



MARBLEHEAD SCHOOL COMMITTEE



**Update on
School Committee
Negotiations with
the MEA**

October 17, 2024



Questions in the Community

How did we get here?

Why don't we have new contracts yet?

Where are we in negotiations?

Where do we go from here?



How did we get here?

Negotiations began March 14, 2024

- School Committee had requested to start bargaining in December 2023
- MEA declined and said it was not ready

School Committee requested to bargain more frequently

- MEA 's MTA representative said he was not available

MEA presented its wage goals in June but did not confirm their "goal" was their wage proposal until September 10 for the teachers Unit



Why don't we have a contract yet?

The MEA's wage proposals are unaffordable and unsustainable, resulting in layoffs of employees and negatively impacting students.

The current MEA wage proposals total a \$11,591,107 budget increase over 4 years.

Factoring in revenue increases as noted by the town current MEA proposals would require either a \$7,591,107 tax override or layoffs of more than 75 staff members or 15% of the staff



Cost of current MEA proposals

The MEA has proposed a **33.9%** increase for **Unit A** over a 4 year period.
Cost = **\$9,690,641** budget increase by year 4

The MEA has proposed a **32%** increase for **Custodians** over a 4 year period.
Cost = **\$644,258** budget increase by year 4

The MEA has proposed a **27.8%** increase for **Tutors** over 4 year period.
Cost = **\$734,964** budget increase by year 4

The MEA proposed an **83.2%** increases for **Paraprofessionals** over 4 year period.
Cost: **\$435,969** budget increase by year 4

The MEA proposed **52%** increases for **Permanent Substitutes** over 4 year period.
Cost: **\$85,275** budget increase by year 4



Where are we in negotiations?

Custodians Unit

- Request for a state mediator filed, Department of Labor Relations has taken jurisdiction and asked for an update by November 8th.

Unit A

- On going negotiations

Tutors Unit

- On going negotiations

Paraprofessional Unit

- On going negotiations

Permanent Substitutes Unit

- On going negotiations



Current School Committee Proposals

Unit A

- 10 ½ % for steps 1-10 over 4 years
- 12 % for Step 11 (more than 2/3 of teachers) over 4 years
- Addition of steps 12

Tutors

- Rename as “Instructional Assistants”
- Removing multi- year requirement prior to step advancement
- Proposing quicker step advancement so employees now advance a wage step each year

Custodians

- Reclassify wage groupings in year 1 to provide up to 16% wage increase in year 1
- Additional 4 ½ % wage increase over next 2 years.
- Increase sick leave by 20%
- Increase night differential by over 350% by end of the contract

Paras

- Reclassify wage table bringing Pre-K, Kindergarten and Special Ed Para to top pay level
- Up to 65% increase for starting wages and 34% wage increase for top wage scale
- Increase rate of stepping to higher wage levels



Current School Committee Proposals

Permanent Substitutes

- Addition of steps and reduction of time between steps to allow for faster wage advancement
- 23% wage increase for starting wage over 3 years
- 17% increase for top step over 3 years

Safety Committee

- Modeled after the Professional Development Advisory Committee
- Equal Representation of Administrators and Union members
- All bargaining units may be represented at the discretion of the Union

Parental Leave

- New benefit of up to first 12 days paid by employer (previously none paid by employer)
- Increase to balance of 12 week available to be paid by Employee's accrued time
- Previously limited to maximum of 8 weeks and was entirely paid by Employee's accrued time



Some Other Issues



Parental Leave- The Committee has increased its offer by 20% to include up to 12 work days of paid leave in addition to the current benefit of using the employee's own paid personal leave remainder of the up to 12-weeks of leave from the employee's paid leave accruals.



