

Weston Public Schools 2023-2024 Budget Guidelines

The Weston School District dedicates itself to providing outstanding academic, social, and emotional education in a fiscally responsible manner. We persevered through the recent school years marred by the COVID-19 pandemic while maintaining educational excellence despite the challenges familiar to all of us. The pandemic has left our school community facing learning deficits and unprecedented mental health challenges, with the future human and budgetary consequences remaining unknown. For the next two years, measures put in place to address this crisis will be paid through federal pandemic aid. Planning to continue remedial measures must begin now in case these needs persist.

Despite these challenges, Weston continues to be regarded as one of the highest performing school districts in Massachusetts receiving varied prestigious accomplishments and continues to be highly ranked in many metrics.

To maintain the overall strength of the school system while recognizing local and general economic challenges, the School Committee provides the following general guidelines to assist the School Administration in preparing the budget for fiscal year 2024.

Preserve Excellence in Curriculum and Instruction

Planning for Fiscal Year 2024 must consider the possibility of on-going impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and provide continued support for our curriculum while meeting state and federal mandates for student support. At the core of our efforts will be preserving the quality of our programs and enhancing services and approaches that enable all students to reach high standards and expectations, as measured through data driven assessments and standardized test scores. This goal must be achieved above all else.

Maintain a Safe, Secure, and Sustainable Educational Environment and Infrastructure

The budget should continue to support safe and educationally sound school environments. We should continue to collaborate with the Town to achieve economies of scale in the maintenance and operation of our facilities and grounds. Building and ground security should continue to receive reasonable improvements within the broad contours of our school community's cultural expectations. We should continue routine maintenance of our facilities, conduct regular building reviews, and establish a public multi-year capital project plan that aligns with Weston's Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP)'s goals for Smart and Efficient Buildings. Technology efforts should continue to focus on innovation, out-of-school enrichment platforms, accessibility, reliability, and system security. We will continue to work closely with the Weston Police and Fire Departments and the Board of Health regarding safety and security.

Work toward a long-term goal on the rate of budget change that aims to bring the district's expenditures closer to the average of neighboring districts

The School Administration should continue to be sensitive to the Town's short and long-term financial constraints, including the tax burden of budgetary decisions and the uncertainty of state and federal funds. Staffing levels should be regularly assessed to ensure that each position affirmatively and directly improves student achievement. The School Committee prioritizes spending on direct student services over administrative costs – and expects program enhancements to be offset by budget reductions as far as possible. While the School Committee continues to stress the importance of fiscal responsibility, the primary consideration continues to be given to providing students with the tools and resources they need to succeed at a high level.