

Millis Public Schools Budget Book Index

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**Budget Outlook
Fiscal Year 2014
2013-2014 School Year**

Dear Parents, Caregivers and Community Members,

In January, Governor Patrick released his proposed budget for FY 14 for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Following public hearings on the state budget the House will release a fiscal 2014 budget bill in mid-March. The Senate is expected to work with the House to approve a final state budget by the end of May.

While the state economy is improving, it is not yet robust enough to make up for lost ground of the last four years. That said, the Governor's budget proposal supports education from Pre-School to higher education as a priority. FY14 Chapter 70 Aid (Education Aid) is almost \$4.4 million, an increase of \$226 Million state-wide and 5.4% above the current level of Chapter 70 funding. For Millis, this increase translates into \$283,684 more in Education Aid for the town. However, this increase relies on new or proposed tax revenues and there is still significant uncertainty for FY 14 at this point in time due to the revenue sources proposed by the Governor. The House and Senate will make their recommendations and proposals in the spring months.

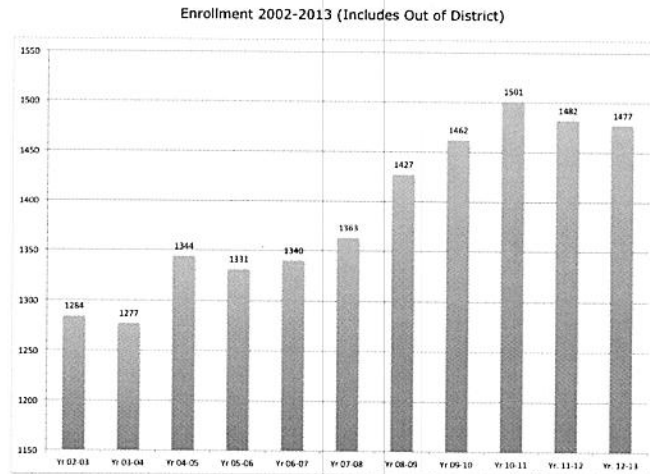
The Governor's budget provides a modest increase to Millis' state aid with an increase of \$283,684 in Chapter 70 Education Aid. Local tax revenues supplement the local aid from the state, but the combined amounts are split with 65% going to the school department and 35% going to town departments after fixed costs such as insurance have been deducted. The amount of revenue may not cover the increase in fixed costs for the school department and the town.

In order to cover the one-year increase in contracted salaries for the approximately 240 staff members in the school department, an additional \$391,365 is needed. Special Education mandates add \$139,498 and other miscellaneous costs such as enhanced retirement, teachers returning from maternity leave, and the upgrade in our Business Office add \$245,092 in costs. These are offset by reductions in our expenses, especially in heat and in out-of-district tuitions for special education, a savings of \$260,834 or approximately 10%.

The reductions in expenses are attributable to the high quality of programming we have offered in district and the staff in Special Education who are constantly striving to provide solutions that reduce costs and still maintain the integrity of our programs. The Special Education department has reduced the number of students going to costly out of district placements and created in-house programs to meet students' needs. Additionally, the Director of Operations has been able to realize cost savings by utilizing natural gas instead of oil to heat our buildings and we have locked into a low natural gas rate in collaboration with the Town of Millis. Moreover, we have pursued Solar Energy and will be installing panels this spring on the Middle/High School roof. This will result in savings in electricity costs once the system is operational.

Therefore, to level fund the Millis Schools from FY 13 to FY 14, will require \$515,121 to keep the staff we currently have but not restore any of the positions lost in the past years of reductions. This is a modest 4% increase over the previous year. However, the district still has one of the lowest per pupil expenditures in the state and there are several needs that are going unmet.

In fiscal years 2011 and 2012 the Millis School District had to reduce the budget by \$989,967. During those years over 25 staff members either were laid off or had their hours reduced. Of this amount, \$862,380 was due to these salary reductions, yet our enrollments had continued to grow at a rate of about 30 students per year over the past five years. We are now, in FY 14, seeing a slight decline in enrollment in the lower grades due to lower birth rates but classes in Grades 4-12 are very large.