Safety Meetings – The Committee has offered to establish a Safety Advisory Committee to discuss safety issues



Elementary Student Lunch & Recess – The School Committee is obligated to ensure that the statutorily required 900 hours of student learning time during the course of the year is met. Lunch and recess do not count toward the required 900 hours

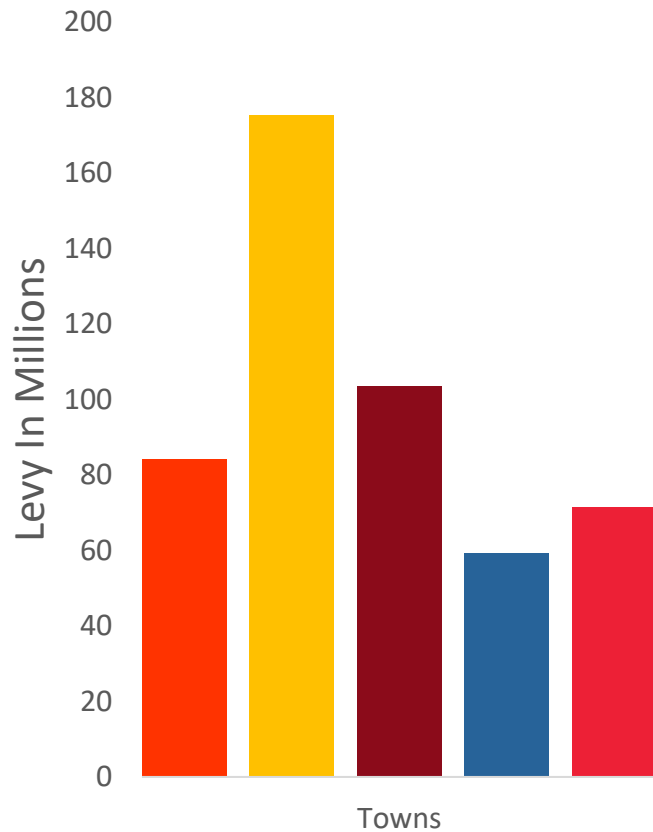


Athletic Fees – These fees are determined by the Committee each year and are not subject to negotiations with the Union.



