

# Region 15 Public Schools

## 2026-2027 Superintendent's Proposed Budget

Presented by  
Joshua Smith, Superintendent of Schools  
February 2026

### **Board of Education**

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**REGION 15 SCHOOLS**  
*Serving the towns of Middlebury and Southbury*

# MISSION/ VISION

***“The mission of Region 15, a collaborative community committed to excellence, is to educate every student to be productive, ethical, and engaged in a global society through proven and innovative learning experiences supported by its strong community whose decision-making is based on the best interest of all students.”***

## Theories of Action

- *If we foster schools that are welcoming and inclusive to all students, then students will feel valued, and better able to access their learning.*
- *If we improve our ability to align assessments to curriculum, improve our data culture, and increase our analysis of student learning, then we will be more equipped to provide meaningful student engagement and increased achievement.*
- *If we embrace communication, transparency, and collaborative relationships within ourselves and the community then we will improve trust and participation in supporting our students.*
- *If we increase and promote access to career pathways, curriculum, and shared instructional experiences then our district will prepare students for the world they will enter after their time with us.*

# R15 Portrait of a Learner



## **Empowered Learner**

- Adaptable, Resilient, Growth-Minded, Self-Directed



## **Innovative Problem-Solver**

- Solution-focused, Analytical, Creative, Innovative



## **Ethical Contributor**

- Globally-minded, Inclusive, Community-minded, Courageous



## **Productive Collaborator**

- Team-oriented, Open-minded, Dependable, Supportive



## **Effective Communicator**

- Audience-aware, Perceptive, Responsive, Expressive

# THANK YOU

**District Office Administrators & Staff**

**Building Administrators**

**Instructional Leaders & Teachers**

**Building and Support Staff**

**Board of Education Members**





## Strong Return on Investment

🎓 **High School Graduation Rates:** Among the highest 4-year graduation rates in the state

🏆 **Music Awards:** PHS Theatre Department received five awards and 17 nominations at the 2025 HALO Awards

✅ **College Acceptance Rate:** On average students apply to 6 schools and are accepted at more than 5, an 85% acceptance rate

🚗 Electric car club is now competing with a carbon fiber frame and had best finish last year.

🤖 Robotics Club Advanced past the state level.

👨‍🍳 We now have multiple levels of culinary classes and have begun offering catering services.

🏃 Athletic success at regional and state levels.

# Examples of Region 15 Success

## Advanced Placement Exams:

In CT of those that take the exam 68.2% achieve a 3+  
In Region 15 that rate is 91.8%

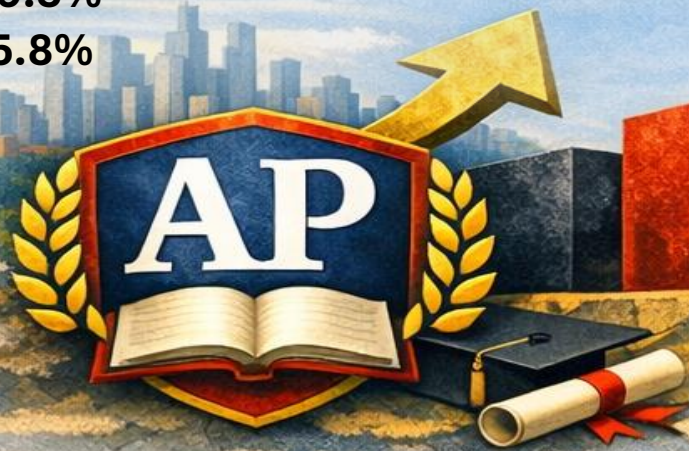
## 3+ Based on Total number of high school students:

