# North Brookfield Public Schools FY27 Operating Budget

Prepared by Superintendent Tim McCormick with the North Brookfield Public Schools administrative team

STRATEGIC PLANNING

# Mission-Driven Budget Development

## Our Mission

We empower every student to reach their full potential by providing a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking, and a sense of belonging. We prepare students for success in a global society through continuous improvement and innovation.

## Our Vision

We strive to create a school community where every stakeholder feels valued, connected, and inspired. Students are academically prepared and equipped with the skills needed to thrive in educational pursuits and careers as citizens in an interconnected world.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

# Three-Year Strategic Framework (2024-2027)

### Curriculum & Instruction Enhancement

Continuously improve and innovate curriculum and instructional methods to ensure delivery of high-quality education for all students.

### Meeting Needs of All Students

Provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment that addresses the individual needs of every student through personalized learning plans.

### Fostering Culture of Belonging

Cultivate a diverse, inclusive, and welcoming school culture where all stakeholders feel valued, connected, and part of the community.

Every budget decision is aligned with these strategic objectives, ensuring our financial investments directly support student learning and well-being.

# FY27 Budget Overview: A Responsible Investment

**$7.28**

**FY26 Budget**

Approved budget

**$7.28M**

**FY27 Budget**

With offsets applied

**$9.14M**

**Total Request**

Before revenue offsets

**0.00%**

**Budget Increase**

Over FY26 approved budget

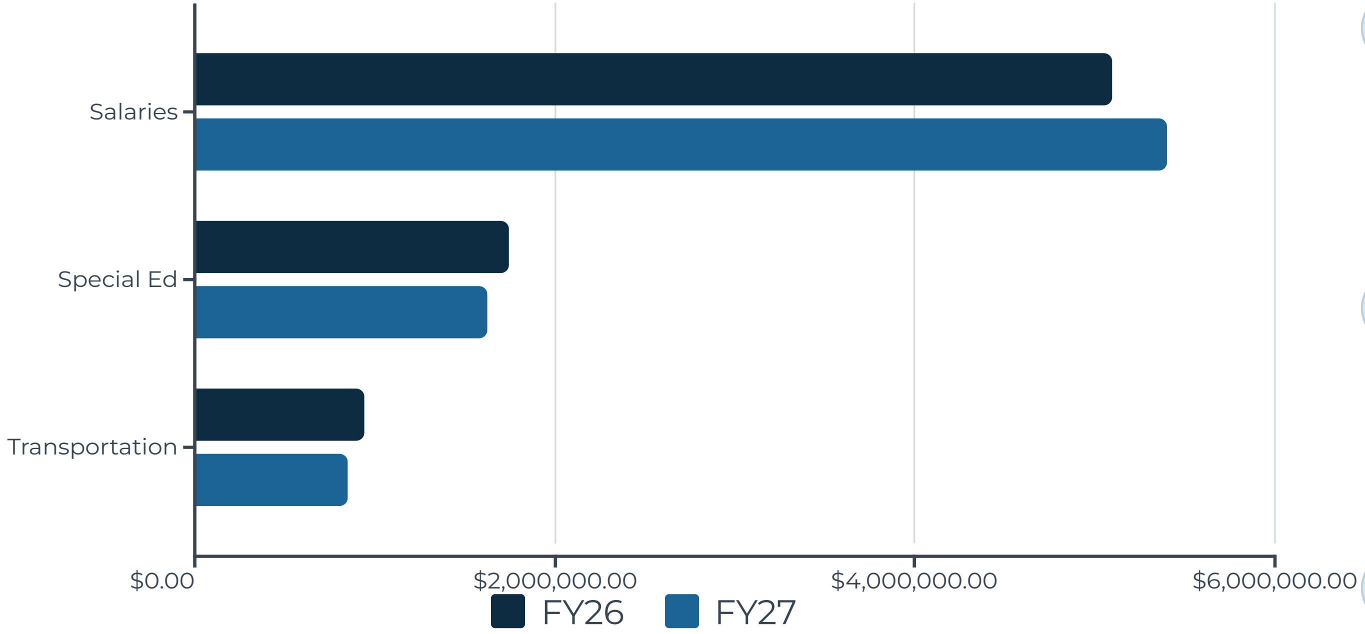
**$0**

**Net Increase**

From FY26 to FY27

This budget represents a thoughtful balance between meeting student needs, honoring contractual obligations, and maintaining fiscal responsibility to North Brookfield taxpayers.