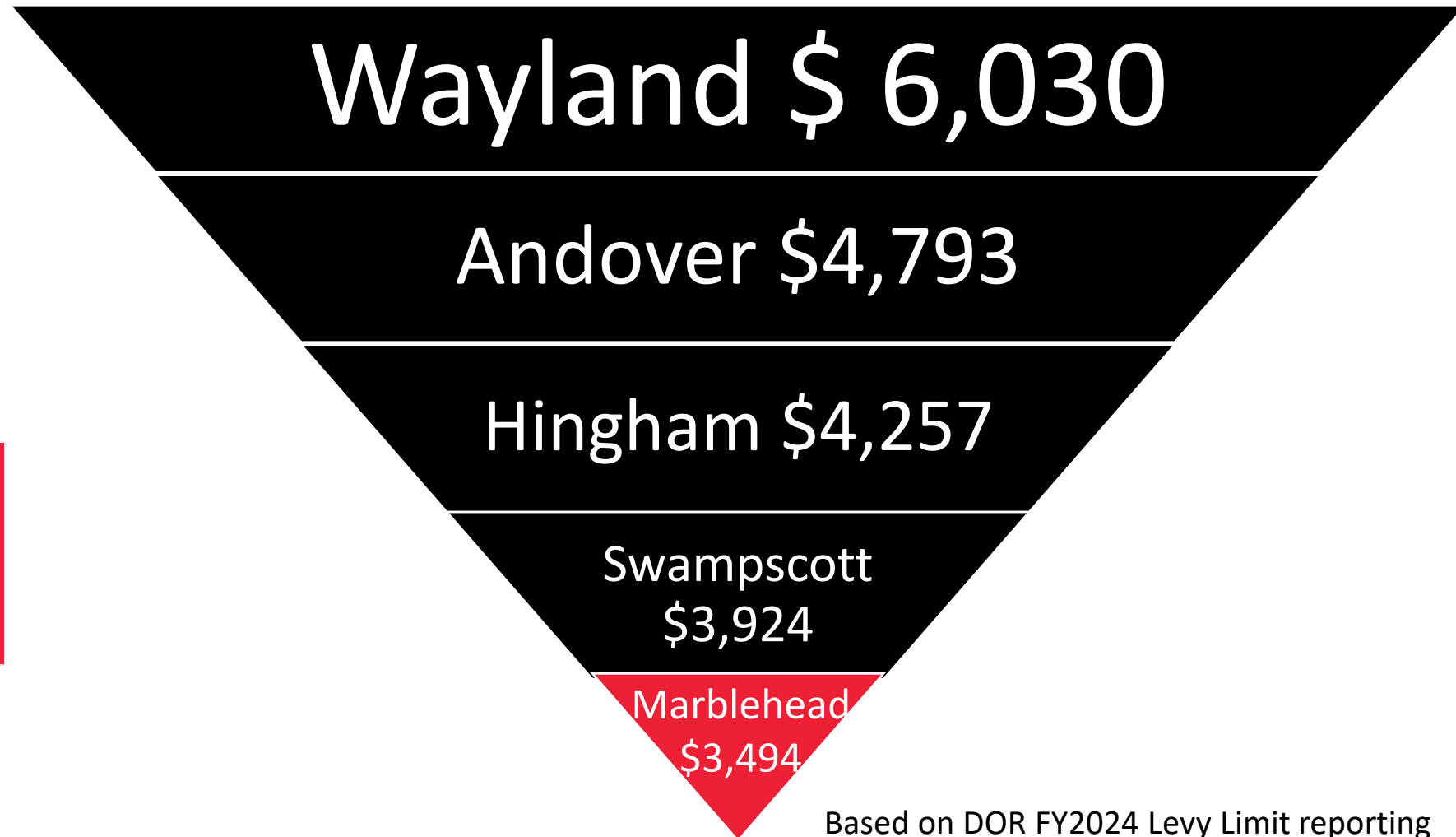
Tax Levy Comparison

Total Tax Levy



- Wayland
- Andover
- Hingham
- Swampscott
- Marblehead

Tax Levy Per Resident

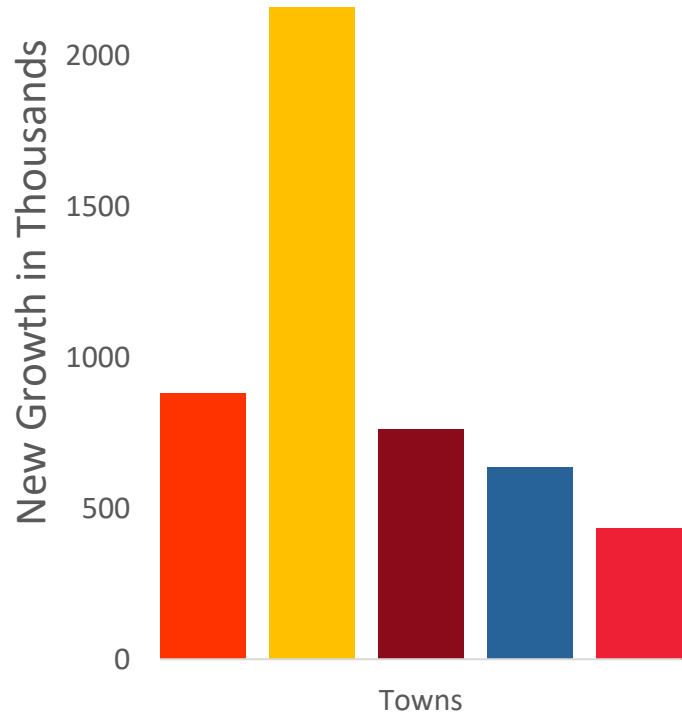