National Average is 22.6% of high school students

MA leads the nation at 32.8%

CT is 29.5%

R15: 55.8%

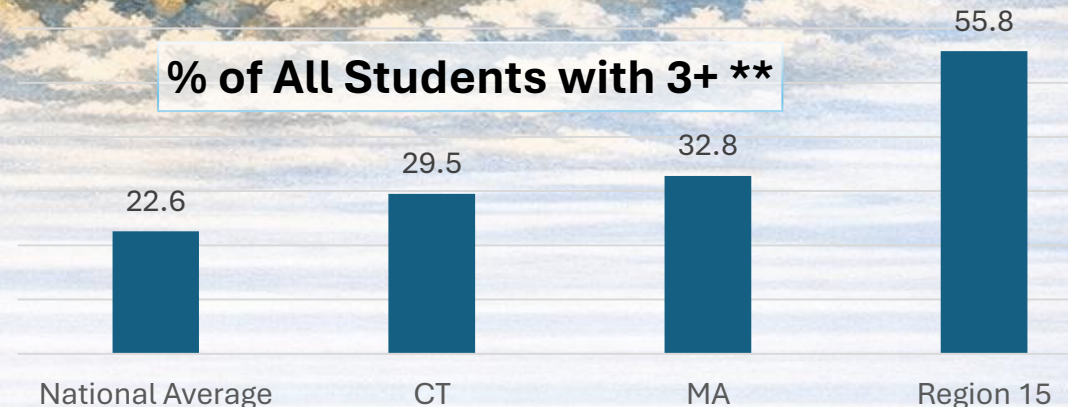


## 3+ of Participants



\*Each student is counted once, regardless of how many AP tests are taken.  
\*\* Percent calculated based on total number of students in high school.

## % of All Students with 3+ \*\*



# Where have our graduates gone over the past couple of years?

## Tier 1 – Ultra-selective

Harvard, Stanford, MIT, Columbia, Duke, UPenn, Yale

## Tier 2 – Highly selective

Carleton, Georgetown, UC Santa Barbara, Holy Cross, Emory, Boston College, BU

## Tier 3 – Selective

Clemson, Bentley, Clark, Fordham, Ithaca, Hofstra, Syracuse, Providence

## Tier 4 – Broad admission

Adelphi, Merrimack, Roger Williams, Seton Hall, Sacred Heart, Niagara, Quinnipiac, Culinary Institute of America,

As the cost of college and universities have increased, decisions on where to attend include many additional factors. In-state incentives like, the 2.75 gpa auto acceptance and free community college tuition, students and families have new alternatives to traditional choices that will force us to rethink how we define post graduate success.

**Region 15 Board of Education Honored With The  
*Connecticut Association of Board of Education (CABE)*  
*Board Recognition Award for a Second Year in a Row***



# BUDGET PRIORITIES:

As we enter the process of budget development with an eye towards fiscal responsibility, it is crucial to keep sight of our mission. ***We must preserve the communities' expectation of a quality education and the trust they provide in us.***



Provide the community with a school system that supports our Mission Statement, Theories of Action, POL and the quality educational system they require of us



Provide educators with the resources, supports, and training necessary to deliver quality instruction and continued growth.



Deliver a clear, accurate, and transparent budget to inform decisions and create confidence in the process.



Balancing current needs with deferred expenses and address state funding reductions



Respect the fiscal impact to all residents and the investment our towns make to our success.

# SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BUDGET

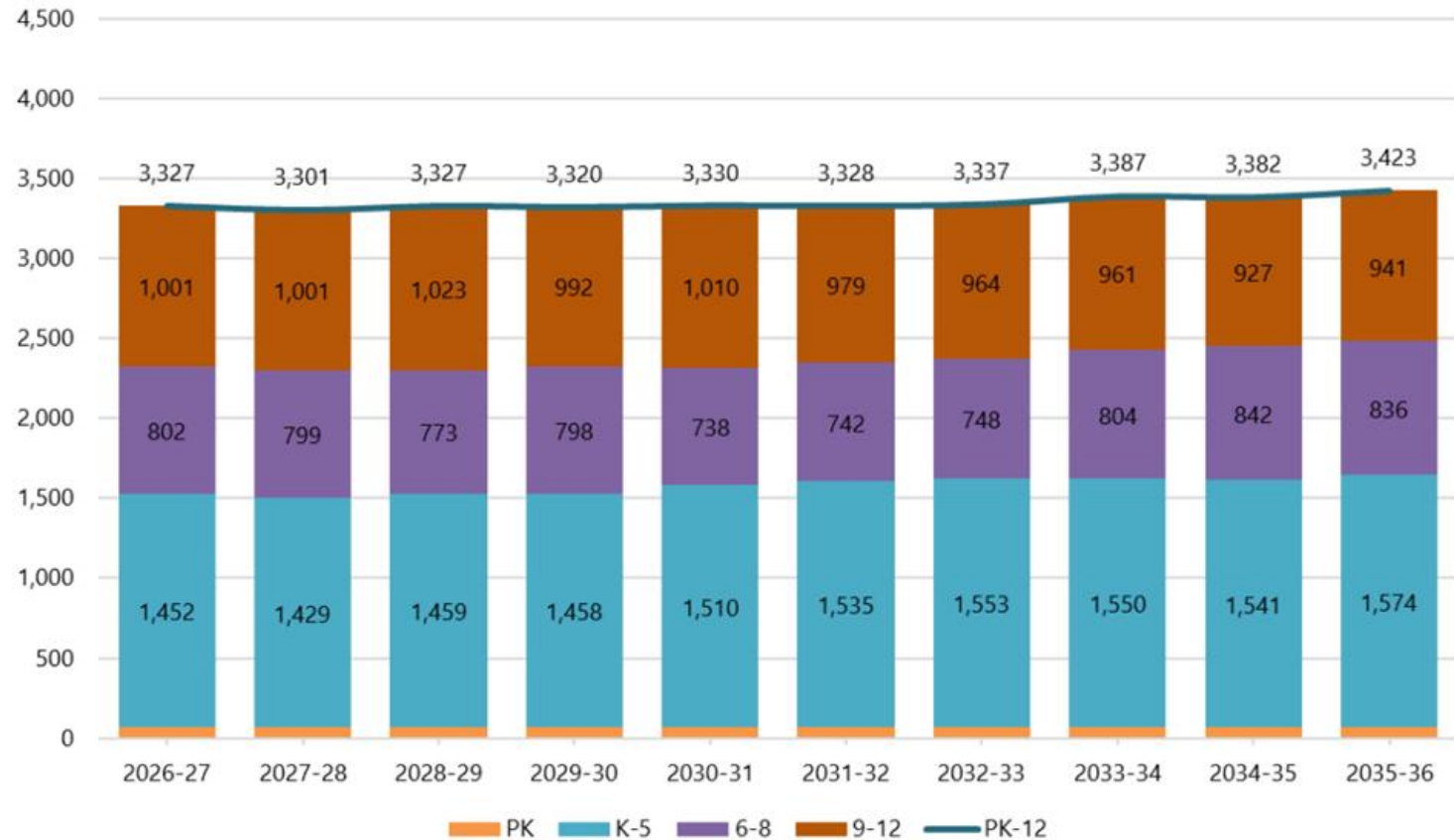
- Addresses staffing and instructional needs
- Maintains programs and class size norms
- Responds to instruction needs of students and programs
- Manages cost increases and minimizes deferred costs
- Acknowledges current labor and inflationary pressures



