



Programs & Services Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

Present: Councilors Krintzman (Chair), Oliver, Malakie, Lobovits, Baker, and Farrell

Absent: Councilors Humphrey and Micley

Also Present: Councilors Wright and Bixby

City Staff: Anna Nolin, Superintendent; Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Financial and Administrative Officer; Jennifer Steel, Chief Environmental Planner; Andrew Lee, Senior Assistant City Solicitor; Maureen Lemieux, Chief Financial Officer; Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer; and Jaclyn Norton, Committee Clerk

School Committee Members: Christopher Brezski, Chair of School Committee

All agendas and reports, both past and present can be found at the following link: [Programs & Services Committee | City of Newton, MA \(newtonma.gov\)](https://www.newtonma.gov/Programs%20and%20Services)

For more information regarding this meeting, a video recording can be found at the following link: [Programs & Services Committee - November 6, 2024 - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

#435-24 Hancock Estates Easement for Walking Trail Access

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization for the City to accept a Grant of Easement from Hancock Estates LLC for walking trail access over its property at 200 Estate Drive, Chestnut Hill, MA, known as Hancock Estates.

Action: **Programs & Services Approved 5-0 (Councilor Baker Not Voting)**

Note: Jennifer Steel, Chief Environmental Planner, presented the attached presentation that outlined that this easement would complete the trail connection. At the moment, the trail would need to be on a steep stream bank, and approving this easement will allow for a level footbed. The attached presentation shows maps for the site of the easement and the proposed trail entrance.

A Councilor asked if any opposition to the proposal has been raised. Ms. Steel noted that no opposition has been raised. It was asked by another Councilor what people are currently doing to access the area currently and what can be done to reduce traffic for those that want to drive to the trail. Ms. Steel responded that there is no trail present at this location, but there is some

evidence of a few people walking through it. Regarding the concerns about traffic, the Councilor was directed to reach out to the Public Works Department.

Committee members voted 5-0 (Councilor Baker Not Voting) on a motion to approve from Councilor Oliver.

#345-24 Request for Updates from School Committee and Newton Public Schools
COUNCILORS KRINTZMAN AND OLIVER requesting semi-annual updates from the School Committee and Newton Public Schools. The goal of this item will be to increase information sharing between these parties and the City Council per the recommendation from the Community Dialog Working Group.

Action: Programs & Services Held 6-0

Note: Anna Nolin, Superintendent, described that Newton Public Schools (NPS) has just completed its portrait of a learner process which will be used to help develop the new 3–5-year strategic plan. The attached presentation outlines the current challenges of NPS, the services that the district needs to deliver, and changes that have impacted NPS over the last 30 years. Regarding whether expenses should be down due to enrollment being down, Superintendent Nolin noted the lack of common and systematic emotional and academic curriculum and services. This is coupled with increases to the budget not keeping pace with inflation previously which has led to holes/gaps in providing the strongest programs. Superintendent Nolin described that NPS is currently approaching a funding gap and added that if every cost-saving measure outlined in the presentation was done there still would be a funding gap.

A Councilor asked if we are looking at reducing elementary schools to help bridge this funding gap. Superintendent Nolin and School Committee Chair Brezski both noted that this is not currently being explored. Chair Brezski added that there will be difficult decisions that will need to be made to bridge this funding gap. Regarding Newton Community Education (NCE), it was stated that they have been operating at a loss of \$1.3 million per year for the last three years and that the funding obligations for this are being transferred from the City to NPS. It was added by School Committee Chair Brezski and Superintendent Nolin that this was a large shift from pre-pandemic revenue and the need to evaluate this programming, so it meets the needs of the Community. The Chair asked if the schools would continue to be closed on election day as they were for the 2024 Federal Election. Superintendent Nolin said that this would continue for the November election to aid NPS administrators in meeting contract obligations of the new teachers' contract.

Councilors voted 6-0 on a motion to hold from Councilor Oliver.

#297-24 Requesting discussion on the current status of transitioning to electric school buses

COUNCILORS LOBOVITS, HUMPHREY, MALAKIE, LAREDO, GREENBERG, ALBRIGHT, KRINTZMAN, MICLEY, AND LIPOF requesting a discussion on the

investigation by NPS administration into transitioning school buses to electric powered vehicles.

