The 0.6 FTE School Adjustment Counselors at the elementary level will allow for a designated adjustment counselor at each Elementary School. Currently, there is a designated adjustment counselor at the Batchelder Elementary School and a shared adjustment counselor at the Hood and Little Elementary Schools. The elementary schools will continue to work towards implementing a multi-tiered system of supports known as MTSS in September 2024. In addition to targeting reading, the elementary principals will also continue the work associated with social emotional and behavioral interventions as part of MTSS. Additional counselors will be instrumental in addressing student mental health needs and wellness. The role of School Adjustment Counselor is an extremely impactful one at the elementary level. This position allows not only for responsive services but is key in developing programs that are proactive rather than reactive. These positions are essential in addressing the social emotional needs of all students, which continues to be heightened due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The 1.0 FTE Academic Interventionist is a professional teaching position that is an enhancement over the current part-time 15 hour per week tutors that exist at each elementary school. This would allow for one full-time Academic Interventionist that would be shared between all 3 elementary schools. The addition of the Academic Interventionist professional position at the elementary schools will help provide and support a more progressive early intervention approach with students at all levels but in-particular grades 1 and 2 with a focus in math.

These key positions will not be funded due to a need to balance the fiscal year 2025 budget.

### ***NRPS 2025 & Staffing Needs Continued***

The School Department’s strategic plan and other school committee goals identify several other positions that are not reflected in the 7.7% school budget proposal given the fiscal constraints at this time. These positions, totaling \$748,782, represent 8.5 FTE full time equivalents (FTEs) as shown in the table below:

School / Dept.	NRPS 2030 Positions Not Included in Budget	Amount	NRPS 2030 Strategy
Elementary / MS	1.0 FTE Academic Interventionist	78,176	Teaching & Learning
District K-8	1.0 FTE Literacy Coach	78,176	Teaching & Learning
District K-8	1.0 FTE Math Coach	78,176	Teaching & Learning

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

District K-12	1.0 FTE Humanities Coordinator	111,550	Teaching & Learning
District	Administrative Position Upgrades	50,000	Teaching & Learning
District	1.0 FTE Educational Data Coach	78,176	Teaching & Learning
Elementary	2.0 FTE Academic Interventionist	156,352	Teaching & Learning
District	0.50 FTE Administrative Assistant Restoration	40,000	Operational Restoration
District	1.0 FTE Digital Learning Specialists	78,176	Teaching & Learn. Restoration
	<b>8.5 FTE</b>	<b>748,782</b>	

The Administration has recommended the positions that it believes would have a significant impact on student learning, while recognizing the fiscal environment and budget challenges the community faces in FY 2025.

### ***Budget Priorities***

Below is a list of key budget priorities that the Administration and the School Committee focused on in the development of the FY 2025 budget.

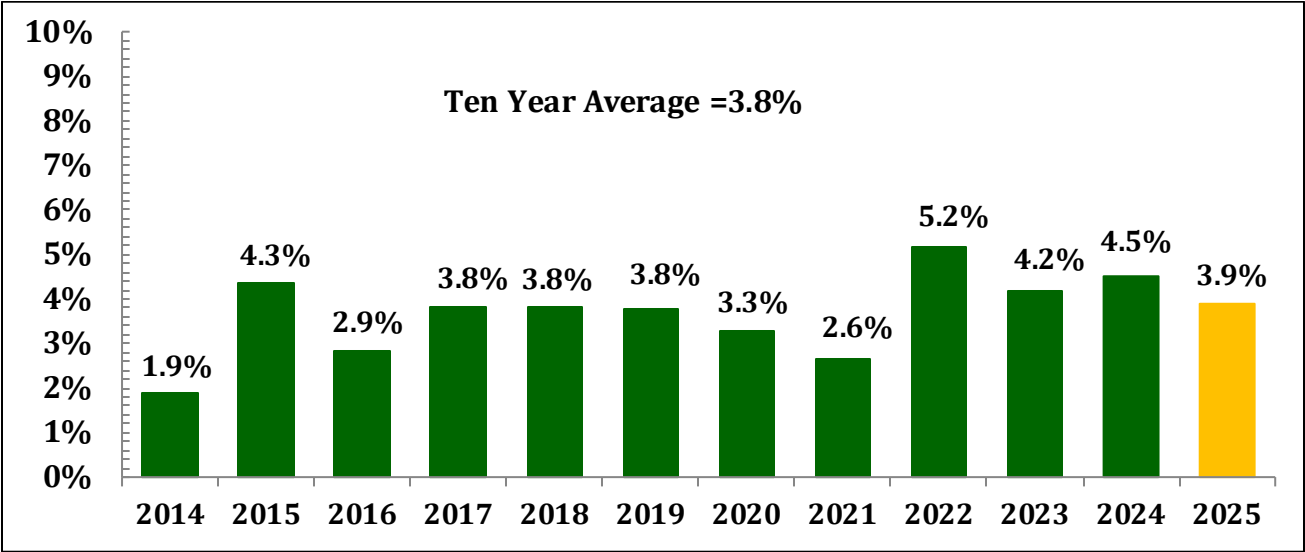
- Approve a Fiscal Year 2025 (FY '25) budget that adequately meets district requirements for optimum student achievement in alignment with NRPS 2025;
- Continue to explore opportunities to reduce operational costs including energy savings by pursuing (solar power, boiler upgrades, WWTP efficiencies, energy management modulation, etc.);
- Support the development of the plan to reduce the Kindergarten fees leading toward the eventual goal of providing free Full-Day Kindergarten and will explore the next steps to increase access to Universal Free Day Pre-K;
- Develop strategies to preserve positions and supports that were implemented in part with ESSER funding while also continuing to move the district forward in alignment with NRPS 2025;
- Continue to collaborate with representatives of the Select Board, Finance Committee, the Town Administrator, and the town's Director of Finance.

The final fiscal year 2025 budget represents a funding level that meets the available revenues with the Town within the proposition 2.5% tax levy with no-override. It is a budget that is less than level services and includes a reduction to existing personnel and services.

It is important to note that the North Reading Public Schools experienced moderate budget increases in the past. This has required the use of several one-time funds and revenue sources to maintain level services. This has made it challenging to continue to maintain level services and achieve the educational objectives of the district. The operating budget history charted below illustrates the budget increases over the last several fiscal years during these challenging economic times.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Budget Amount</b>	<b>% Budget Increase</b>
FY 2010	\$22,802,875	1.90%
FY 2011	\$23,143,886	1.50%
FY 2012	\$24,021,751	3.79%
FY 2013	\$25,169,692	4.78%
FY 2014	\$25,648,524	1.90%
FY 2015	\$26,764,015	4.40%
FY 2016	\$27,495,074	2.73%
FY 2017	\$28,546,142	3.80%
FY 2018	\$29,633,545	3.80%
FY 2019	\$30,746,047	3.80%
FY 2020	\$31,757,773	3.29%
FY 2021	\$32,593,216	2.60%
FY 2022	\$34,276,665	5.20%
FY 2023	\$35,709,330	4.20%
FY 2024	\$37,319,595	4.50%
FY 2025	\$38,772,128	3.90%



***Final Budget Conclusion***

The FY2025 budget will allow the District to meet all contractual obligations with employees and employee unions, as well as address fixed operational cost increases to successfully operate and maintain all four school campuses. It unfortunately includes a reduction to personnel and services that will have an impact on the following: (1) optimum class sizes at each level for student learning; (2) mental health and academic support systems available for all students; (3) expenses budgets for instructional materials and technology. Despite these reductions the District will continue to work hard to uphold the vision and mission of the North Reading Public Schools.