Based on DOR FY2024 Levy Limit reporting



New Growth Comparison

Total New Growth

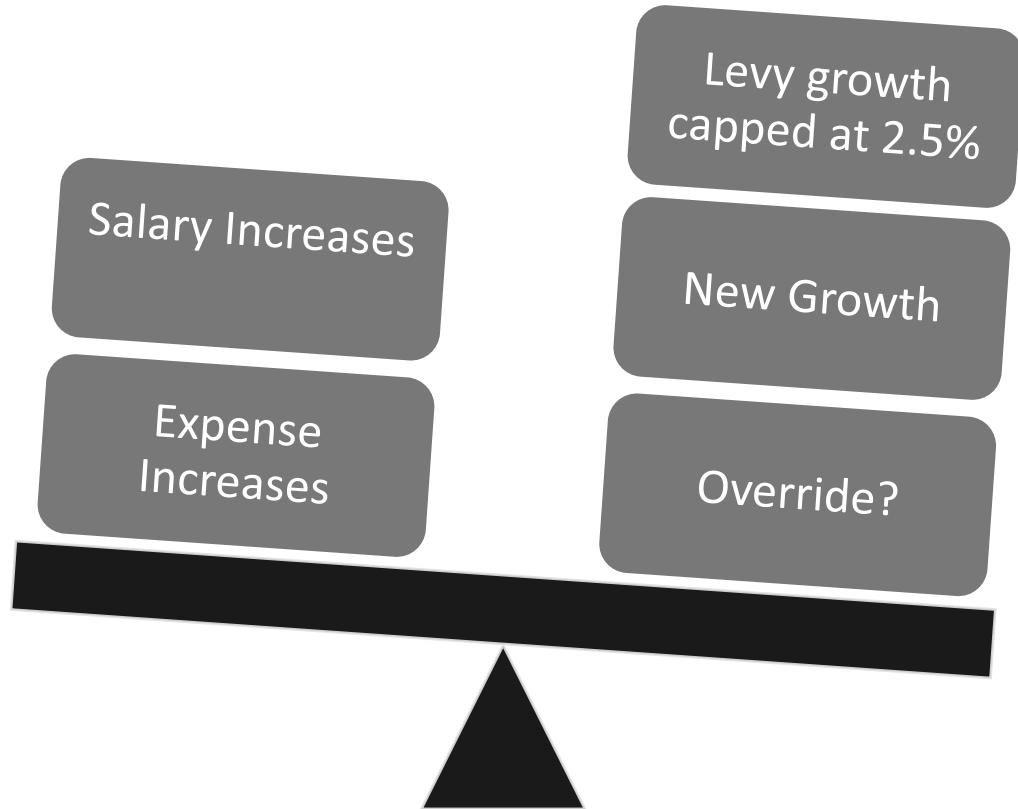


Wayland Andover Hingham
Swampsott Marblehead