# Enrollment Projections (Medium Model)

- Medium projections revised downward to account for two successive small kindergarten classes and reduced in-migration from stagnant housing market.
- Elementary (K-5) enrollment is projected to grow modestly, reaching 1,500 students by 2030-31 before stabilizing at between 1,500 and 1,600 students.
- Middle school (6-8) enrollment is projected to decrease to a low of 738 students in 2030-31 before rebounding to over 840 students by 2034-35.
- High school (9-12) enrollment is projected to stay relatively stable through 2030-31 before declining over the final years of the projections, reaching a low of 927 students in 2034-35.

Region 15 Projected Enrollment by Grade Level (Medium Model) PK-12



# K-5 DISTRICT CLASS AVERAGES

Current 2025-2026 Class Size Averages						Projected 2026-2027 Class Size Averages					
Grade	PES	GES	LMES	MES	District Avg	Grade	PES	GES	LMES	MES	District Avg
K	13.8	17.0	18.3	15.0	16.0	K	15.5	17.0	18.3	15.3	16.3
1	17.3	15.7	15.5	16.0	16.1	1	17.7	18.0	18.3	16.0	17.5
2	15	18.7	16.2	15.0	16.2	2	18.0	16.0	15.8	16.3	16.5
3	18.5	19.7	22.0	14.0	18.6	3	15.5	19.0	20.0	15.7	17.6
4	20.7	19.0	21.0	20.0	20.2	4	18.3	20.3	16.8	14.3	17.4
5	16.0	18.0	17.0	16.7	16.9	5	16.0	18.7	21.6	20.0	19.1
School Avg	16.7	18.0	18.2	16.1	17.3	School Avg	16.7	18.2	18.6	16.3	17.5

Net zero FTE Change

Budget object	2025-26	2026-27	Yr to Yr	% Change	% of Total	% of Total Increase
Category	Adopted	Proposed	Change \$	Change %	2026-27	% Increase overall
Salaries	\$51,677,053	\$53,722,929	\$2,045,876	3.96%	54.35%	2.18%
Benefits	\$17,706,455	\$19,633,180	\$1,926,725	10.88%	19.86%	2.05%
Instructional	\$4,421,299	\$4,576,837	\$155,538	3.52%	4.63%	0.17%
Non-Instructional	\$1,097,488	\$1,143,869	\$46,381	4.23%	1.16%	0.05%
Transportation	\$6,582,556	\$7,064,824	\$482,268	7.33%	7.15%	0.51%
Facilities	\$4,513,909	\$4,508,088	-\$5,821	-0.13%	4.56%	-0.01%
Tuition	\$6,192,925	\$6,518,655	\$325,730	5.26%	6.59%	0.35%
Debt	\$1,681,872	\$1,681,872	\$0	0.00%	1.70%	0.00%
Total Gross Budget	\$93,873,558	\$98,850,254	\$4,976,696	5.30%		5.30%
Revenue	\$3,096,034	\$3,096,034	\$0	0.00%		
<b>Proposed Net Total</b>	<b>\$90,777,524</b>	<b>\$95,754,220</b>	<b>\$4,976,696</b>			<b>5.48%</b>