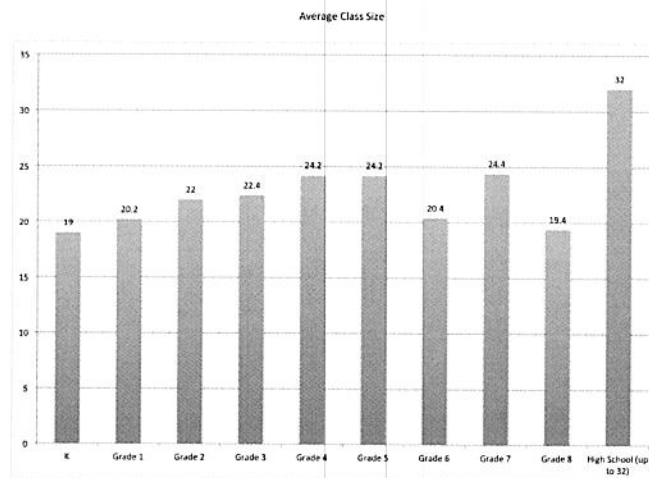
There are several innovative ways that we have continued to increase our efficiency and improve quality (solar panel installations, redefinition of staff roles and responsibilities, utilization of powerful learning tools such as iPads instead of purchasing textbooks, and creating ways to keep more students with special needs in our schools rather than in out-of-district placements, to name just a few). However, the quality of education students receive in Millis is becoming more and more compromised by large class sizes, a reduction in electives and extra-curricular offerings, and a lack of instructional resources and support personnel to reduce achievement gaps for Low Income and Special Needs students as required by law.

The Millis Public Schools are high performing and have received several awards and high rankings over the past five years:

- 2007 U.S. National Blue Ribbon Award for Excellence at the High School.
- 1st place award for Best Spanish Immersion School in the U.S. and Canada for the Middle School in 2012 and fourth place for Clyde Brown Elementary (there are more elementary programs and thus, competition is greater.)
- US. News and World and Newsweek have consistently ranked our high school as in the top 5-6% in the entire nation.
- Boston Magazine designated our high school as one of the top 50 in Massachusetts in 2012 and Most Likely to Win a Pulitzer Prize as well as Most Improved in 2011.

- Our Middle School was most recently awarded the designation as “Apple Distinguished School” for 2012-2013 for innovative leadership in improving student engagement and learning with effective uses of technology.
- Millis is recognized throughout Massachusetts and even New England for integrating technology to personalize learning and the New Media Video Production program.
- The Center for American Education granted MPS distinction in 2011 as a High Return on Investment district based on high student achievement and low per pupil costs.
- The Millis Public Schools dropout rate is 0% due to the personalized educational approach.

MCAS scores have risen steadily over the past seven years as well, going from around the state average in most grades and subjects to between 7-10% above the state average most years in most grades. However, last year we saw lower scores on MCAS in English Language Arts for the first time in many years, especially in Gr. 3, perhaps due to larger class sizes. The current large fourth grade lost a position after Grade 1 in the first round of reductions and the loss of a part-time Reading Support Instructor at the Clyde Brown has reduced direct instructional support for struggling students. Class sizes range from 21 to 32 students per class, which is not ideal by any measure.



We are proposing several additions to staff that are essential to address areas of concern and also to meet Special Education mandates without sending students out of district at a higher cost:

- A Dual-certified Special Education teacher at Grade 5 to reduce class size and meet the needs of students who are struggling as well as provide the ability for all Grade 5 teachers to better challenge and support their students in smaller, more personalized classes.
- A Special Education teacher at Clyde Brown Elementary to create an in-district classroom for several young students with significant special needs. The cost of one out-

of—district placement is equal to the salary of a teacher. Thus, it is much more cost effective to provide these specialized services in a classroom in-district.

- We must add \$10,000 to our Summer Special Education program that is mandated for students to prevent regression over the summer.
- The current .4 Spanish position needs to be increased to full-time to accommodate increased enrollment and offer courses that increase acceptances to high quality colleges.
- Reinstate the Clyde Brown Reading Support position but revamp the model so that the staff member is able to provide support in both ELA and Math.
- A .75 Technology Technician is needed to assist with maintenance of devices and the high-capacity network required for effective use of technology.
- Reinstate the .4 PE/Fitness position previously lost so that all students in Middle School benefit from Fitness classes during these crucial years.
- A Spanish Instructor for the Elementary Spanish program so that 100% of students in grades K-4 receive Spanish instruction. Learning a second language has long lasting cognitive benefits as well as providing skills necessary in a global economy.
- Increase the .8 Math Specialist to 1.0 so that she can work in grades K-8.
- A Coordinator and Data Coach for the Tiers of Support and Intervention program at Clyde Brown that develops plans for struggling students and monitors learning progress. Clyde Brown is a large school (610 students) and does not have an Assistant Principal to free the Principal for the time needed for instructional leadership.
- Expense increases of \$26,300 for general classroom and school supplies, and stipends for teachers to offer more clubs after school. These areas were cut by \$29,700 in FY 11 and 12.
- \$8,000 to fund the before and after-school Middle School Homework and Instructional Support program as well as develop a High School Program for before and after school.

