



Berkley Public Schools

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Financial Impact Statement from Berkley Public Schools

Berkley Public Schools faces significant financial constraints that threaten the quality of education for our students. As a small town in Bristol County with a primarily residential tax base, our district struggles to generate sustainable revenue growth, resulting in ongoing budget shortfalls.

Despite operating with a lean budget, Berkley Public Schools has already experienced severe cuts, including the loss of two math interventionists, two reading interventionists, a special education teacher, a speech pathologist, an art teacher, and a library teacher to balance the FY25 budget. These reductions have left our middle school without any art or library programs, have increased our special education caseloads, and impacted how we provide necessary services to students.

For FY26, our Town has recommended a budget increase of 1.2%, totaling \$116,000. Our Chapter 70 increase is estimated to be \$48,000. Rising costs in transportation and utilities alone total \$201,000 for FY26, consuming all of the increase from the town and state and leaving us with a deficit before we meet our contractual and other operating obligations. FY26 will require a reduction of 10 teaching staff, driving up class sizes and eliminating the few support services we can provide. Additionally, an increasing English Learner population and a growing number of economically disadvantaged students necessitate additional resources that our current budget cannot accommodate.

While the town is actively pursuing long-term financial solutions, including debt exclusions and commercial development efforts, immediate support is crucial to maintaining essential student services and manageable class sizes. Without adequate funding, further reductions will negatively impact the educational quality and student outcomes at Berkley Public Schools. The Department of Education has said that every student deserves a high-quality education despite their zip code. The students from Berkley are at a disadvantage because of their zip code; reductions year after year do not allow us to provide a high-quality education.

Berkley Public Schools remains committed to providing a high-quality education for all students, and securing stable funding is essential to achieving this goal.

Respectfully submitted by,

Melissa Ryan

Superintendent of Schools

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