Impact to towns is based on the 5.3% gross budget amount

# Revenue Sources

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-2025	2025-26	2026-27		
<u>REVENUE BUDGET</u>	<u>ADOPTED</u>	<u>ADOPTED</u>	<u>ADOPTED</u>	<u>ADOPTED</u>	<u>ADOPTED</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>	<u>ADM 10/1/2025</u>	
TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY	\$25,002,444	\$26,234,266	\$28,509,280	\$29,516,061	\$31,191,430	\$ 31,720,500	Increase of \$529,070	34.36%
TOWN OF SOUTHBURY	<u>\$49,792,022</u>	\$51,509,793	\$53,858,679	\$57,650,446	\$59,586,094	\$ 64,033,720	Increase of \$4,447,626	65.64%
<b>TOTAL FROM TOWNS</b>	<b>\$74,794,466</b>	<b>\$77,744,059</b>	<b>\$82,367,959</b>	<b>\$87,166,506</b>	<b>\$90,777,524</b>	<b>\$ 95,754,220</b>		
TUITION- PRE K	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$150,000	\$ 150,000		
INVESTMENT INCOME				\$75,000	\$280,000	\$ 320,000	Bank Interest earned from Webster Bank and STIF	
PAY FOR PLAY SPORTS	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$ 180,000		
PAY FOR PLAY MS MUSIC	\$15,250	\$15,250	\$15,250	\$15,250	\$15,250	\$ 15,250		
PHS PARKING	\$40,000	\$31,600	\$31,600	\$31,600	\$31,600	\$ 31,600	Parking revenue based on \$100 fee	
FACILITY RENTAL		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$ 20,000		
<b>TOTAL LOCAL SOURCES</b>	<b>\$405,250</b>	<b>\$406,850</b>	<b>\$406,850</b>	<b>\$481,850</b>	<b>\$ 676,850.00</b>	<b>\$ 716,850</b>		
MAGNET TRANS GRANT	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$ 27,000		
EXCESS COST GRANT	\$1,551,724	2,026,724	\$2,937,407	\$2,190,111	\$2,086,535	\$ 2,046,535	Excess Cost decreased based on State projections	
AGENCY PLACED GRANT	\$132,480	\$132,480	\$158,719	\$301,785	\$304,749	\$ 304,749		
ADULT ED GRANT	\$900	\$900	\$900	\$900	\$900	\$ 900		
<b>TOTAL STATE SOURCES</b>	<b>\$1,712,104</b>	<b>\$2,187,104</b>	<b>\$3,124,026</b>	<b>\$2,519,797</b>	<b>\$2,419,184</b>	<b>\$ 2,379,184</b>		
Total Revenue from Local & Stat	<b>\$2,132,354</b>	<b>\$2,593,954</b>	<b>\$3,530,876</b>	<b>\$3,001,647</b>	<b>\$ 3,096,034.00</b>	<b>\$ 3,096,034</b>		
Total Gross Budget	<b><u>\$76,926,820</u></b>	<b><u>\$80,338,013</u></b>	<b><u>\$85,898,835</u></b>	<b><u>\$90,168,153</u></b>	<b><u>\$94,048,558</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 98,850,254</u></b>		

# Budget Development and Impact of Three Key Drivers

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- Bus Contract = 0.5%
- Salary Agreements = 2%
- Employee Benefits = 2.08 %

All collective bargaining contracts were negotiated and adjusted to address market comparisons, current labor demands, and included representatives from both towns.

The transportation contract was impacted by the same factors and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

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All other increases account for only 0.72% of budget



# STAFFING SUMMARY



## **Certified Positions: There are no net staffing additions.**

- K-5: Any changes will be enrollment driven, adjusted within each school, and maintain class size norms:
  - Reallocate Net total elementary = 0 FTE
  - Reallocate 1 open FTE at PHS to a Social Worker Position net FTE 0