Action: **Programs & Services No Action Necessary 6-0**

Note: Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Financial and Administrative Officer, described the current yellow bus service within Newton. This is contained in the attached presentation. He outlined that electric buses have a number of benefits, including reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced maintenance costs, and the potential for fleets to partner with local utilities to feed power back to the grid. There are a number of challenges, including the City not owning the bus depot to install chargers, initial costs being 3-4 times the cost of a diesel bus, and complexities of applying for grants when the City contracts out this service. The attached presentation outlines activities that the City has been engaged in relating to bringing electric school buses to Newton. Mr. Hurley emphasized that a next step for the City can be to begin looking into either purchasing or leasing land for a bus depot. Doing so would save the schools approximately \$300,000 - \$360,000 per year in the bus contract.

A Councilor asked if Newton is behind other communities when it comes to the transition to electric buses. Currently, there are a couple of communities in the nation that have gotten electric buses due to receiving grant money, but currently in Massachusetts, Beverly is the only community with any that are operational. It was also reaffirmed by Mr. Hurley that the technology of these electric school buses is getting better every year. Regarding a bus depot, Mr. Hurley stated that it would need to be roughly 1.5-2 acres of land and, in response to a Councilor's question, said that they are exploring partnering with other communities for a regional bus depot.

Committee members voted 6-0 on a motion of No Action Necessary from Councilor Oliver.

Referred to Programs & Services and Finance Committees

#409-24 **Authorization to appropriate \$2,000,000 to the NPS Educational Stabilization Fund**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate two million dollars (\$2,000,000) from June 30, 2024 Certified Free Cash to the NPS Educational Stabilization Fund.

Action: **Programs & Services Approved 6-0**

Note: Maureen Lemieux, Chief Financial Officer, described that \$23.6 million was certified as free cash last month. The administration dedicated a portion of these funds to projects that otherwise would have been bonded to not increase our debt service obligations. This allocation would help extend the life of the NPS Educational Stabilization Fund created earlier this year.

A Councilor asked if these funds were considered when describing the funding gap in the previous presentation. School Committee Chair Brezski said that they were aware of these

funds being dedicated and that they contribute to helping bridge that gap. When asked how \$2 million was decided, Ms. Lemieux stated that they wanted to ensure Superintendent Nolin had the necessary funding to move forward with purchasing new Math Curriculum when the time came.

Committee members voted 6-0 on a motion to approve from Councilor Oliver.

Referred to Programs & Services and Finance Committees

#412-24 Authorization to appropriate and expend \$338,119 for McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Transportation

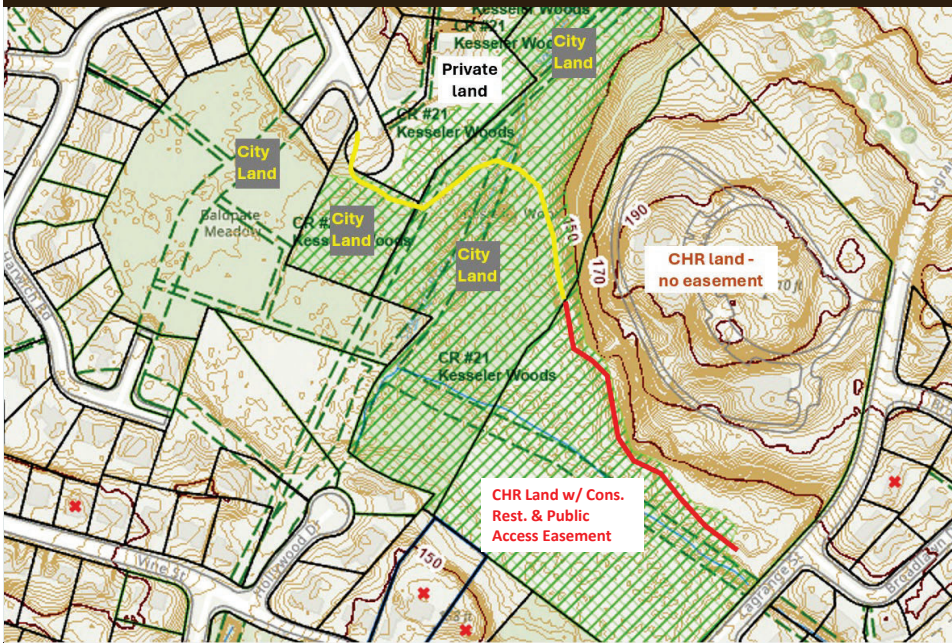
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend the state reimbursement in the sum of three hundred and thirty-eight thousand one hundred and nineteen dollars (\$338,119) from June 30, 2024 Certified Free Cash to Newton Public Schools for FY24 McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Transportation.