## BUDGET PROCESS AND GOALS

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The annual budget is the financial framework of the educational program needs of the North Reading School Department. The budget is more than just a financial instrument and requires an orderly and cooperative effort on the part of the School Committee, the staff, and the community to ensure sound fiscal practices for achieving the educational goals and objectives of the North Reading Public Schools.

A major portion of the income for the operation of the public schools is derived from local property taxes, and the North Reading School Committee will attempt to protect the valid interest of the taxpayers. However, the first priority in the development of our annual budget is the educational welfare of the children in our schools.

It is the intention of this School Committee to work closely with the Finance Planning Team as early as possible in the budget process, to ensure the final town budget submitted at Town Meeting reflects funds needed to comply with state educational requirements and brings education in North Reading to a higher level of excellence.

As a trustee of local, state, and federal funds allocated for use in public education, the North Reading School Committee will fulfill its responsibility to see that these funds are used wisely for the purposes to which they are allocated.

Public school budgeting is regulated and controlled by federal and state legislation, state regulations, and local School Committee requirements. An operating budget representing the School Committee's best judgment of needs for the North Reading School System will be prepared and presented to the Town Administrator in a timely fashion.

The Superintendent will serve as budget officer and will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of and adherence to, a budget calendar conforming to the schedule set forth in the Town Charter. However, he may delegate portions of this responsibility to members of his staff as he deems appropriate. The three areas of responsibility for the Superintendent as budget officer will be budget preparation, budget presentation, and budget administration.

The operating budget consists of two components: personnel services and expenses. Personnel services (salaries) account for approximately 83.0% of the FY 2025 recommended budget. Actual class organization, staffing and enrollment data is gathered on October 1 of each year. Enrollment projections are generated based on the current year counts and historical data and trends. (Charts detailing trends in both enrollment and the budget are included in this analysis section of the budget book). In early October, budget leaders receive the enrollment projections and detailed historical expense data specific to their programs along with the School Committee's budget goals. During late November and December, central office administrators conduct a series of meetings with Directors and School Principals to review and discuss budget requests and potential cost-saving measures. The Superintendent, using input from the administrative team, determines the appropriate allocation of resources across the schools. The Superintendent presents the preliminary

## **BUDGET PROCESS AND GOALS**

budget recommendation to the School Committee in March. The School Committee, working through its subcommittees, reviews the budget for the elementary, middle school, and high school programs during late March. In early April, the School Committee holds public meetings to report on the subcommittee meetings as well as to hear public input. The School Committee will vote on the FY 2025 budget no later than May 1, 2024.

### **FY 2025 School Committee Budget Goals**

1. Approve a Fiscal Year 2025 (FY '25) budget that reflects support of the district's strategic plan, NRPS 2025, and other strategic initiatives;
2. Continue to explore new opportunities to reduce expenses associated with energy costs (e.g. solar power)
3. Support the development of the plan to reduce the Kindergarten fees leading toward the eventual goal of providing free Full-Day Kindergarten and will explore the next steps to increase access to Universal, Free, Day Pre-K;
4. Continue to review the current structure of user fees for extra-curricular and athletic activities and its impact on families;
5. Develop strategies to preserve positions and supports that were implemented in part with ESSER funding while also continuing to move the district forward in alignment with NRPS 2025;
6. Review all aspects of school transportation including the bus fees, contracts and rates, the process for route design, and emerging topics such as the electric school bus pilot. The Superintendent will prepare a presentation on this topic for the committee;
7. Continue to collaborate with representatives of the Select Board, Finance Committee, the Town Administrator, and the town's Director of Finance to discuss potential changes to the budget development calendar as a goal with having a revenue guideline budget amount earlier in the process.

## BUDGET TIMELINE

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August 28, 2023	Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Calendar and Budget Goals presentation and vote
October 23, 2023	Large Capital Improvement Plan presentation to School Committee
October 26, 2023	Principals and Directors given budget request sheets
November 13, 2023	School Committee vote on FY '25 Large Capital projects
November 27, 2023	Five- and Ten-Year Enrollment projections completed
December 8, 2023	Budget requests due to the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations
February 16, 2024	Release preliminary budget books to School Committee
March 11, 2024	Present preliminary budget to School Committee
March 28, 2024	Preliminary school budget webinar (12:00 p.m.)
April 8, 2024	FY '25 Budget Workshop # 1 (5:00 p.m.)
April 8, 2024	Public Hearing on FY '25 budget
April 22, 2024	FY '25 Budget Workshop # 2 (5:00 p.m.)
April 22, 2024	School Committee votes recommended budget
May 8, 2024	Present recommended budget to Finance Committee
May 13, 2024	Select board vote town meeting warrant
June 10, 2024	<b>Town Meeting votes budget</b>

The personnel services component of the budget includes salaries for all staff. Full time equivalency (FTE) is tracked for all regular employees but not for on-call or temporary employees such as substitute teachers or coaches.

It is important to note that the definition of a 1.0 FTE varies with positions as defined in collective bargaining agreements. In order to calculate the personnel services budget request, staffing needs must first be calculated. Professional staffing needs are determined based on enrollment projections and professional staffing guidelines. Unless otherwise known, it is assumed that all current staff will be returning to work for the next school year. Using the current year staff as a base, the personnel service budget request is generated as follows:

1. All employees not at the maximum step are advanced one step.
2. Collective bargaining increases are applied to the salary table. During those years when a contract is in negotiation, a projected increase is applied to the salary table, when appropriate. By contract, teachers and professional support staff advance to a higher educational level during the following school year after providing satisfactory evidence that they have met all degree requirements. Historically, there have been twelve to fifteen teachers who meet this criteria annually. The cost impact is calculated and is included in the teacher salary budget request.
3. Longevity stipends are added and adjusted for those employees who qualify.
4. Staff changes based on enrollment are calculated. For teachers and professional support staff, these positions are budgeted at an average salary, typically Masters Step 6.
5. Salaries for staff known to be retiring or taking a leave of absence are deleted and replaced with the average salary noted above.
6. Salaries for substitute teachers, coaches, extra-curricular club advisors, professional development workshops, stipends, etc., are determined.
7. A turnover reduction is determined. The turnover reduction takes into account the anticipated retirements, resignations and/or leaves of absence, which historically occur after the budget is approved, but prior to the start of the school year. In the rare event that no unanticipated turnover is realized, the school department's personnel service budget request would be underfunded.

It is helpful to keep in mind that North Reading's teachers' salary scale, like that of all public schools in the Commonwealth and in the country, is based on a step system where salary increases are based on years of service and educational attainment beyond the bachelor's degree. The FY '24 teachers' salary scale and a chart detailing the headcount of current staff by lane and step are included in this budget book. The FY '24 salary scale is also included.