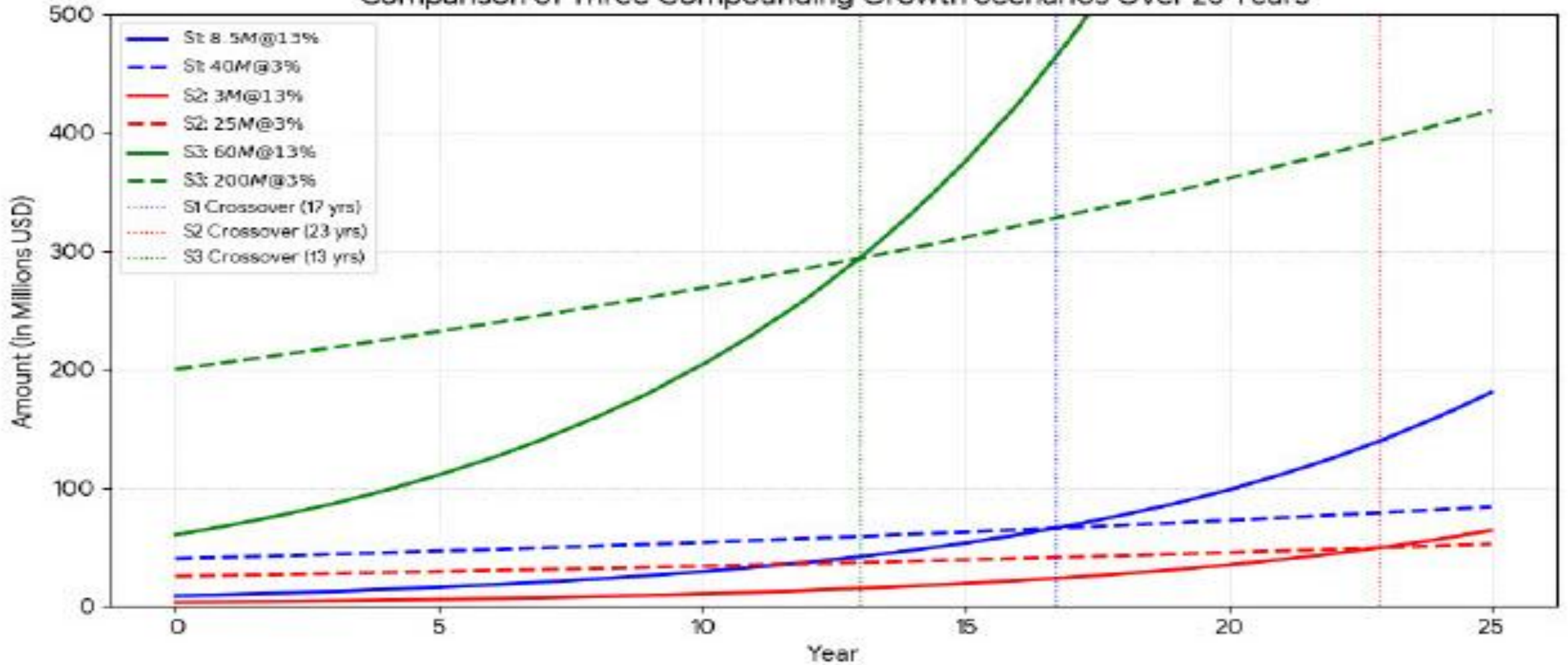
## **Non-Certified Positions: no new additions: Net Budgeted Staffing Change: 0**

**Budgeted Salary Lines:** Salary lines adjusted to account for open paraeducator positions and certified staffing turn over.

- This budget does hedge 4 paraeducator positions. Over the past two years we have had consistent paraeducator openings: \$200,000
- Reduction based historic salary on actuals: \$350,000

**Total Salary Line Reductions: \$550,000**

Comparison of Three Compounding Growth Scenarios Over 25 Years



**Comparison of Salary Account and Medical Accounts in Educational Budgets over time**

The intersection is when the annual cost for medical insurance will exceed the budgeted salary costs. *Assuming trends continue at their current rate.*

Scenario	Starting Amount Insurance (A1)	Growth Rate (A1)	Starting Amount Salaries(A2)	Growth Rate (A2)	Crossover Year (A1 ≥ A2)
1 Midsize district	\$8.5 Million	13%	\$40 Million	3%	17 Years
2 Small District	\$3 Million	13%	\$25 Million	3%	23 Years
3 Large District	\$60 Million	13%	\$200 Million	3%	13 Years