# Three Major Budget Drivers




**Salaries: 73% of total budget**

Up 5.7% due to contractual obligations and steps

**Special Education: Cost savings**

Down 6.8% through in-district program improvements

**Transportation: Increased efficiency**

Down 10.1% through route optimization

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT

# Personnel: Our Greatest Asset

### Instructional Staff

**$119,000 increase** in teacher salaries reflecting contractual steps and lane movement, maintaining high-quality classroom instruction across all grade levels.

### Student Support

**$43,000 increase** in guidance services to expand academic, social-emotional, and post-secondary planning support for students.

### Health Services

**$18,000 increase** in nursing services ensuring we meet growing student health needs and compliance requirements.

### Paraprofessionals

**$95,000 increase** at elementary level tied directly to enrollment trends and IEP requirements for inclusive support.

# Special Education: Strategic Program Development

## Reducing Out-of-District Costs

The FY27 budget reflects a **$118,154 reduction** in special education tuition costs, driven by successfully returning students from out-of-district placements to strengthened in-district programming.

Despite the state's 3.1% tuition increase for private special education schools, our proactive planning has offset these costs while continuing to meet students' individualized needs.

## Required by Law

Federal and state law requires districts to provide services aligned with each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). As student needs evolve, staffing and services must adapt accordingly.

### Key Service Adjustments:

- Maintained school psychologist services with realignment
- Modest increases in speech-language services
- Enhanced BCBA and occupational therapy support
- Continued focus on in-district capacity building

# Notable Budget Adjustments & Reallocations

The FY27 budget reflects strategic adjustments driven by contractual obligations, mandated services, and intentional shifts to optimize programming and efficiency, rather than across-the-board increases. These changes highlight key staffing and operational reallocations.

## Instructional & Support Staff Changes

- Teacher salaries: +$119,000 (contractual step and lane movement)
- Guidance services: +$43,000 (expanded academic, social-emotional, and postsecondary support)
- Nursing services: +$18,000 (growing health needs and compliance)
- Elementary paraprofessionals: +$95,000 (enrollment trends and IEP requirements)
- High school paraprofessionals: -$15,700 (efficient realignment with service delivery)

## Special Education Service Adjustments

- Special Ed Director: +$3,300 (contractual obligations and regulatory complexity)
- School psychologist: -$15,000 (staffing realignment while maintaining service levels)
- Speech-language services: Modest increases for cost-effective mandated service delivery
- BCBA and occupational therapy: Modest increases for complex student needs

## Operational Efficiencies

- Facilities Director maintained at 0.5 FTE (balanced approach for district size)
- Heating oil: -$33,800 (lower fuel prices and reduced usage without compromising comfort)

## Athletics: Responding to Student Interest

- Notable increase of ~$25,000 ($20,000 net after $5,000 offset)
- Two middle school soccer coaching positions
- One high school boys volleyball coach
- Equipment and transportation costs included
- Driven by student participation and access, not expansion for expansion's sake

The FY27 budget reflects a thoughtful balance between meeting student needs, honoring contractual and legal obligations, and identifying efficiencies—prioritizing targeted investments that support students while maintaining long-term financial sustainability and responsible stewardship of community resources.

# Key Funding Terms Explained

## Chapter 70 Funding

Chapter 70 funding is the state's main education aid to school districts. It is the amount of money the Commonwealth provides each year to help fund public education, based on a statewide formula that considers things like student enrollment, student needs, and community ability to pay.

**In plain terms:** "Chapter 70 is the state's share of funding our school budget."

## Required Net School Spending (NSS)

Required Net School Spending is the minimum amount of money a district is required by the state to spend on education in a given year. It represents what the state determines a district must spend to provide an "adequate" education, based on the Chapter 70 foundation budget formula.