These positions and expense increases total approximately \$249,000 and must be approved by the School Committee and Town meeting. In addition, the reallocation of \$110,000 of Out-of-district tuition dollars will fund two essential Special Education positions. We will continue to look for additional ways to increase efficiency and provide excellent educational services throughout the spring.

In Millis approximately \$326,000 of teaching salaries are paid for out of School choice dollars, supporting approximately 5 teachers. The district receives approximately \$5,000 for every student attending Millis from other towns, including students who used to live in town but have moved. These students are spread throughout the K-12 system and do not require an addition of staff. Due to our space limitations and large class sizes in grades 4-12, we have been unable to accommodate additional Choice students except in lower grades. The reputation of our district as providing high quality, innovative education must be maintained so that we continue to attract Choice students to maintain the income of \$320,000 per year, especially with lower Kindergarten enrollments due to lower birth rates the last few years. If this flow of income is reduced, more revenue will be needed from local sources or reductions in staff will be necessary.

The positions above support the Millis Public Schools goals of the Millis public schools, especially Goals II and III:

Goal I: Leadership, Culture and Communication

To develop a collaborative culture of continuous improvement that values diversity among students and staff. Every child should be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged so that they are prepared for college and life in a 21st century complex global economy.

Goal II: Core Academic Learning

To improve student learning in core academics so that students are prepared for college and life in the 21st century complex global economy.

Goal III: Stretch Learning and Development of 21st Century Skills

To provide more opportunities for all students to engage in challenging learning experiences that are rigorous and relevant. To prepare students to be lifelong learners and leaders who are college ready and able to flourish in the complex 21st century global economy.

Goal IV: Learner Engagement

To increase students' engagement in learning and sense of belonging and motivation to learn through strengthened relationships with peers and staff as well as increased relevance of curriculum.

It is crucial that we provide students in Millis with an education that will enable them to compete in a global economy in a diverse world where critical thinking, creativity, cultural and language fluency, and superb communication, technology and collaboration skills are the minimum requirements for the vast majority of jobs.

Economic growth, quality of life and property values depend on good schools. Moreover, during a period of economic recession and slow growth such as we have experienced over the past four years, it is more imperative than ever to invest in education to help bring the region and the country out of the economic downturn. Governor Patrick understands this linkage and has proposed a budget supportive of education. Globalization and the information technology revolution have made almost all work more complex, requiring critical-thinking skills. It is widely accepted that students must be better educated than ever to secure and keep a well-paying job. According to Thomas Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum in their 2012 book *That Used to Be Us; How America Fell Behind in the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back*, "raising math, science, reading and creativity levels in American schools is the key determinant of economic growth, and economic growth is the key to national power and influence as well as individual well-being." (p.100).

As the budget season unfolds, please stay informed. School Committee meets twice per month on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. Also, please feel free to contact me at ngustafson@millisps.org or call 508-376-7000.

Finance Committee meets Wednesdays and the Selectmen meet Mondays at 7:30 in Town Hall.

Sincerely,

Nancy L. Gustafson

Millis Public Schools

Fiscal Year 2013

FY13 School Department Budget

\$12,398,045

Fiscal Year 2014

Draft FY14 School Department Budget

Draft as of 2/27/2013

Salaries- Fixed Costs

1 COLA	\$119,606	
2 Steps	\$197,549	
3 Lanes	\$74,210	
4 Other (Busin. Off, Matern. Retns, Enh. Rtrmt., other)	\$245,092	
Business Mgr & Payroll Clerk	\$62,070	
Maternity Returns	\$59,603	
Enhanced Retirement & Other	\$123,419	
5 Special Education Reorganization	\$139,498	SPED services realignment-FY13 "expenses" moved to "salary" include 2.0 FTE tchrs. & 1.0 aide
Total Salary Increase	\$775,955	

Expenditures- Fixed Costs

1 Cons. Inst Mat., Athletic Training, Cust. Supplies	\$14,569	
2 SPED Savings	(\$208,771)	Reduction in Out-of District placements
3 Heat Savings	(\$28,632)	
4 Special Education Van to Warrant	(\$38,000)	
Total Expense Decrease	(\$260,834)	

Total FY14 Increase (Salary + Expenditures) **\$515,121**

Fiscal Year 2014

FY14 Level Service Budget

\$12,913,166

Additional School District FY14 Needs:

