

DUDLEY-CHARLTON FY2027 BUDGET HEARING

March 11, 2026
@ SHRHS

Steven M. Lamarche

Superintendent

Joseph J. DeSantis

Director of Finance and Operations





AGENDA

- Relevant Information
- Assumptions/Risks
- Fiscal Year 2027
- Capitol Plan
- Questions





INTRODUCTION



The annual school budget process outlines how our community's tax dollars are thoughtfully invested to support a Dudley-Charlton education. Together, they translate financial planning into meaningful opportunities for students, ensuring resources are aligned with the district's enduring commitment to excellence.

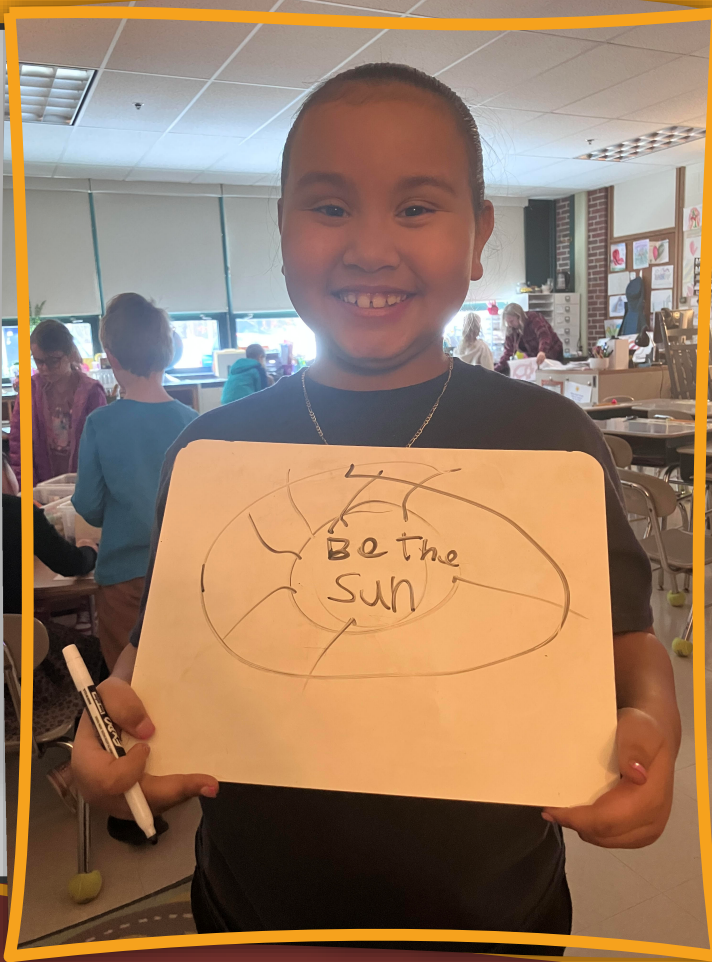
This work also anchors important districtwide dialogue, requiring careful deliberation and informed decision-making as priorities are balanced and how programs are valued within a finite set of resources.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOALS



2025-2026

School Committee Goals



Governance and Leadership Capacity:

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee will strengthen its governance practices and leadership capacity by building consistent systems, fostering effective communication, and deepening collaboration with students, families, and community partners.



School Committee Goals



Educational Excellence and Student Experience:

The School Committee will ensure all students have equitable access to high-quality instruction, effective educators, and enriching experiences that promote learning, engagement, and well-being.



School Committee Goals



Fiscal Responsibility and Resource Stewardship:

The School Committee will strategically align fiscal planning and resource allocation with the District's 10-Year Capital Plan to ensure financial sustainability and equitable student outcomes.



DISTRICT PLAN



Strengthen the continuum of learning by ensuring access and opportunity for all students. Enhance instructional practices and support systems to improve student achievement and outcomes. Foster family and community engagement through meaningful partnerships and effective communication.



ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

- **Minimum Chapter 70 for FY2027** ☒
272 districts in hold harmless (85.27%), 69 are regionals
- **Excess & Deficiency stable for FY2027** ☒ +
- **School Choice/Charter Assessments stable FY2027** ☐
- **Level funded supplies/technology (FY21-FY27)** ☒ [HQIM]
- **Federal Entitlement Grants stable FY2027** ☒ (- 25%)
Title I, Title II, Title IV, Title III, 240 [level funded]
- **Reimbursements remain stable for FY2027** ☐
Transportation, Circuit Breaker, Medicaid





REMINDER

As we engage in the 360 fiscal planning process, we remain firmly committed to responsible stewardship, carefully reviewing expenditures, maintaining a conservative financial approach, and exercising flexibility only where supported by our financial partnerships with Charlton and Dudley.