The FY '25 personnel service operating budget recommendation funds a variety of positions that are funded through grant and revolving accounts. Based on current staffing and projected increases, this represents 420 full time and part-time employees covered in the

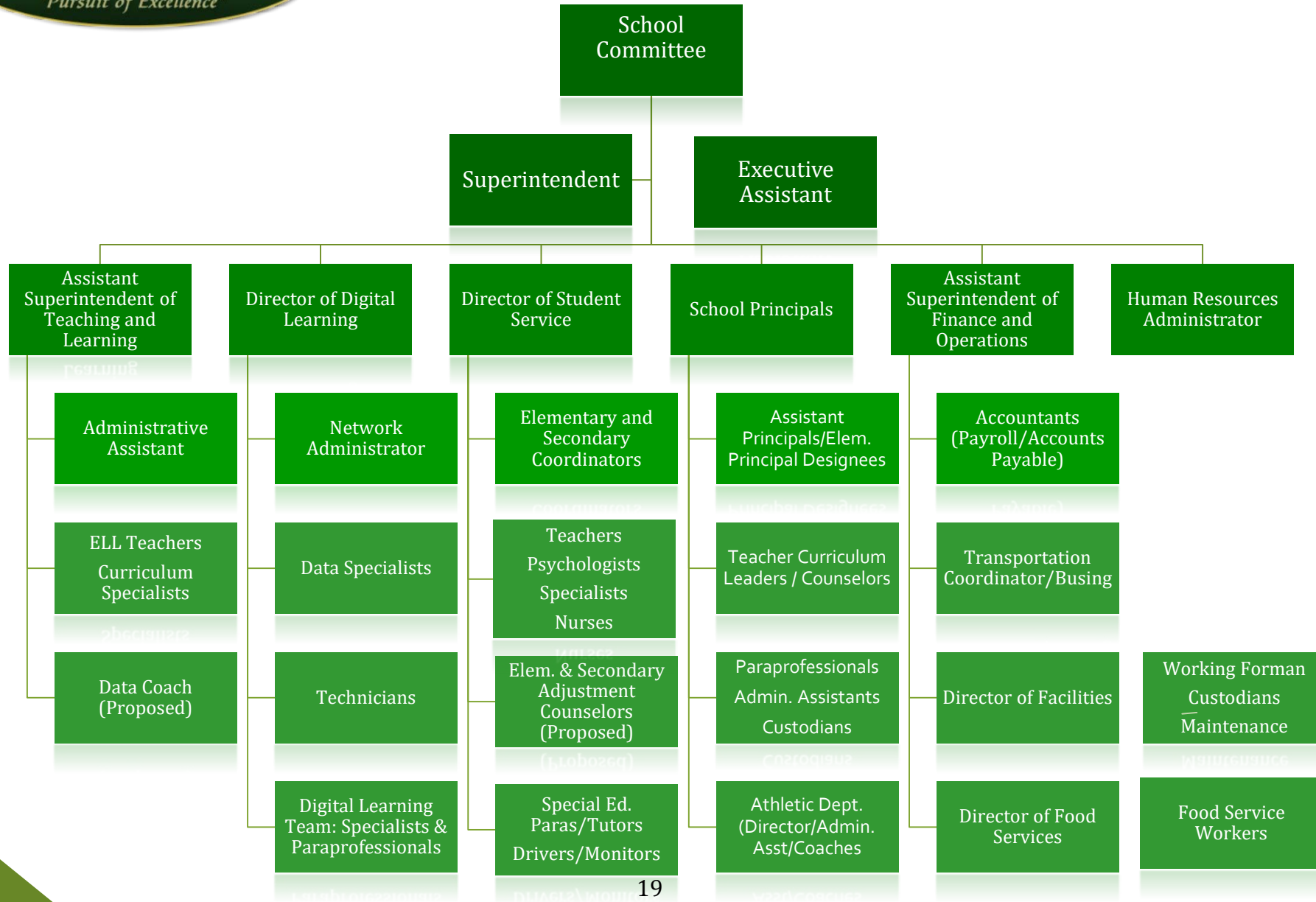
## **BUILDING THE BUDGET**

operating budget. On-call and temporary employees are included in the dollar amount but not in the total FTE or headcount.

Principals and budget leaders build their expense budgets from the bottom up. This means no automatic increases are given or assumed. Each Budget leader must provide detailed support for their budget requests. In addition to the instructional expense budgets, adjustments are made based on information known at the time for special education out-of-district tuitions, special education transportation, regular transportation and utilities budget. Utilities budgets are built based on projected usage over a three year average and adjustments are made based on anticipated market fluctuations.

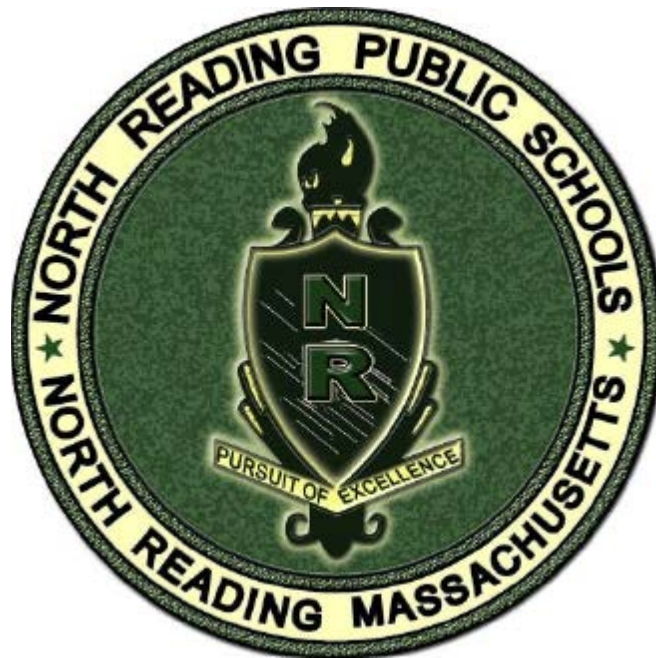


# Organizational Chart



# Section 2

## Analytical Summary Data Staffing & Enrollment



**FY 24 STAFF COUNTS BY LANE/STEP BY FTE BREAKDOWN  
TEACHERS  
FY 24 FTE**

Step	B.A.	B.A. 15	B.A. 30	M.A.	M.A. 15	M.A. 30	M.A. 45	M.A. 60	DR	Total
1										0.0
2				3.0		1.0				4.0
3				3.0						3.0
4	1.0		1.0	4.5		1.0				7.5
5	2.0			4.0	1.0				1.0	8.0
6		1.0		6.0				2.0		9.0
7		1.0		9.0	1.0	1.0	1.0			13.0
8	1.0			6.8						7.8
9				7.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	0.4		12.4
10				6.0	3.0	3.0		1.0		13.0
11				8.0	1.0	1.0		1.0		11.0
12	3.0	1.0	3.0	35.0	39.1	32.8	16.0	36.2	2.0	168.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>92.3</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>40.6</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>256.8</b>

**FY 24 STAFF COUNTS BY LANE/STEP EMPLOYEE BREAKDOWN  
FY 24 Staff**

Step	B.A.	B.A. 15	B.A. 30	M.A.	M.A. 15	M.A. 30	M.A. 45	M.A. 60	DR	Total
1										0.0
2				3.0		1.0				4.0
3				3.0						3.0
4	1.0		1.0	5.0		1.0				8.0
5	2.0			4.0	1.0				1.0	8.0
6		1.0		6.0				2.0		9.0
7		1.0		9.0	1.0	1.0	1.0			13.0
8	1.0			7.0						8.0
9				7.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0		13.0
10				6.0	3.0	3.0		1.0		13.0
11				8.0	1.0	1.0		1.0		11.0
12	3.0	1.0	3.0	37.0	40.0	33.0	16.0	37.0	2.0	172.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>95.0</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>41.0</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>42.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>262.0</b>