**In plain terms:** "Required NSS is the minimum amount we must spend on our schools."

## Required District Contribution

The Required District Contribution is the local share of the Required Net School Spending amount — meaning the minimum amount the town must fund locally (through local revenue/appropriation) to meet the state's education funding requirement. This is calculated within the Chapter 70 formula after accounting for state aid.

**In plain terms:** "Required local contribution is the minimum amount the town must pay toward our school budget."

REVENUE SOURCES

# Understanding Chapter 70 & Funding Streams

### Chapter 70 State Aid

**$5.089 million projected** for FY27, representing approximately 58% of our Foundation Budget. This reflects a modest .83% increase from FY26, consistent with state funding trends.

### Required Net school spending

**$ 9.099 million required** This represents a 3.6% increase, reflecting the Commonwealth's assessment based on property values and resident income.

### Required district contribution

**$4.01 million** which would equate to 100% of required NSS % of foundation.  This requires a state mandated $275,000 increase for FY27.

While Chapter 70 aid and local contribution satisfy Foundation Budget requirements, they don't capture the true cost of operating our schools, making external revenue sources critical.

# Major Offset Revenue Sources

**Total FY27 Offsets: $1.85 million**

### Special Education Circuit Breaker: $835,022

State reimbursement for costs of educating severely high-needs special education students above a certain threshold.

### School Choice Revenue: $527,336

Funding from students choosing to attend North Brookfield from other districts, supporting ongoing staffing and programming.

### Federal IDEA Grants: $142,163

Federal funding ensuring eligible students with disabilities receive free and appropriate public education with individualized services.

### Title Grants: $130,040

Federal support for disadvantaged students (Title I), professional development (Title II), and student support programs (Title IV).

### Rural School Aid: $95,000

State recognition of unique challenges faced by small, rural districts, providing steady support for operations.

# Expanding Career-Connected Learning

### Project Lead The Way Expansion

Expanding **Project Lead The Way** programs across both schools, including Launch and Gateway modules. This initiative culminates in a DESE-recognized Innovative Career Pathway in Advanced Manufacturing, preparing students for future careers.

### Grant-Funded Initiatives

Nearly all of these career-connected learning initiatives are **grant funded**, showcasing our responsible fiscal stewardship and the strong commitment of educators to rigorous, engaging, and equitable learning experiences for all students.

### Investigating History Partnership

Actively pursuing the **Investigating History** program for grades 3–7 through the One8 Foundation. This will extend instructional coherence and foster a deeper understanding of historical concepts across grade levels.

# Benefits of This Responsible Budget

### Class sizes remain stable

Ensures personalized attention and effective learning environments for students, supporting academic success and fostering strong student-teacher relationships.

### Special Ed services delivered closer to home

Provides comfort and convenience for students and families, fostering better integration into local schools and strengthening community ties.

### Fewer costly out-of-district transports

Reduces transportation expenses, allowing valuable resources to be reallocated directly to student support programs and classroom enhancements.

### Staff retention

Maintains experienced educators and support staff, leading to consistent, high-quality instruction and a strong, stable school community.

### Predictable, minimum tax increase

Demonstrates fiscal responsibility, providing stability for taxpayers while ensuring essential educational investments for the future of our students.

LOOKING FORWARD

# FY27 and Beyond: A Strong Foundation

## Strategic Curriculum Investments

Over recent years, we've invested in high-quality instructional materials including Into Reading, Illustrative Math, OpenSciEd, and Project Lead The Way career pathways—nearly all grant-funded.

Our partnership with Novak Consulting supports Universal Design for Learning implementation, strengthening Tier 2 interventions and reimagining high school advisory into a "CREW" block for post-secondary success.

## Commitment to Excellence

This budget balances innovation with sustainability, placing students at the center of every decision. While fiscal pressures will continue, our direction is clear and our foundation is strong.

## Contact Information:

Superintendent Tim McCormick
tmccormick@nbschools.org
508-867-8148

> **"Together, we will continue building a system that reflects our shared belief in the potential of every learner."**