Every investment is made with purpose. Fiscal responsibility is not simply about balance, but about making disciplined, strategic choices that strengthen student learning, support our staff, and reflect our shared responsibility to the community.

By aligning fiscal prudence with educational priorities, we ensure resources are directed where they matter most, positioning the district to meet today's needs while remaining prepared for future challenges.

FY27 AREAS OF SPECIFIC FOCUS



- **Class Size**
- **Contractual Obligations**
- **Active Employee Benefits and Health Insurance**
- **Retiree Health Benefits**
- **Student Safety – School Resource Officer Balance**
- **Out of District Tuitions**
- **Regulatory Overload/Restoration**

BIG NUMBERS



FY25	\$ 59,885,638	2.68%	
FY26	\$ 62,209,895	3.88%	\$ 2,324,257
FY27	\$ 65,748,436	5.69%	\$ 3,538,541
FY27 Target			

FY27 AREAS OF SPECIFIC FOCUS



- *Class Size*
- *Contractual Obligations*
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STUDENT SAFETY – SRO - CHARLTON



Fiscal Commitment

The School Resource Officer (SRO) position would be funded and employed by the Town of Charlton. The district's role would be limited to an annual contribution of **\$30,000–\$35,000**, providing predictability and a clearly defined fiscal commitment.

Rationale

- Extends consistent access to school safety and prevention supports across the district, addressing the absence of on-site SRO coverage in the Charlton schools.
- Strengthens collaboration, preparedness, and relationship-building among students, staff, administrators, and local public safety partners.
- Leverages a cost-share model that avoids creating a new district position while expanding supports in a fiscally responsible manner.

FY27 AREAS OF SPECIFIC FOCUS



- *Class Size*
- *Contractual Obligations*
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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES



•Fiscal Impact & Rationale

Proposed budget increase of **\$105,000** to add leadership capacity within the Department of Pupil Personnel Services.

- Restores a leadership role that existed prior to the Dudley override (\$40,000–\$50,000 previously allocated)
- Responds to continued growth in the number and complexity of out-of-district placements, requiring increased oversight, coordination, and fiscal management.
- Addresses expanded DESE integrated monitoring, to include general education responsibilities such as oversight of building-based Instructional Support Teams (IST) and MTSS implementation.
- Reflects the 30% increase in students identified with disabilities in Dudley-Charlton, consistent with statewide trends.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES



6580000	Dudley-Charlton Reg	3432	Administration	\$295
170000	Auburn	2449	Administration	\$414
1100000	Grafton	3050	Administration	\$516
1860000	Millbury	1650	Administration	\$523
2140000	Northbridge	1865	Administration	\$523
1350000	Holland	226	Administration	\$536
3060000	Wales	93	Administration	\$545
450000	Brookfield	302	Administration	\$555
7530000	Quabbin	2168	Administration	\$555
2870000	Sturbridge	902	Administration	\$595
2900000	Sutton	1310	Administration	\$607
3160000	Webster	1699	Administration	\$648
7780000	Quaboag Regional	1118	Administration	\$686
2260000	Oxford	1493	Administration	\$694
2150000	North Brookfield	407	Administration	\$695
7700000	Tantasqua	1759	Administration	\$730
7670000	Spencer-E Brookfield	1418	Administration	\$805
3040000	Uxbridge	1632	Administration	\$905
2770000	Southbridge	1885	Administration	\$934
1510000	Leicester	1322	Administration	\$947
8760000	Bay Path RVTHS	1088	Administration	\$984

SWCEC Member Districts

DCRSD - \$ 295 29.00 \$324

(\$ 119) (\$ 90)

Auburn - \$ 414

\$ 416,500/\$ 315,000

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES



Dudley-Charlton Reg	3432	Administration	\$295
Bridgewater-Raynham	5582	Administration	\$457
Ashburnham-Westminster	2264	Administration	\$458
Whitman-Hanson	3483	Administration	\$472
North Middlesex	3736	Administration	\$495
Freetown-Lakeville	2700	Administration	\$505
Hampden-Wilbraham	2837	Administration	\$509
Acton-Boxborough	5146	Administration	\$524
Dennis-Yarmouth	2941	Administration	\$543
Quabbin	2168	Administration	\$555
Dighton-Rehoboth	2549	Administration	\$562
Groton-Dunstable	2305	Administration	\$562
Mendon-Upton	2072	Administration	\$568
Ayer Shirley School District	1687	Administration	\$574
Quaboag Regional	1118	Administration	\$686
Tantasqua	1759	Administration	\$730
Spencer-E Brookfield	1418	Administration	\$805
Hamilton-Wenham	1525	Administration	\$818
Blackstone-Millville	2142	Administration	\$935
Bay Path RVTHS	1088	Administration	\$984