<b>% on Steps</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>% on Maximum</b>	<b>66%</b>

## TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULES

<b>Unit A</b>									
<b>FY 23</b>									
<b>Step</b>	<b>B.A.</b>	<b>B.A. 15</b>	<b>B.A. 30</b>	<b>M.A.</b>	<b>M.A. 15</b>	<b>M.A. 30</b>	<b>M.A. 45</b>	<b>M.A. 60</b>	<b>DR</b>
1	50,501	51,165	54,151	56,622	57,286	57,618	58,280	60,272	63,244
2	53,459	54,123	57,109	59,789	60,452	60,784	61,447	63,438	66,457
3	56,416	57,080	60,067	62,950	63,614	63,945	64,609	66,598	69,668
4	59,378	60,041	63,028	66,114	66,778	67,108	67,772	69,762	72,905
5	62,339	63,002	65,990	69,279	69,942	70,274	70,937	72,928	76,092
6	65,297	65,960	68,946	72,444	73,106	73,438	74,101	76,092	79,302
7	68,258	68,919	71,906	75,606	76,269	76,601	77,265	79,254	82,520
8	71,215	71,878	74,865	78,771	79,433	79,768	80,432	82,421	85,730
9	74,178	74,842	77,828	81,934	82,600	82,932	83,595	85,585	88,944
10	78,719	79,380	82,365	86,672	87,335	87,668	88,331	90,323	93,729
11	81,441	82,104	85,089	89,610	90,275	90,606	91,270	93,261	96,718
12	84,164	84,825	87,813	92,548	93,214	93,543	94,206	96,197	99,709

<b>FY 24</b>									
<b>Step</b>	<b>B.A.</b>	<b>B.A. 15</b>	<b>B.A. 30</b>	<b>M.A.</b>	<b>M.A. 15</b>	<b>M.A. 30</b>	<b>M.A. 45</b>	<b>M.A. 60</b>	<b>DR</b>
1	51,764	52,444	55,505	58,038	58,718	59,058	59,737	61,779	64,825
2	54,795	55,476	58,537	61,284	61,963	62,304	62,983	65,024	68,118
3	57,826	58,507	61,569	64,524	65,204	65,544	66,224	68,263	71,410
4	60,862	61,542	64,604	67,767	68,447	68,786	69,466	71,506	74,728
5	63,897	64,577	67,640	71,011	71,691	72,031	72,710	74,751	77,994
6	66,929	67,609	70,670	74,255	74,934	75,274	75,954	77,994	81,285
7	69,964	70,642	73,704	77,496	78,176	78,516	79,197	81,235	84,583
8	72,995	73,675	76,737	80,740	81,419	81,762	82,443	84,482	87,873
9	76,032	76,713	79,774	83,982	84,665	85,005	85,685	87,725	91,168
10	80,687	81,365	84,424	88,839	89,518	89,860	90,539	92,581	96,072
11	83,477	84,157	87,216	91,850	92,532	92,871	93,552	95,593	99,136
12	86,268	86,946	90,008	94,862	95,544	95,882	96,561	98,602	102,202

**FY 2023 - FY 2025 NORTH READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF  
FTE BREAKDOWN**

PROGRAM	Batchelder			Hood			Little			Middle School			High School			System wide			Total			Change
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	
Preschool				1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0										3.0	3.0	3.0	0.0
K- 5 Classroom Teach.	23.6	23.6	23.1	18.0	20.0	19.0	17.0	15.0	15.0										58.6	58.6	57.1	-1.5
Art	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.0				6.3	6.3	6.5	0.2
Computer Science										3.0	3.0	3.0							3.0	3.0	3.0	0.0
Business/Technology										0.0	0.0	0.0	4.8	4.8	4.8				4.8	4.8	4.8	0.0
English Lang. Arts										6.0	6.0	6.0	8.8	8.0	8.0				14.8	14.0	14.0	0.0
ELL																1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	0.0
Digital Learning Spec.	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	2.2	1.2	0.2	6.0	4.0	3.0	-1.0
Guidance											0.0		4.0	4.0	3.0				4.0	4.0	3.0	-1.0
Media/Library										1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0				2.0	2.0	2.0	0.0
Occupational Ther.	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.0										2.8	2.8	2.8	0.0
Math										6.0	6.0	6.0	8.6	7.6	7.6				14.6	13.6	13.6	0.0
Music / Perf. Arts	1.7	1.7	1.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.5				6.8	7.0	7.2	0.2
Nurses	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	6.0	6.0	5.5	-0.5
Coaches																		0.0			0.0	0.0
Academic Interventionist	1.0	1.0	1.0			0.0			0.0			0.0							1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
PE/Health	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.2	4.2	4.2				9.8	9.8	9.9	0.1
School Psychologist	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	2.0	2.0				8.5	8.6	8.6	0.0
School Adj Counselor	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0				5.0	5.4	5.4	0.0
Reading Specialist	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.0		0.0				5.8	5.8	5.8	0.0
General Science										6.0	6.0	6.0	10.0	10.0	10.0				16.0	16.0	16.0	0.0
Social Studies										6.0	6.0	6.0	9.4	9.4	9.4				15.4	15.4	15.4	0.0
Special Education	6.5	5.5	5.5	9.1	10.2	10.6	3.0	3.0	3.0	13.0	14.0	12.0	14.0	14.0	12.0				45.6	46.7	43.1	-3.6
Speech	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.2	1.2	1.2	0.6	0.6	0.6				6.8	6.8	6.8	0.0
Team Chairperson	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3			0.00	0.00		0.00				1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
World Language										4.0	4.0	4.0	5.4	4.6	4.6				9.4	8.6	8.6	0.0
Video Production										1.0	1.0	1.0							1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>42.64</b>	<b>41.74</b>	<b>41.44</b>	<b>38.03</b>	<b>40.83</b>	<b>40.53</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>60.1</b>	<b>61.3</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>80.70</b>	<b>78.10</b>	<b>75.10</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>259.6</b>	<b>256.8</b>	<b>249.7</b>	<b>-7.10</b>

**FY 2023 - FY 2025 NORTH READING ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF  
FTE BREAKDOWN  
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

PROGRAM	Batchelder			Hood			Little			Middle School			High School			System-wide			TOTAL			Change
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	
Superintendent																1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
Asst. Supt. Teaching & Learning																1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
Asst. Supt. of Fin. & Operations																1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
Director of Student Services																1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
Asst. Director / Coordinator																2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.0
Director of Digital Learning																1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
Coordinator of Counseling Serv.																1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
Coordinator(s) (STEM & Human.)													1.0	1.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
Principal	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	0.0
Assistant Principals										1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.0
Director of Facilities																1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
Human Resources Director																0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>