Action: **Programs & Services Approved 6-0**

Note: Ms. Lemieux explained that this funding is a reimbursement from the state for McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Transportation. Councilors raising no objection voted 6-0 on a motion to approve from Councilor Oliver.

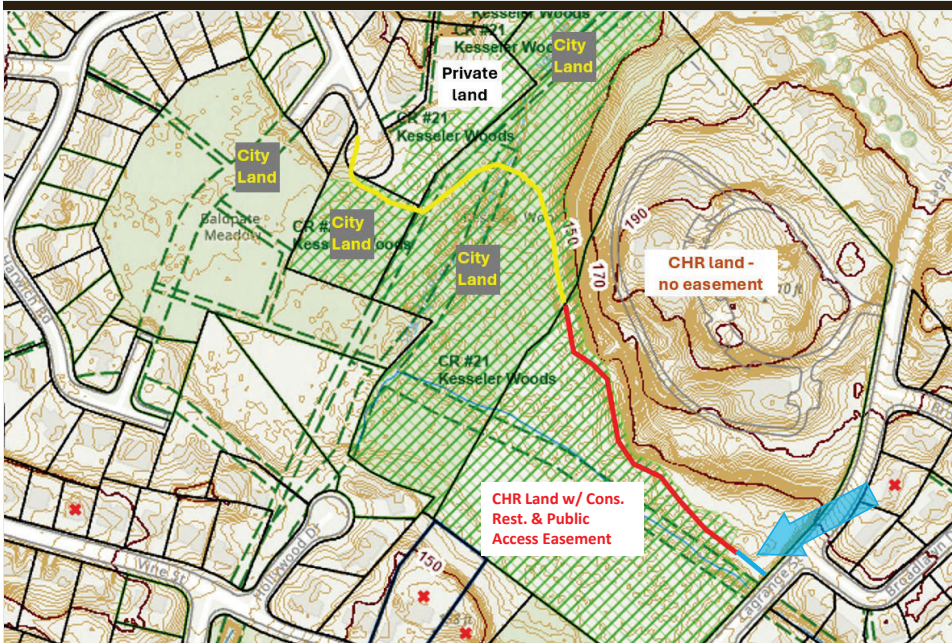
The meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Josh Krintzman, Chair