Regional School Districts

DCRSD - \$ 295 29.00 \$324

(\$ 162) (\$ 133)

BRRSD - \$ 457

\$ 567,000/\$ 465,500

FY27 AREAS OF SPECIFIC FOCUS



- Class Size
- *Contractual Obligations*
- *Active Employee Benefits and Health Insurance*
- *Retiree Health Benefits*
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PROJECTED CLASS SIZE W/ADJUSTMENTS TO BALANCE FY27



Average Class Size Projections FY27: *With Staffing Changes*

		<u>Dudley Student #</u>	<u>Current Section #</u>	<u>Ave Class Size: Current</u>			<u>Charlton Student #</u>	<u>Current Section #</u>	<u>Ave Class Size: Current</u>	
MASON RD	Pre-K	63	2	15.75		CHARLTON ELEM	53	2	13.25	
	K	90	5	18.00			127	6	21.17	
	1	95	5	19.00	6/5 Grade 1		130	6	21.67	
		248	12				310	14		
DUDLEY ELEM	2	108	6	18.00		HERITAGE	122	6	20.33	7/6 Grade 2
	3	112	5	22.40	4/5 Grade 3		164	7	23.43	6/7 Grade 3
	4	79	4	19.75	5/4 Grade 4		127	6	21.17	7/6 Grade 4 to ILC
		299	15				413	19		
DUDLEY MIDDLE	5	128	6	21.33		CHARLTON MIDDLE	142	7	20.29	
	6	126	6	21.00			148	7	21.14	
	7	122	6	20.33	7/6 Grade 7		149	7	21.29	
	8	145	7	20.71			164	7	23.43	
		521	25				603	28		
Totals and AVG.Class.Size		1068	52	20.06			1326	61	21.54	

FY27 AREAS OF SPECIFIC FOCUS



- **Class Size**
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AREAS OF SPECIFIC FOCUS



Transportation	\$ 133,834
Contractual Obligations	\$ 1,455,802
Active Employee Benefits/Ins.	\$ 585,848
OOD Tuitions	\$ 250,000
Retiree Health Benefits D50/C54=104 (286) DCRSD <u>351</u>	\$ 522,084
WCRS	\$ 173,379
SRO + Assistant Director PPS	\$ 145,000
School Choice Assessment	\$ 227,219
Other line variances	\$ 45,375
5.69% Total	\$ 3,538,541





Product	Level	Budget Impact
Elementary Math - New Implementation for SY27-28	Elementary	\$230,000
Open Sci Ed Materials for Labs and Implementation of New Course at SHRHS	Secondary	\$30,000
High School Math Geometry Implementation for SY27-28	Secondary	\$30,000

Variance work 5.83% to 4.35%



FY26 per pupil Increase [E&D]	(\$ 247,425)
Amazon	(\$ 250,000)
Gov's School Choice Assessment	(\$ 140,000)
Class Size Management (3.0 FTEs)	(\$ 195,000)
Total	(\$ 832,425)
5.69% \$3,538,541	
	<u>\$ 2,706,116</u>
	4.35%

BIG NUMBERS



FY25	\$ 59,885,638	2.68%	
FY26	\$ 62,209,895	3.88%	\$ 2,324,257
FY27	\$ 65,748,436	5.69%	\$ 3,538,541
FY27 Target	<u>\$ 64,916,011</u>	<u>4.35%</u>	<u>\$ 2,706,116</u>

FY27 Budget - Initial 2/4/26



Assessments					
		FY26	FY27	\$ Change	% Change
DCRSD		\$ 62,209,895	\$ 65,836,147	\$ 3,626,252	5.83%
Charlton (53.71%)					
	Minimum	15,494,647	17,196,924	1,702,277	10.99%
	Transportation	1,158,776	1,254,138	95,362	8.23%
	Additional	3,289,061	3,463,833	174,772	5.31%
	Subtotal Operating	19,942,484	21,914,895	1,972,411	9.89%
	Capital				
	Sewer Charges	25,776	25,776	-	
	Shepherd Hill Field (Debt Excl)	60,858	56,967	(3,891)	
	July 2024 Capital-Bond	230,050	217,050	(13,000)	
	Subtotal Capital	316,684	299,793	(16,891)	-5.33%
	Total Assessment - Charlton FY27	20,259,168	22,214,688	1,955,520	9.65%
Dudley (46.29%)					
	Minimum	8,359,605	9,037,239	677,634	8.11%
	Transportation	995,484	1,080,879	85,395	8.58%
	Additional	2,825,571	2,985,307	159,736	5.65%
	Subtotal Operating	12,180,660	13,103,425	922,765	7.58%
	Capital				
	Sewer Charges	9,224	9,224	-	
	Shepherd Hill Field (Debt Excl)	52,281	56,171	3,890	
	July 2024 Capital-Bond	303,350	283,100	(20,250)	
	Subtotal Capital	364,855	348,495	(16,360)	-4.48%
	Total Assessment - Dudley - FY27	12,545,515	13,451,920	906,405	7.22%
	Total Assessment	32,804,683	35,666,608	2,861,925	8.72%