**SUPPORT STAFF**

PROGRAM	Batchelder			Hood			Little			Middle School			High School			System-wide			TOTAL			Change
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	
<u>Teaching Support</u>																						
General Paraprofessionals	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.4	1.4	1.8	1.8	1.8							9.8	9.8	8.8	-1.0
General Kindergarten Paras	3.0	3.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	3.0	2.0	2.0										9.0	8.0	6.0	-2.0
Special Ed. Paraprofessionals	8.0	8.0	8.0	9.4	7.8	7.8	5.7	5.7	5.7	7.00	9.00	9.00	12.00	11.00	11.00				42.1	41.5	41.5	0.0
Digital Learning Paras	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0										3.0	3.0	3.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>63.9</b>	<b>62.3</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>-3.0</b>
<u>Administration Support</u>																						
Network Administrator																1.0	1.0	1.0	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.0
Technicians / Data Manager																2.5	3.5	3.0	2.50	3.50	3.00	-0.5
Out-of-District Coordinator																0.5	0.5	0.5	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.0
Intervention Tutors	0.40	0.40	0.00	0.40	0.40	0.00	0.40	0.40	0.00								0.0		1.20	1.20	0.00	-1.2
Admin. Asst. to Superintendent																1.0	0.5	0.5	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.0
Bus. Office Accountants/HR																2.80	2.3	2.30	2.80	2.30	2.30	0.0
Secretaries	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.8	3.8	3.8	1.73	1.7	1.73	10.53	10.53	10.53	0.0
Custodians/Grounds/Maintenance																19.0	20.0	19.0	19.00	20.00	19.00	-1.0
Sped Transportation/Monitor																2.5	2.5	2.5	2.50	2.50	2.50	0.0
Food Service Workers/Driver																10.8	10.8	10.8	10.80	10.80	10.80	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>41.8</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>41.3</b>	<b>51.8</b>	<b>52.8</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>-2.7</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>15.0</b>			<b>15.4</b>			<b>12.1</b>			<b>14.8</b>			<b>17.8</b>	<b>51.6</b>	<b>52.6</b>	<b>51.1</b>	<b>132.5</b>	<b>132.9</b>	<b>127.2</b>	<b>-5.70</b>

**FY 2023 - FY 2025 NORTH READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS STAFF  
FTE BREAKDOWN**

PROGRAM	Batchelder			Hood			Little			Middle School			High School			System-wide			Total			Change
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24	FY25	
Regular Education Teachers	28.7	28.7	28.4	23.9	25.4	24.7	24.5	22.0	22.0	40.9	41.1	41.1	61.1	58.5	57.5	3.8	2.8	1.8	182.9	178.5	175.5	-3.0
Special Education Teachers	6.8	5.8	5.8	9.4	10.5	10.9	3.3	3.3	3.3	13.0	14.0	12.0	14.0	14.0	12.0				46.6	47.7	44.1	-3.6
Specialists	6.1	6.2	6.2	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.5	4.7	4.7	5.2	5.2	5.2	4.6	4.6	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	24.1	24.6	24.6	0.0
Nurses	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	6.0	6.0	5.5	-0.5
<b>Total Instructional Staff</b>	<b>42.6</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>40.5</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>60.1</b>	<b>61.3</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>80.7</b>	<b>78.1</b>	<b>75.1</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>259.6</b>	<b>256.8</b>	<b>249.7</b>	<b>-7.1</b>
Paraprofessionals	15.0	15.0	14.0	16.0	14.4	13.4	12.1	11.1	10.1	8.8	10.8	10.8	12.0	11.0	11.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	63.9	62.3	59.3	-3.0
Administrators	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	9.8	9.8	9.8	16.8	17.8	17.8	0.0
Secretaries	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.8	3.8	3.8	1.73	1.73	1.73	10.53	10.53	10.53	0.0
Other Support	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.0										1.20	1.20	0.00	-1.2
Central Office																3.8	2.8	2.8	3.80	2.80	2.80	0.0
Custodians																19.0	20.0	19.0	19.00	20.00	19.00	-1.0
Technology																3.5	4.5	4.0	3.5	4.5	4.0	-0.5
Speech Ther. Services																0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sped. Bus Drivers																2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	0.0
<i>Out-District-Coord.</i>																0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
<b>Total Admin. &amp; Support Staff</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>41.8</b>	<b>40.3</b>	<b>121.7</b>	<b>122.1</b>	<b>116.4</b>	<b>-5.70</b>
<b>Total System wide</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>59.1</b>	<b>57.4</b>	<b>56.4</b>	<b>57.6</b>	<b>55.9</b>	<b>47.8</b>	<b>44.5</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>72.9</b>	<b>76.1</b>	<b>74.1</b>	<b>98.5</b>	<b>95.9</b>	<b>92.9</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>42.6</b>	<b>381.3</b>	<b>378.9</b>	<b>366.1</b>	<b>-12.8</b>
Food Service Workers																10.8	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.8	0.0
Revolving/Grant FTE's	4.0	4.0	4.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.5	16.0	16.5	16.5	0.0
<b>Net General Fund FTE's</b>	<b>56.0</b>	<b>55.1</b>	<b>53.4</b>			<b>53.9</b>			<b>38.1</b>			<b>73.1</b>			<b>90.9</b>			<b>40.1</b>	<b>365.3</b>	<b>362.4</b>	<b>349.6</b>	<b>-12.8</b>

*\*Food Service Workers are paid directly from the food service revolving account from proceeds generated from the food service program, there is no impact on the operating budget.*

**OCTOBER 1 ENROLLMENT (2023-2024)**

<b>Little School</b>										<b>Total Enrollment:</b>		<b>294</b>
<b>PreK</b>		<b>Kindergarten</b>		<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>	<b>Fourth</b>	<b>Fifth</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>			
<b>Full</b>	<b>Half</b>	<b>Full</b>	<b>Half</b>									
23		40	0	55	41	51	58	26	<b>294</b>			
<b>Batchelder School</b>										<b>Total Enrollment:</b>		<b>452</b>
<b>PreK</b>		<b>Kindergarten</b>		<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>	<b>Fourth</b>	<b>Fifth</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>			
<b>Full</b>	<b>Half</b>	<b>Full</b>	<b>Half</b>									
		64	11	68	79	76	85	69	<b>452</b>			
<b>Hood School</b>										<b>Total Enrollment:</b>		<b>410</b>
<b>PreK</b>		<b>Kindergarten</b>		<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>	<b>Fourth</b>	<b>Fifth</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>			
<b>Full</b>	<b>Half</b>	<b>Full</b>	<b>Half</b>									
	22	62	0	86	64	63	60	53	<b>410</b>			
<b>Total Elementary School Enrollment</b>												
<b>PreK</b>		<b>Kindergarten</b>		<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>	<b>Fourth</b>	<b>Fifth</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>			
<b>Full</b>	<b>Half</b>	<b>Full</b>	<b>Half</b>									
23	22	166	11	209	184	190	203	148	<b>1,156</b>			
			177									
<b>Middle School</b>										<b>Total Enrollment:</b>		<b>543</b>
<b>Sixth</b>	<b>Seventh</b>	<b>Eight</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>									
187	165	191	<b>543</b>									
<b>High School</b>										<b>Total Enrollment:</b>		<b>618</b>
<b>Ninth</b>	<b>Tenth</b>	<b>Eleventh</b>	<b>Twelfth</b>	<b>SP</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>							
153	171	162	127	5	<b>618</b>							
									<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>2,317</b>		

### **THE PROGRESSION RATE METHOD**

The basic assumption of the progression rate method for predicting school enrollments is that what has happened in the past, will continue to happen in the future; that is, given the number of births, the net effect of all other influences on enrollment will remain proportionately the same. The basic technique requires calculating the ratio of the number of children in one grade in one year compared to the number of children who “progress” the year and enroll in the next grade the following year. Fluctuations in such data from year to year create a pattern from which an average progression rate can be calculated to project an enrollment. Percentages are calculated from the historical enrollment data to determine a reliable percentage of increase or decrease in enrollment between any two grades. For example, if 100 students enrolled in Grade 1 in 2022-23, increased to 104 students in Grade 2 in 2023-24, the percentage of progression would have been 104% or a ratio of 1.04. Such ratios are calculated between each pair of grades or years in school over several years.