	<u>FTEs</u>	<u>Budget Amount</u>	<u>Comment</u>
CFB Tiers and Data Coordinator/Student Affairs	1.0	\$57,000	Data and Progress Monitoring and Student Affairs
**Restore Reading/Math Tutor	0.4	\$18,000	Small group direct instruction
HS Spanish Teacher from .4 P/T to 1.0 F/T	0.6	\$35,000	Enrollment increase- impacts college
Technology Technician	0.75	\$46,800	Technology and network demands, internet security
**Restore PE/ Fitness at MS from .6 to 1.0	0.4	\$18,000	Need for 100% of MS students
Math Specialist .8 to 1.0- add MS	0.2	\$17,000	Math coordination to improve MCAS at MMS
Coaches- Cross Country and JV Football	Stipend	\$7,042	Increased participation/new demand
Elementary Spanish Tutor	0.5	\$16,200	Expansion to Gr. 3 & 4 1X/wk.
Tier 2 Before/After School Support Program MS/HS		\$8,000	Essential to eliminate achievement gap and dropouts
**General Supplies- CFB		\$13,000	Zero-based budgeting of essentials needed to run school
**General Supplies- MS		\$5,000	Restores cut in FY12-basic classroom supplies
**Restore Club Stipends- MS and HS		\$8,300	Restores 83% of cut in FY12 to offer extracurriculars

Subtotal: **\$249,342**

Total: **\$13,162,508**

**Restoration of previous FY reduction/cut

Millis Public Schools

Other Important Educational Needs

Warrant Articles

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Bus Lease or Contracted Services	\$79,000	Transportation of students-new contract year
Computer Lease	\$60,000	Maintain computers/devices existing leases
HVAC at Clyde Brown	\$15,000	Existing units are 22 years old and failing or in danger
Kitchen Comprsr & Evaprtr for MS/HS Walk-in Cooler	\$12,000	Compressor is at the end of its useful life
Curriculum Materials /Instructional Resources:	\$60,000	Instructional Resources not included in base budget
Window Treatment on south side of MS/HS	\$8,000	Reduce solar heat and glare in spring and late summer
Small bus, 20 passenger, with wheel chair lift	\$57,000	Pre-School Specials Needs population exceeds capacity of current van
Library Upgrade	\$15,000	10 Year Accreditation Cycle for NEASC-evaluation in FY14 and FY15
Furniture	\$8,000	Two Special Needs classrooms, higher enrollment Middle and High Schools and replace broken furniture
Special Education Van	\$33,000	Replace aging van
Building Repairs	\$15,100	MS/HS Bus loading platform, front entrance, concrete entryways and concrete pads at maintenance shop and dumpsters at CFB and MS/HS all need repair
3 Ceiling Fans installed at the top of each stairwell	\$26,700	Increase air circulation and reduce heat on second floor of MS/HS
Irrigation Well for MS/HS Ballfields	\$25,000	\$13,000 construction and \$12,000 for Equipment
Medicaid	\$0	Balance of \$3,699 in Town account will absorb \$2,100
Warrants to establish revolving funds for Athletic Fields an	\$0	Town Meeting must vote to establish Revolving Accts
Total Warrant Articles:	\$413,800	

Millis Public Schools

FY 2014 BUDGET CALENDAR

- December** Superintendent solicits, receives and conducts preliminary review with Administrators of: staffing, non-staffing expenses, capital needs, furnishings and equipment, and technology requests. All requests are documented and reviewed.
- January** Superintendent and Business Manager analyze budget and begin determination of fixed costs. Business Manager obtains pertinent district documents form DESE website.
- Administrative Team and Superintendent prioritize educational needs and capital needs for warrants.
- February** Superintendent and Business Manager create first draft of the FY'14 budget.
- Superintendent presents the draft FY'14 budget recommendation and warrants to the Millis School Committee.
- School Committee reviews FY'14 draft budget in response to published FY'14 Governors' budget. Adjustments made based on information available.
- March** School Committee conducts Public Hearing on the Proposed FY'14 draft budget.
- Budget and Warrants presented to the Selectman, Town Administrator, and Finance Committee by Superintendent and School Committee.
- School Committee vote of FY'14 draft proposed budget.
- April** Budget presented to the staff at all schools.
- March – May** Continue to monitor state and local funding sources, and meet with Finance Committee. Make adjustments needed to present a balanced budget at Town Meeting.
- May 2013** School Committee approves final FY'14 budget amount if it has changed. Attend Town Meeting to present budget.