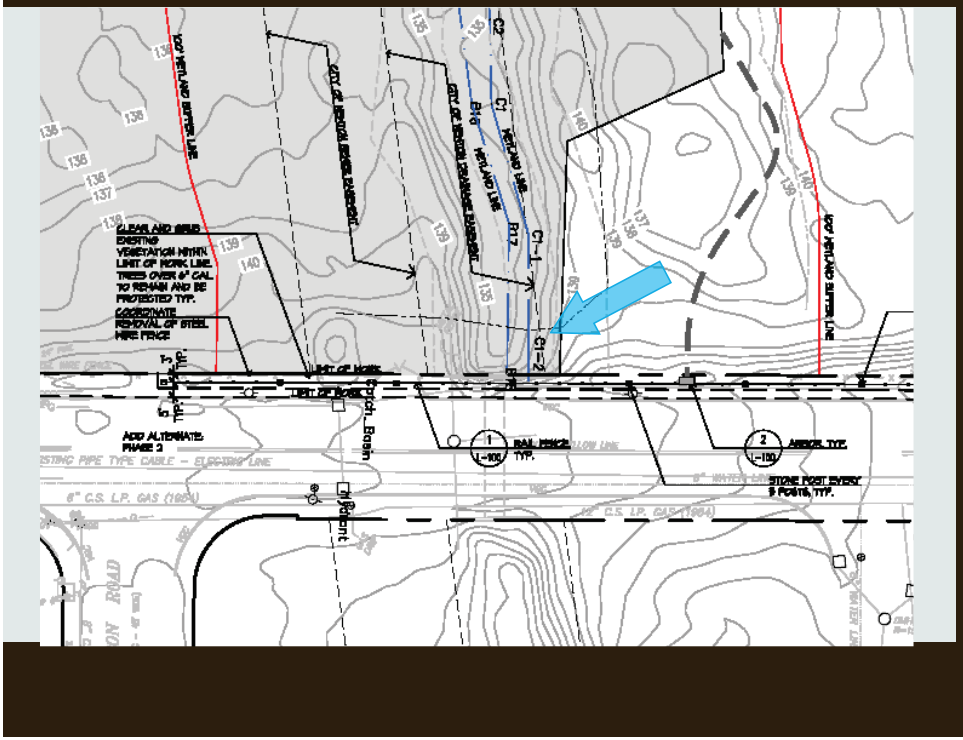
KESSELER CONSERVATION AREA TRAIL ALIGNMENT

With a gap at the
southern end



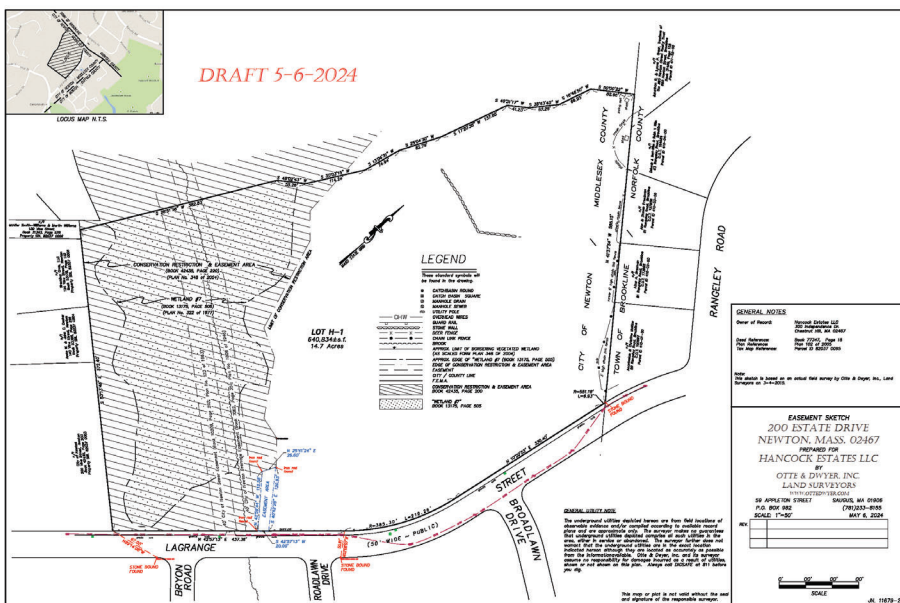
KESSELER CONSERVATION AREA TRAIL ALIGNMENT

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CURRENT PUBLIC ACCESS EASEMENT

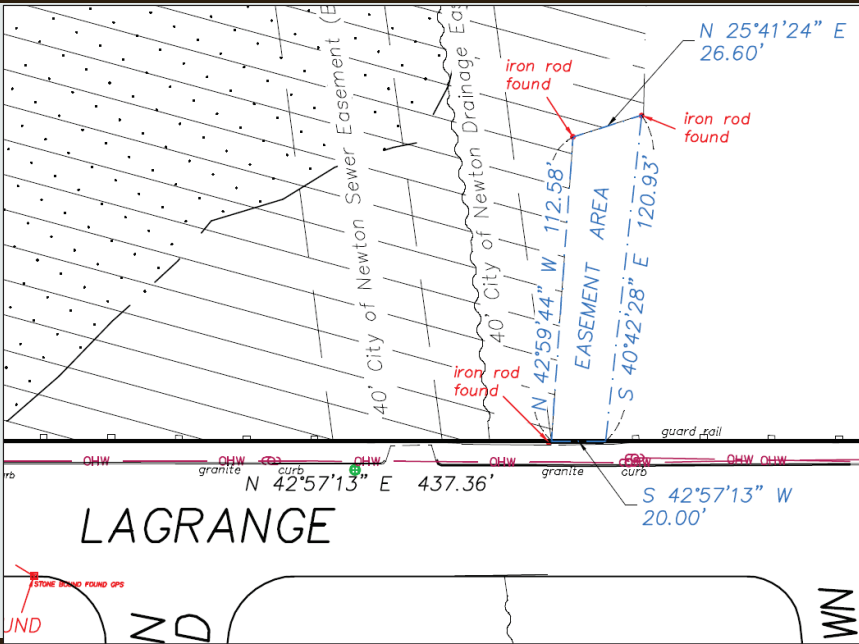
Would force the trail to be on the steep stream bank