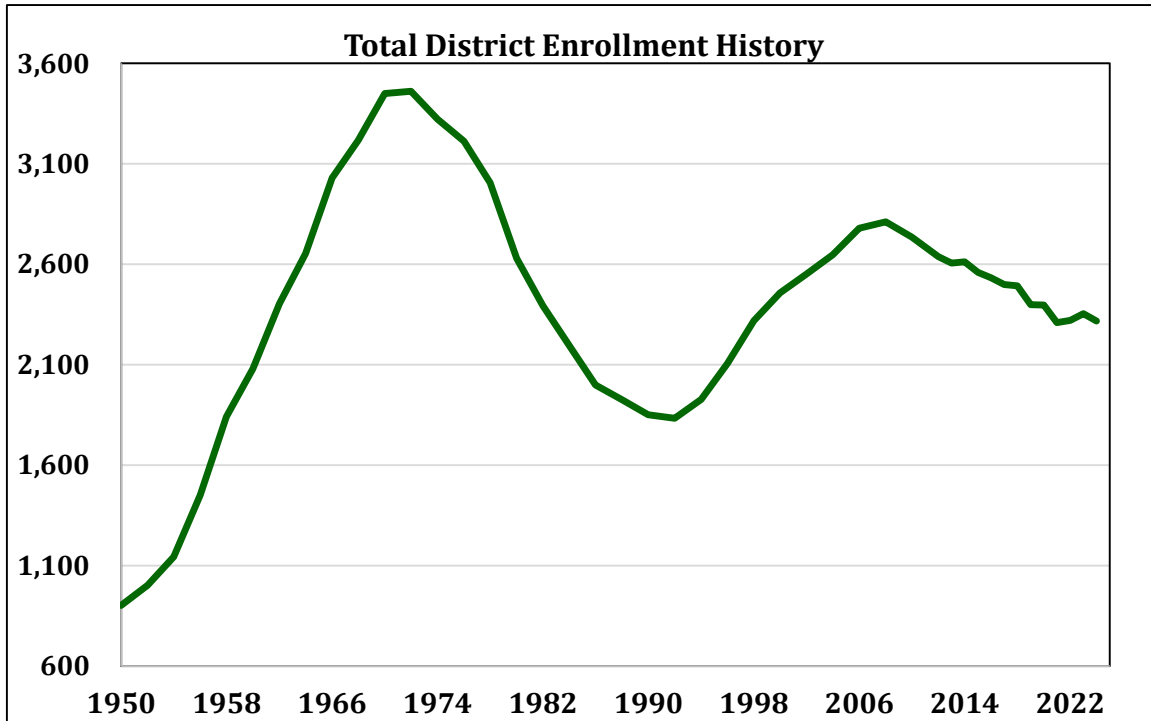
The data used to calculate this information includes birth records, census information, housing developments, real-estate market data and area private school enrollments. We find that we can predict the upcoming year’s totals typically within a 1% variance.

A progression rate method was calculated using a 3-year, 5-year, and 10-year historical database. Because North Reading is inward migration has begun to show evidence of increasing over the past three years, the three-year calculation is generally considered more reliable.

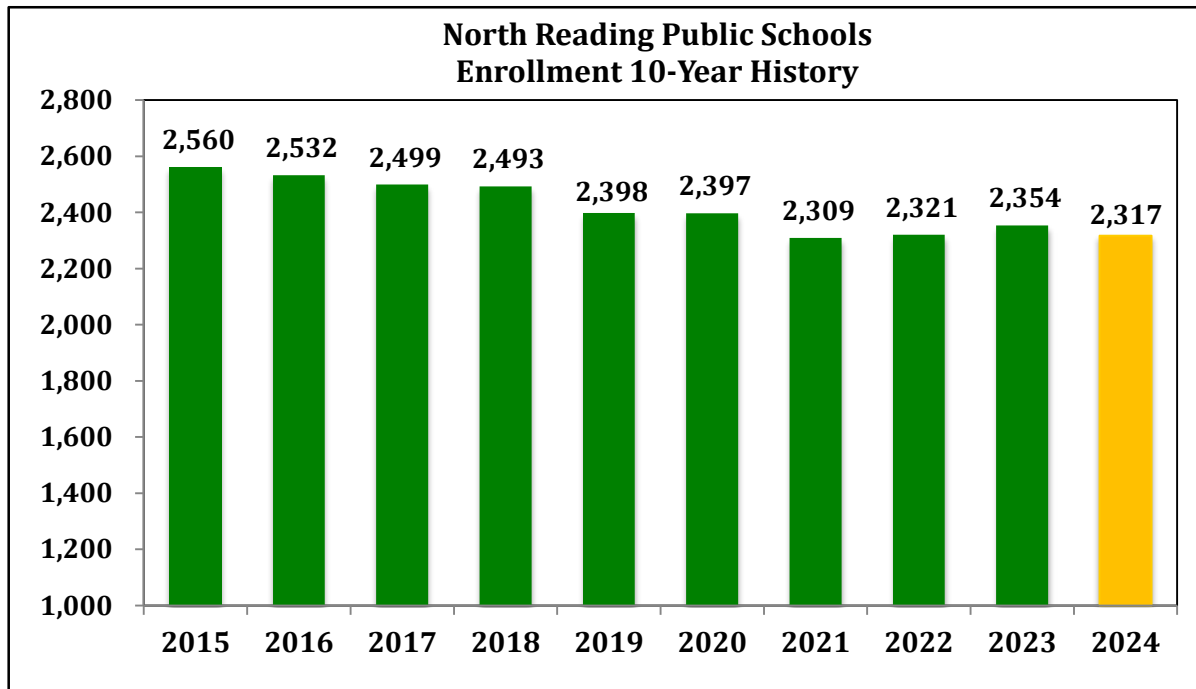
### **Enrollment Report**

The enrollment report includes actual student enrollment from the 1949-50 School Year through 10/01/2023, and a projection of enrollment through June 30, 2035. As depicted in the chart below. North Reading’s total student enrollment has been cyclical. In the early fifties’ enrollment grew quickly from 900 to 1,841 students. The 1960’s saw the numbers rise to 3,217. In the 1970’s enrollment grew as high as 3,461. Then in the 1980’s enrollment decreased to 1,926 only to rise again during the 1990’s, peaking at 2,319. The period since then has seen a growth back to 2,812 in 2008 with a steady decline since then. Currently, student enrollment stands at 2,317.

## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS



Historical enrollment over the last ten years has remained relatively stable as the below chart indicates. Enrollment did peak in fiscal year 2008 at 2,812 students and has slowly declined over the last several years by 243 students from 2,560 students in fiscal year 2015 to a current total in fiscal year 2024 of 2,317 students.



## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

There are two factors at work, which will have the greatest impact on future enrollments: 1. A steady number of births to North Reading residents and, 2. New in-migration of families with school age children. North Reading has experienced between 132 and 170 births annually over the last several years as shown in the chart below, a range that is expected to continue over the next 6 to 7 years, this will allow North Reading to continue to average approximately, 154 births per year.

Birth Time Period	# Births
Sept. 1, 2013-Aug. 31, 2014 (FY'20)	165
Sept. 1, 2014-Aug. 31, 2015 (FY' 21)	165
Sept. 1, 2015-Aug. 31, 2016 (FY' 22)	151
Sept. 1, 2016-Aug. 31, 2017 (FY' 23)	171
Sept. 1, 2017-Aug. 31, 2018 (FY' 24)	132
Sept. 1, 2018-Aug. 31, 2019 (FY' 25) Next Year's Kindergarten Class	162
Sept. 1, 2019-Aug. 31, 2020 (FY' 26)	170
Sept. 1, 2020-Aug. 31, 2021 (FY' 27)	142
Sept. 1, 2021-Aug. 31, 2022 (FY' 28)	152
Sept. 1, 2022-Aug. 31, 2023 (FY' 29)	157
<b>Average</b>	<b>154</b>

North Reading, over the past five years, has registered on average about 120 kindergarteners for every 100 births (five years previous), a relationship which has increased steadily over the past several years from an average of about 118. This fall, the ratio was much greater than the average at 134 kindergarteners for every 100 births, proving that it is difficult to predict the trend of in and out migration of families with school age children. Proposed or planned residential development and/or turnover of homes in North Reading can influence the cohort numbers. There are no major housing developments plans that would bring a surge of households with school age children to North Reading, the future looks like the District will continue registering between 118-122 kindergartners per 100 births. The report attempts to adjust the projected kindergarten enrollments to reflect typical incoming enrollments and to include a prediction of an increase in families with school age children based on market trends. Relying solely on birth rates five years earlier is not always accurate. Grade 1 is expected to remain between 3% and 5% larger than the previous year's Kindergarten class, which is the ten-year average.

The high school had typically experienced a consistent loss of between 12-14% of students enrolling in grade 9 at the end of Grade 8. However, that trend in the years following the new Middle/High School when it only experienced a loss between 4-7%. However recent trends show this trend has return to 12-14%. This past fall that loss was slightly higher at 15%, which the District believes can be mostly contributed to several families opting to educate their children remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the next three years, K-5 enrollments are forecasted to increase significantly by 81 students over the three-year period. Grades 6-8 enrollment is predicted remain stable with a slight decrease of 3 students as the smaller class sizes make their way from the elementary schools to the middle school. The high school enrollment will increase by only 6 students over the next three years and will begin to approach 700 students in the outer years at the high school.

## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

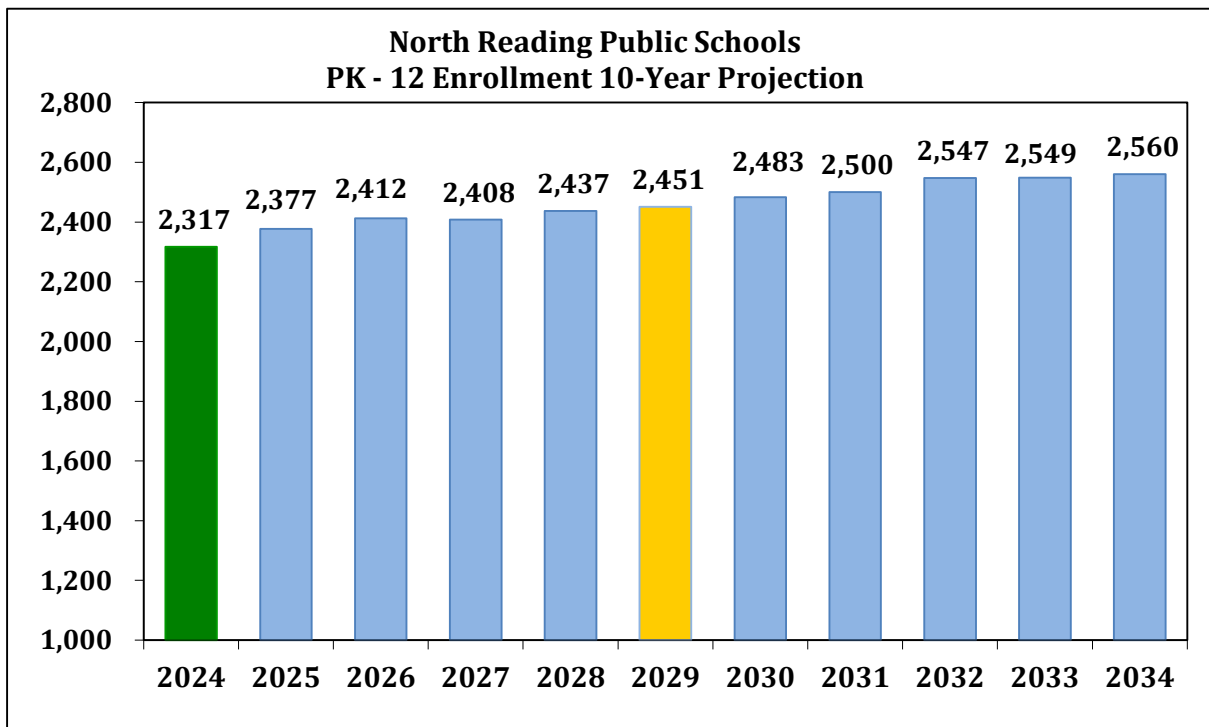
After that point, over the next five-year period projections show district wide enrollment will begin to steadily increase again from approximately 2,400 students to 2,500 students in grades Pre-kindergarten through grade 12, with about 1,250 at the elementary level, 600 at the Middle School, and 650 at the high school. The projections indicate that as the real estate market continues to increase, it will continue to bring additional new families to North Reading, if the real estate market slows down or is impacted by an economic recession it would have an impact of these projections in the outer years.

### History of Enrollment Projections vs. Actuals

You may wonder how enrollments projections have compared to our actual enrollment over the last several years. The chart below indicates that our historical projections using this method have typically been within 1% of actual enrollment. The variance this past year in October 2023 was 1.4%.

FISCAL YEAR	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
PROJECTION	2,453	2,444	2,392	2,357	2,299	2,356	2,351
ACTUAL	2,493	2,397	2,397	2,309	2,321	2,354	2,317
CHANGE (Actual-Projection)	40	-47	5	-48	22	-2	-34

Districtwide enrollment depicted in the graph below is expected to increase over the next five to ten years. In fiscal year, 2029 highlighted below enrollment could reach 2,451 students and could exceeding 2,500 students by 2031 again. However, one should realize that it is very likely these patterns will not last as long as ten years. Enrollment projections are most accurate in the early year and are less reliable more than three and five years into the future. The economy, real-estate market, and timeline of development in town will all have an impact on the projections in the outer years.