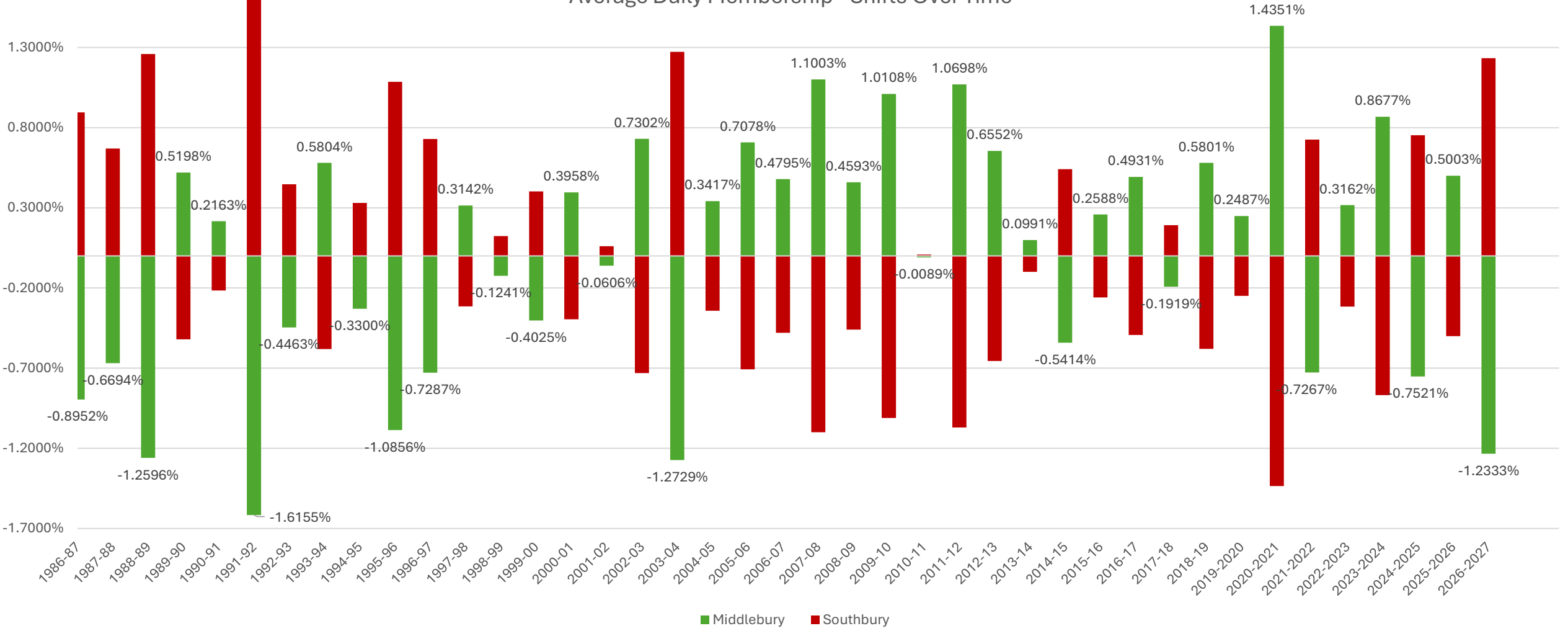
# BUDGET TOTALS BY COMMUNITY

	<b>2025-26 Adopted</b>	<b>2026-27 Proposed</b>	<b>% Increase</b>
Total School Budget Gross	\$90,777,524	\$95,754,220	5.30%
Total Revenue	\$3,096,034	\$3,096,034	
Total School Budget	\$93,873,558	\$98,850,254	5.48%

## Town Breakdown based on the 5.3%

	<b>2026-2027 Proposed</b>	<b>Percent Distribution</b>	<b>Dollar Increase</b>	<b>Percent Increase</b>
Middlebury	\$31,720,500	33.13%	\$529,070	1.69%
Southbury	\$64,033,720	66.87%	\$4,447,626	7.46%

# Average Daily Membership - Shifts Over Time





# Gate Fees:

- Last year, the Board and Region assessed the use of gate fees to cover referees and other event-related expenses. This budget allocates \$50,000 to cover professional service costs for most events, effectively eliminating gate fees for all but a select few larger events.
- The budget does not make any adjustments to pay to play.