FY27 Budget - Version 3.0 - 03/11/2026

DRAFT VERSION

Assessments					
	FY26	FY27	\$ Change	% Change	
DCRSD	\$ 62,209,895	\$ 64,916,011	\$ 2,706,116	4.35%	
Charlton (53.71%)					
Minimum	15,494,647	17,196,924	1,702,277	10.99%	
Transportation	1,158,776	1,254,138	95,362	8.23%	
Additional	3,289,061	2,969,639	(319,422)	-9.71%	
Subtotal Operating	19,942,484	21,420,701	1,478,217	7.41%	
Capital					
Sewer Charges (Annual)	25,776	25,776	-		
Shepherd Hill Field (Debt Excl - FY29)	60,858	56,967	(3,891)		
July 2024 Capital Bond (Debt Pmts - FY38)	230,050	217,050	(13,000)		
Subtotal Capital	316,684	299,793	(16,891)	-5.33%	
Total Assessment - Charlton FY27	20,259,168	21,720,494	1,461,326	7.21%	
Dudley (46.29%)					
Minimum	8,359,605	9,037,239	677,634	8.11%	
Transportation	995,484	1,080,879	85,395	8.58%	
Additional	2,825,571	2,559,385	(266,186)	-9.42%	
Subtotal Operating	12,180,660	12,677,503	496,843	4.08%	
Capital					
Sewer Charges (Annual)	9,224	9,224	-		
Shepherd Hill Field (Debt Excl - FY29)	52,281	56,171	3,890		
July 2024 Capital Bond (Debt Pmts - FY38)	303,350	283,100	(20,250)		
Subtotal Capital	364,855	348,495	(16,360)	-4.48%	
Total Assessment - Dudley - FY27	12,545,515	13,025,998	480,483	3.83%	
Total Assessment	32,804,683	34,746,492	1,941,809	5.92%	



DUDLEY-CHARLTON FY2027 BUDGET HEARING

March 11, 2026
@ SHRHS



QUESTIONS

CAPITOL PLANNING



The capital requests that follow are grounded in a comprehensive Facilities Condition Assessment and Student Capacity Study completed by Habeeb and Associates Architects in May 2024. During the 2024 to 2025 years, the district worked through the School Committee Capital and Safety Subcommittee to refine, validate, and prioritize the findings.

That work translated the original study into a practical and community responsive capital plan, addressing urgent needs, extending timelines where appropriate to support a conservative financial approach, and evaluating opportunities to offset costs through the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA).

As a result, the projects presented are informed, carefully reviewed, and ready for consideration.

DCRSD Capital Planning Phase II = 2026-2029

Habeeb and Associates

Multi-Year Cost \$ **164,204,140**

**Refinement, extend, review MSBA opportunities
and focus on Student/Staff Safety**



Town of Dudley - **\$ 4,672,926**
SHRHS @46.29% (\$ 320,313)

Town of Charlton - **\$ 5,844,838**
SHRHS @53.71% (\$ 371,657)

DCRSD Capital Planning

Phase II = 2026-2029

Focus on Student/Staff Safety



Window Safety Film

Re-key systems (District)

Telephone Systems (District)

Fencing

Playgrounds upgrades

Loading Docks

Window and Masonry Sealant

Standby Generators

Parking lots/driveways/sidewalks (exception SHRHS)

Water Filtration System (Dudley)

IT Network Infrastructure

Worn Carpets (25+ years)

Fuel Oil Tanks

Storm Drainage

Weather Striping Win. & Doors

Electrical Upgrades

Site Lighting

NEXT STEPS

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

SC Budget – All Boards - CMS

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

SC Budget Hearing - SHRHS

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

SC Meeting – CMS – if needed

May 18, 2026 – Town Meetings

Charlton and Dudley



DUDLEY-CHARLTON FY2027 CAPITAL

March 11, 2026
@ SHRHS



QUESTIONS