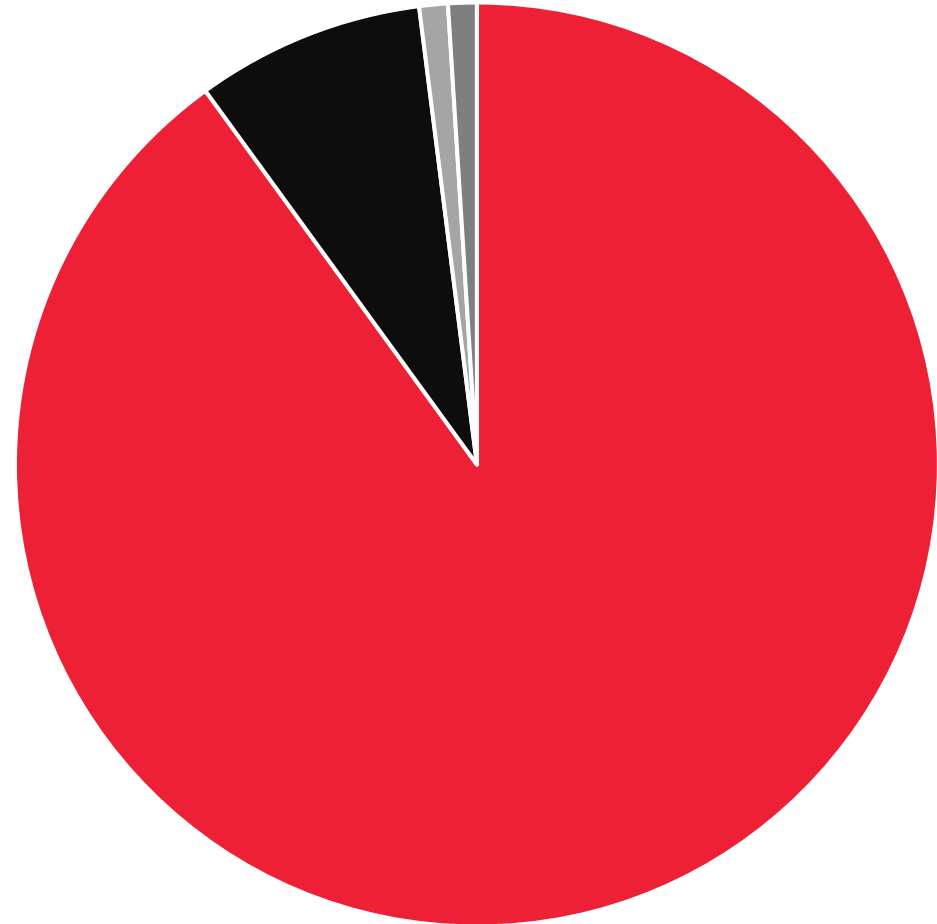
Marblehead's anemic new growth is its greatest financial challenge
- Thatcher Kezer
Town Administrator



How do we balance the budget?