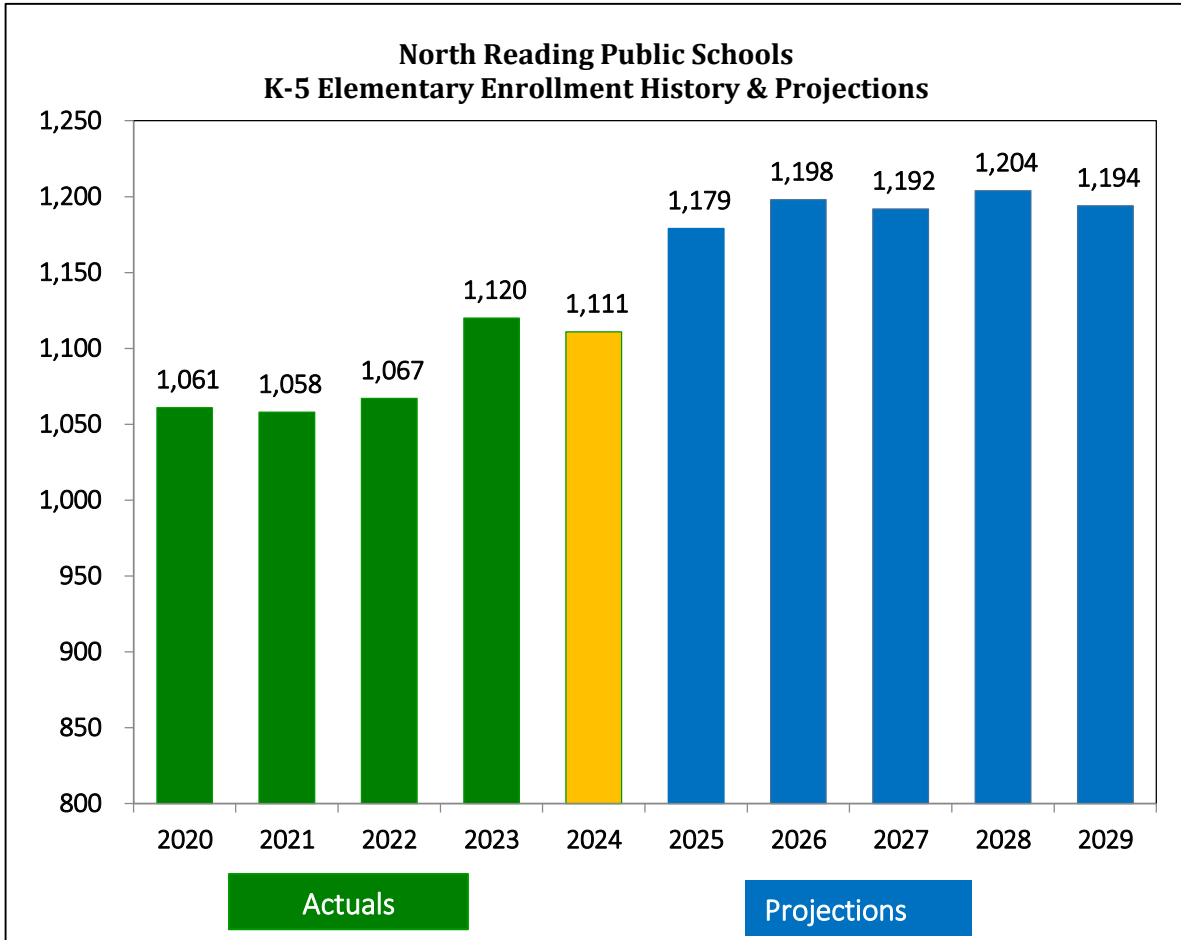
## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

Evidence suggest that the real estate market continues to improve. During the period of 2013-2018, many communities in the region sold only about 60-80% as many homes as in 2008-2013. In the case of North Reading, recent trends show an increase in the number of single-family homes sold in recent years. During the period of 2013-15, an average of 125 homes were sold. However, sales have rebounded to 159 homes sold in 2016, 161 in 2017, and 162 in 2018. Most recently, North Reading sold 201 homes in 2019, 221 in 2020 and are on pace of exceed 276 homes sold in 2021. This is a significant increase than the previous three-year period. This trend indicates an increase in new families with school age children in North Reading and we have begun to see this trend influence the enrollment projections. As single-family home prices, continue to reach a ten-year high, more “Baby Boomers” who have been waiting to downsize, have been encouraged to place their homes on the market. Evidence suggests that young families are moving into North Reading. As additional families move in, previous forecasted enrollment declines have changed and enrollment projections is now indicating an increase. The increase could be even more significantly, in the outer years if the real estate, market continues to improve and recent developments planned in town come on-line. There is also planned developments in North Reading including single-family home developments and age 55 plus affordable housing units that are anticipated to come on-line over the next two to three years, which will have an impact of these projections on the outer years.

Projected Enrollment in Grade Combinations						
Year	PK-5	K-5	6-8	9-12	K-12	PK -12
<b>2023-24 Actual</b>	1,156	1,111	543	618	2,272	2,317
<b>2024-25 Projection</b>	1,229	1,179	497	651	2,327	2,377
<b>2025-26 Projection</b>	1,248	1,198	535	629	2,362	2,412
<b>2027-28 Projection</b>	1,244	1,192	540	624	2,356	2,408
<b>2026-27 Projection</b>	1,256	1,204	583	598	2,385	2,437
<b>2028-29 Projection</b>	1,246	1,194	595	610	2,399	2,451
<b>2029-30 Projection</b>	1,259	1,207	591	633	2,431	2,483
<b>2030-31 Projection</b>	1,249	1,196	616	635	2,447	2,500
<b>2031-32 Projection</b>	1,229	1,175	623	695	2,493	2,547
<b>2032-33 Projection</b>	1,246	1,192	620	683	2,495	2,549
<b>2033-34 Projection</b>	1,253	1,199	607	700	2,506	2,560

The above chart shows projected in grade combinations over the next ten years. All projections are most reliable in the first five years and less reliable in years six through ten. Over the next three years, K-5 enrollments are forecasted to increase by 81 students. Most of the increase can be contributed to higher anticipated kindergarten classes due to higher birth rates and higher in-migration of families with school age children, these larger cohorts are expected to move through the elementary grades. Grades 6-8 is expected to decrease by 3 students over the next three years averaging about 530 students before experiencing another increase in enrollment. The high school enrollment is expected to increase by 6 students over the next three years, before leveling out at about 670 students on average. Moving forward these projections show a moderate increase in enrollment.

## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS



School Year	K	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	Total K-5
<b>2023-24 Actual</b>	177	209	184	190	203	148	1,111
<b>2024-25 Projection</b>	199	184	210	185	194	207	1,179
<b>2025-26 Projection</b>	209	207	185	211	189	197	1,198
<b>2026-27 Projection</b>	174	217	208	186	215	192	1,192
<b>2027-28 Projection</b>	187	181	218	209	190	219	1,204
<b>2028-29 Projection</b>	193	194	182	219	213	193	1,194

Elementary enrollment (K-5), next school year is projected to increase by 68 student’s system-wide. As you can see from the table below, Kindergarten enrollment is anticipated to increase by 22 students, which can be contributed to a higher birth rate statistic from five years earlier but kindergarten enrollment can be very difficult to predict. Grade 5 enrollment will increase significantly, as that larger cohort moves from grade 4 to grade 5. Given the increase in Kindergarten enrollment and grade 5 enrollment additional staffing is anticipated due to enrollment next year.























































































































































































































