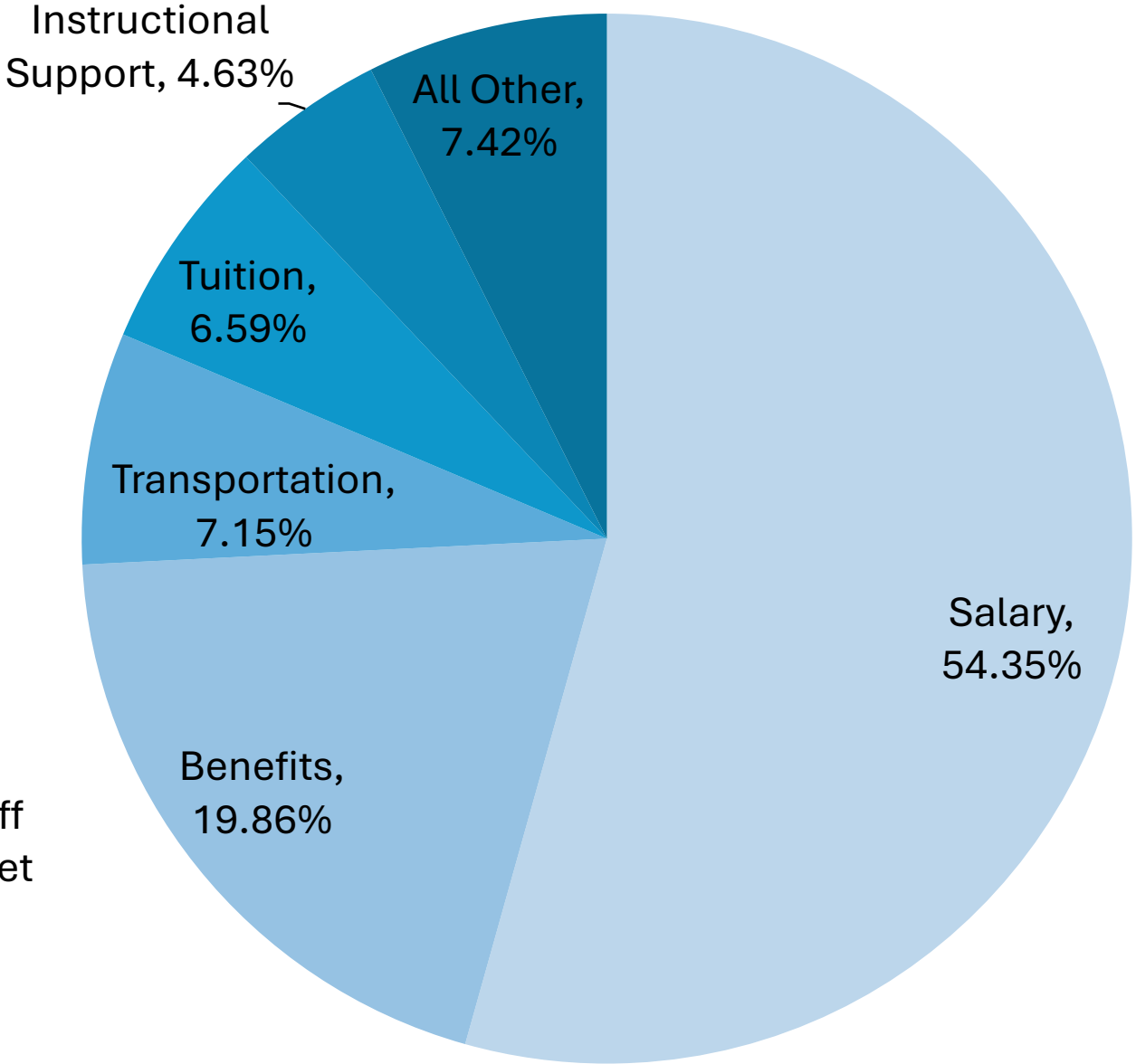
# Summary:

- Adjustments to medical and salary projections brought the initial costs down by about 1%.
- No additional programming or initiatives helped mitigate inflationary pressures.
- Pension is now at 73% funded, contribution remains flat but does not increase as we have done the past few years.
- Current proposed budget protects and retains instructional supplies, class size and student-centered resources.
  - Expands literacy support, decodables, classroom resources
  - Maintains and expands support for Mathematics instruction
- Protects ability to manage long term debt obligations
- 3 object codes account for 4.74% of the 5.3% increase
  - Salaries, Benefits, Transportation

# BUDGET SUMMARY

## Percent of total budget of selected objects:

- We are a service provider, our work depends on our staff
- On average staffing comprises 74% of the annual budget
- Salary increases are all within market averages
- All Other includes debt service, utilities, maintenance



# Utilities, Transportation, Technology and Pension

## Utilities and Natural Gas

- Costs remain flat due to natural gas conversion, reduced public benefit fee, and sunset of energy efficiency leases.