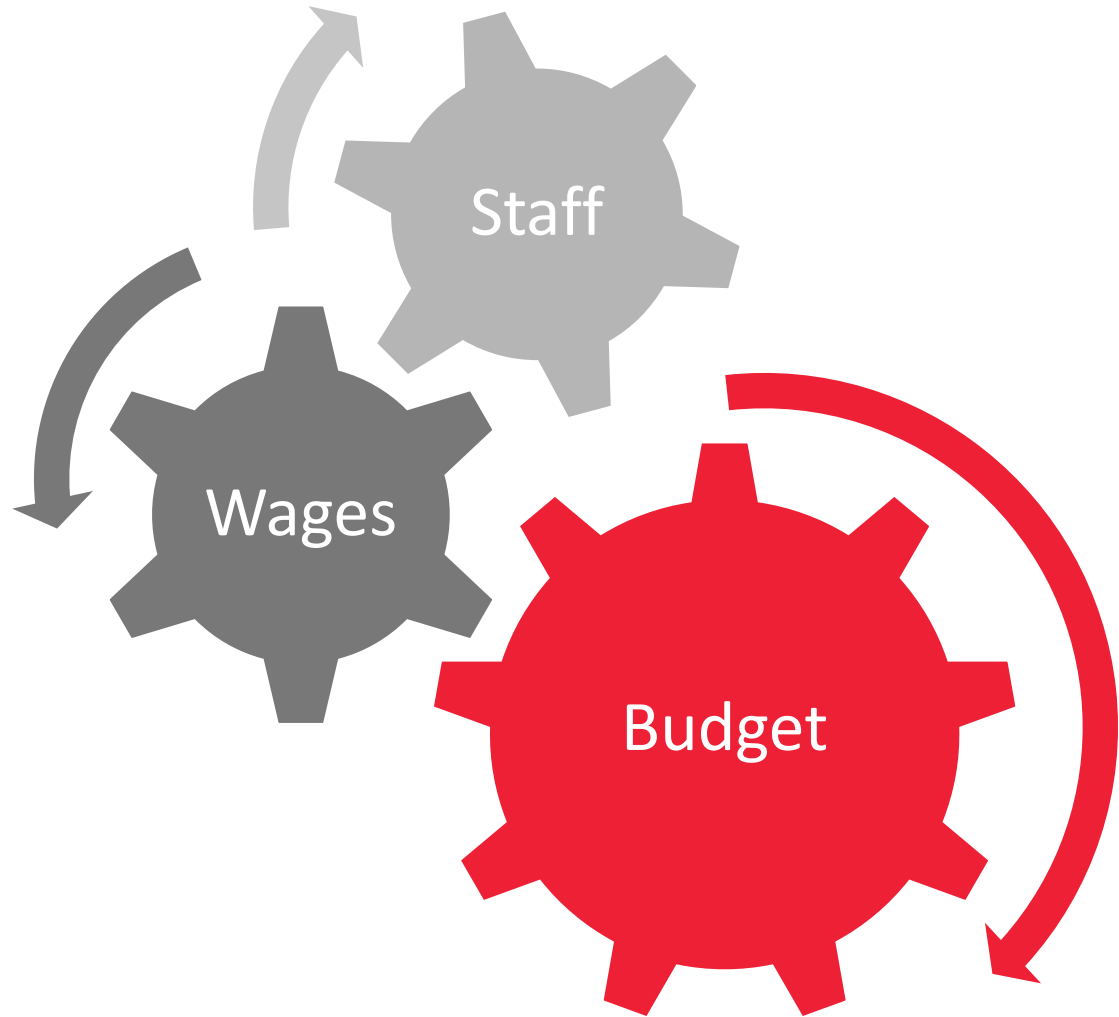
Funding Sources for Budget



■ Town Meeting Appropriation ■ Grants ■ Fees ■ Donations



Formula For Funding the Agreement



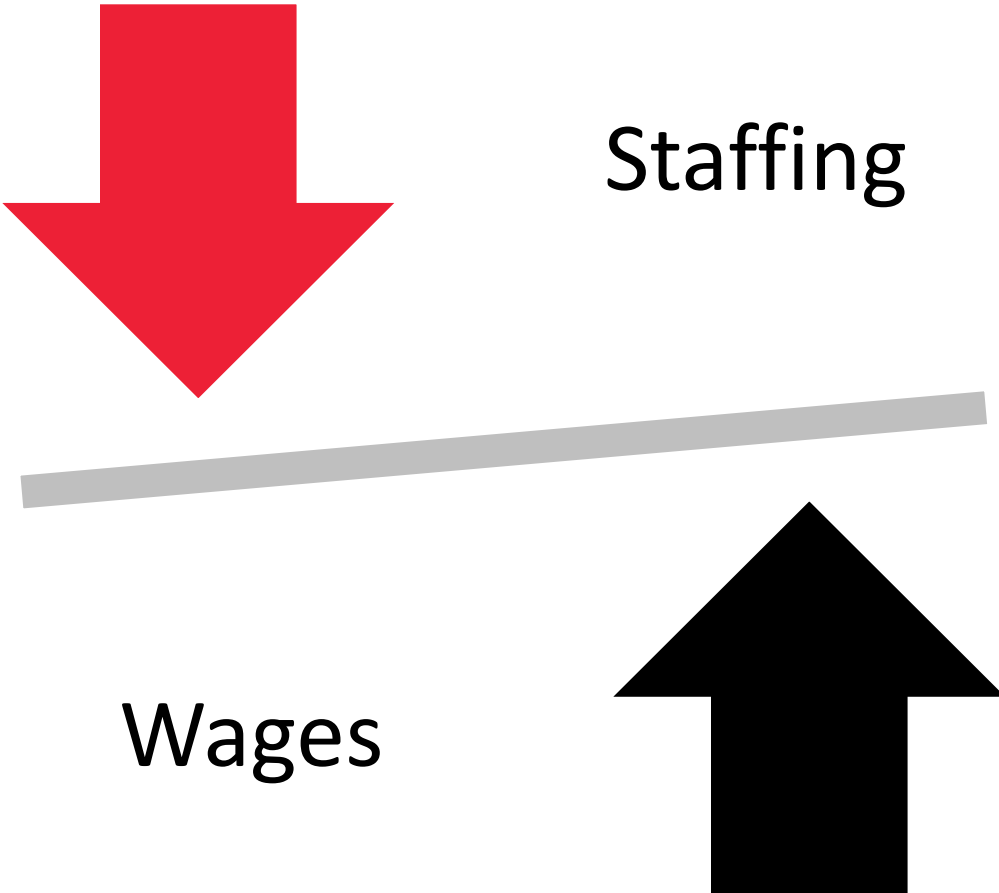
$$A \times B = C$$

Number of Staff Staff Wages Salary Budget

*Salaries account for 80% of the total School budget



Major Funding Concern



The MEA's wage proposal increases:
27%-83% across five units
require....
+/- 10% tax override
or
laying off **more than**
75 employees or 15% staff



Proposition 2½ Override Process

Warrant
Article for
Proposition
2½ is
sponsored
and placed

Override must
receive 2/3
approval at
Town Meeting

Must receive
simple
majority at the
ballot

After first
year, funding
reverts back
to the town
wide general
fund to be
appropriated
by town
meeting



“Demand an override!”

Special Town Meeting?

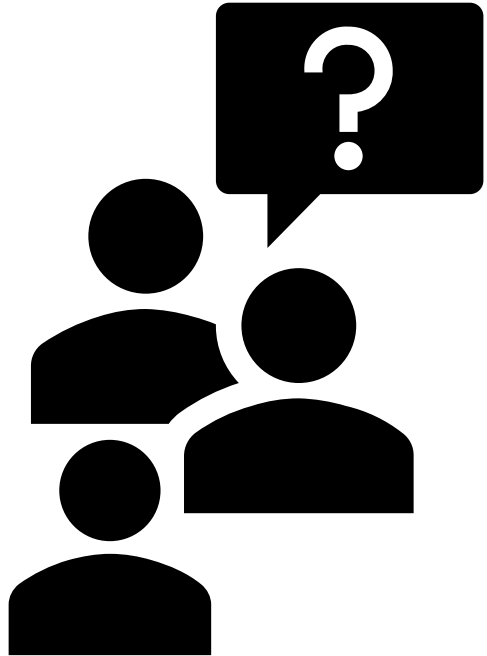
- The Selectboard had “Special Town Meeting” on two agendas in September
- An organized group of over 100 attended and spoke, opposing and shutting down the idea.
- No members of staff or public spoke in favor of this opportunity to place an override article
- School Committee member Sarah Fox spoke about reality of staff reductions if the will of the town continued to turn down additional revenue options.

May 2025 Town Meeting

- School Committee legally must bring forth a balanced budget to town meeting
- The warrant for May Town Meeting opens in January
- School Committee has placed override article for additional School funding for past 6 years
- Superintendent recommends initial budget including staffing levels and expenses
- The School Committee determines if additional funding is needed to balance the budget



The Committee will continue to ask:



How will the proposal impact the education of the students in the Marblehead Public Schools?

Is the proposal affordable and sustainable?

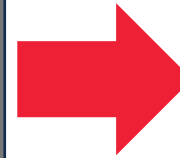


Where do we go from here?

The Committee will continue to bargain in good faith with each of the MEA Units.



The Department of Labor Relations took jurisdiction of (they did NOT dismiss) the Committee's request for mediation to resolve the impasse with the Custodians' unit. The DLR ordered the parties to meet again, as the MEA told the DLR they have room to move in their wage proposal. The DLR has directed the parties to report back result by November 8th and will then likely assign mediator if no agreement has been met.



The Committee is committed to bargaining a contract that meets the needs of Marblehead students, staff and the community.

