

## ANNUAL BUDGET

### Acton-Boxborough Annual Budget

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Committee delegates the development of the annual District budget to the Superintendent and his/her designees for the operating and maintenance of the District, and such capital budgets as shall be necessary for the pursuit of the goals of the District and the educational programs proposed and approved by the District Committee.

Said budget shall conform to the guidelines as set forth by the Legislature in Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws and directives and regulations as set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Education, and shall be in compliance with the foundation budget. It is acknowledged that the foundation budget reflects the minimum recommended spending for a District, and excludes transportation costs, debt service costs, and costs associated with the acquisition of fixed assets. The aforementioned items must, therefore, be budgeted in addition to the foundation budget, and funds to support those expenditures must be raised from the member communities, after the use of any offsetting revenues received from the state.

A budget is a spending plan, which is developed well in advance of the fiscal year. Circumstances may occur which necessitate changing spending priorities and redirecting funds within the budget accordingly. Revisions to the budget may be made from time to time by the Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

The annual budget for each school operated by the District shall be developed with input from the School Council, and shall reflect the priorities established in the Annual School Improvement Plan.

The District Agreement notwithstanding, there shall be no requirement for the annual operation and maintenance budget for the District to be adopted prior to the receipt of funding estimates from the state.

In developing a budget, care shall be taken to make the documents associated with the budget clear and understandable to Finance Committees of member communities and to the general public.

A public information meeting may be held to solicit input from the general public. In accordance with the District Agreement, a public hearing will be held prior to the adoption of the Final Operating and Maintenance Budget by the District Committee. The District Committee shall adopt a final budget not later than forty-five days prior to the earliest date on which the business session of the annual town meeting of any member town is to be held, but in no event later than March 31. The Superintendent and the District Committee will make every effort to fully inform all member communities and their officials of the budget plans of the District.

Assessments to member communities shall be made in compliance with the foundation budget, which may, in certain instances, differ from the apportionment under the District Agreement. When there is a conflict, state law shall prevail. In assessing for expenditures which are excluded from the foundation budget, the District Agreement shall determine the apportionment of assessments after the District Committee has applied all applicable state aid.

### Acton Public Schools

The annual budget is the financial expression of the educational program of the school department, and it mirrors the problems and difficulties that confront the school system.

The budget is more than a financial instrument, and requires on the part of the Committee, the staff, and the community orderly and cooperative effort to ensure sound fiscal practices for achieving the educational goals and objectives of the school system.

Public school budgeting is regulated and controlled by legislation, state regulations, and local School Committee requirements. The operating budget for the school system will be prepared and presented in line with state policy and will be developed and refined in accordance with these same requirements.

The Acton School Committee delegates the development of the annual public school budget to the Superintendent and his/her designees for the operating and maintenance of the public schools, and such capital budgets as shall be necessary for the pursuit of the goals and educational programs proposed and approved by the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:16B; 71:34; 71:37 and 71:38N