## Diesel and Fuel Oil

- Reduction of \$20,000 based on rate lock

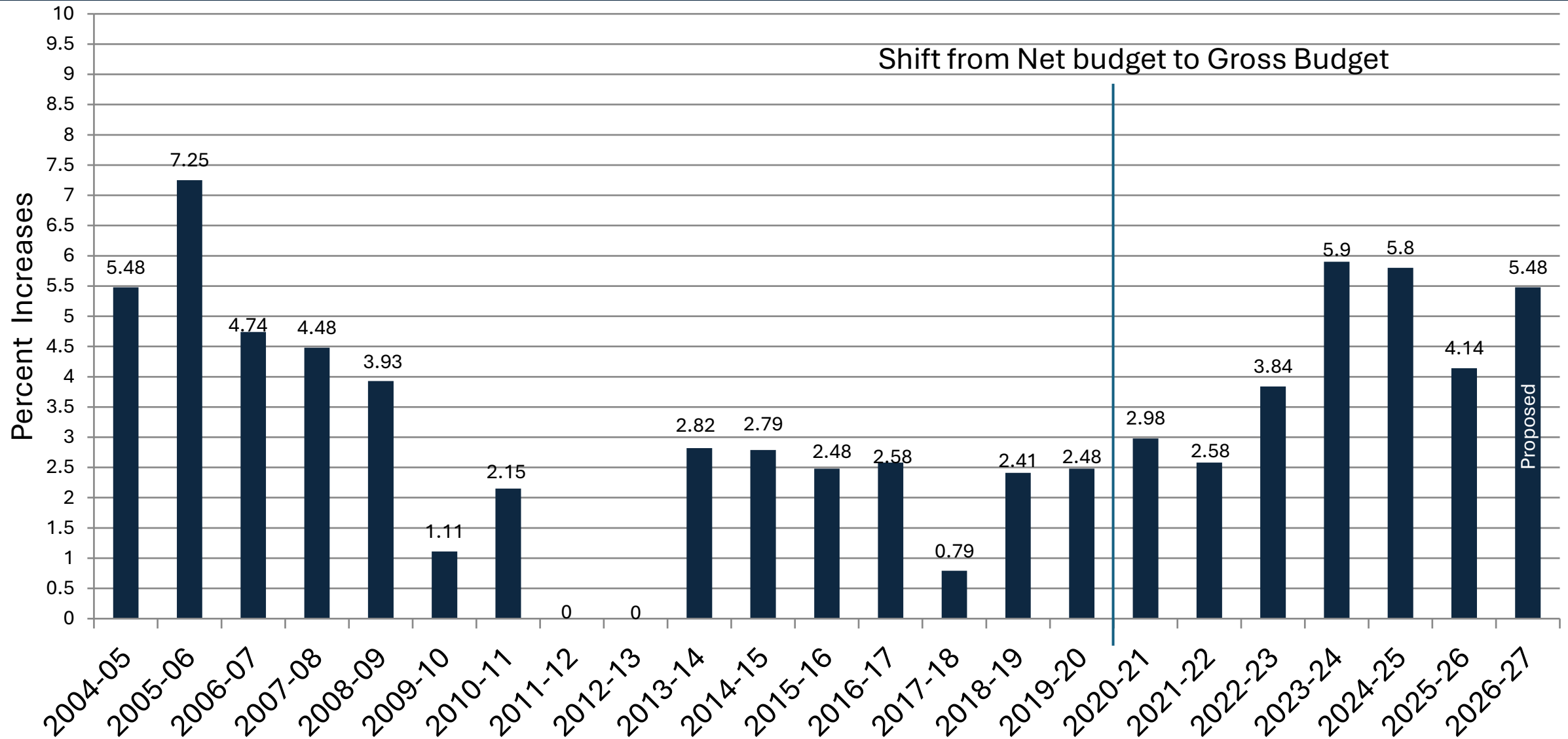
## Pension and Internal Audit

- Continues our current pension contribution
- Preserves \$15,000 to continue internal audit process

## Technology Lease

- Increase to replace aging network equipment: \$40,000

# Board Approved Budget Increases by Percent:



# Review of the budget schedule updated

**Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> Budget Workshop** beginning at 6:30 at PHS Media Center

- Curriculum and Instruction
- Elementary Schools K-5
- Middle Schools 6-8
- Pomperaug High School
- Athletics

**Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> Budget Workshop** beginning at 6:30 pm at PHS Media Center

- Pupil Services
- Capital Plan

**Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> Budget Workshop & Public Hearing** beginning at 6:30 pm at PHS Media Center

- Southbury & Middlebury Boards of Finance Discussion
- Public Hearing immediately following

**Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup> Board of Education Meeting**, 7:30 pm at PHS Media Center

- Board adopts 2026-2027 Budget

# NEXT STEPS

- Questions from Board members can be submitted to the Superintendent's office over the next few weeks
- All budget presentations will be posted on the district website: [www.region15.org/budget](http://www.region15.org/budget)
- Along with presentation, a list of questions and answers will also be developed and available on the website
- Thank you again to all those that contributed to the development of this proposed budget and tonight's presentation
- Any questions?