PROPOSED PUBLIC ACCESS EASEMENT

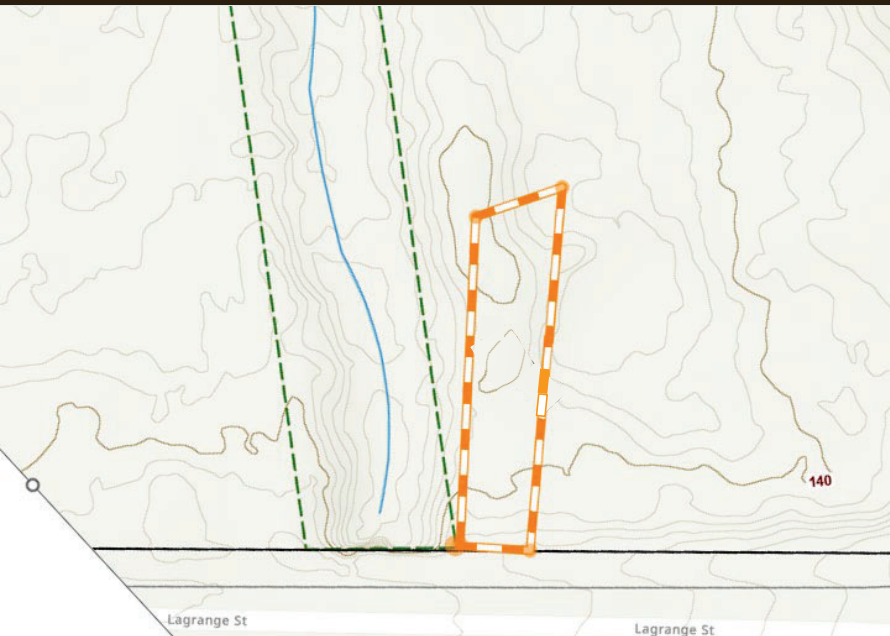
Will allow for a level footbed





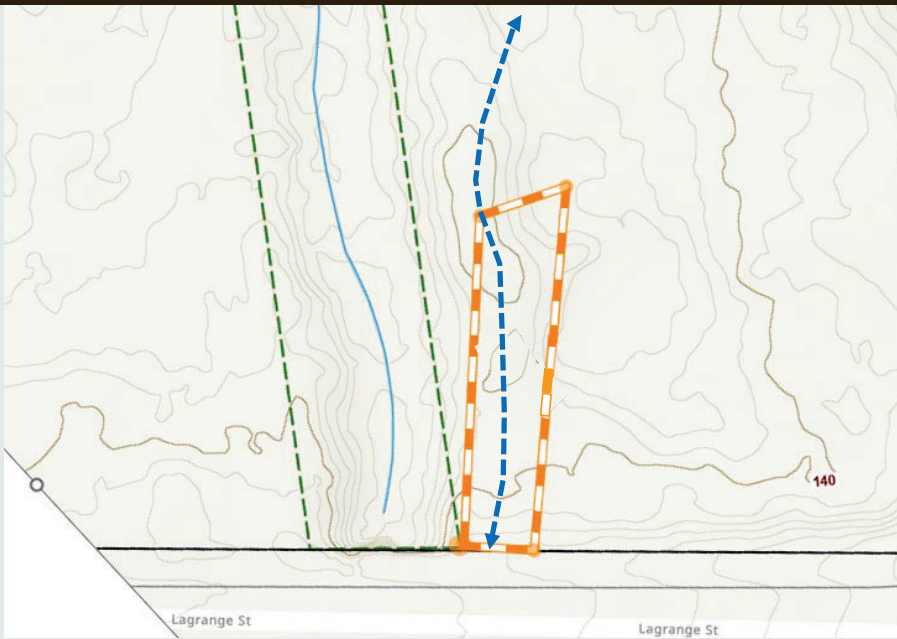
PROPOSED PUBLIC ACCESS EASEMENT

Will allow for a level
footbed



PROPOSED PUBLIC ACCESS EASEMENT

Will allow for a level
footbed



PROPOSED EASEMENT

Will allow for a level
footbed and will complete
the trail connection



PROPOSED TRAIL ENTRANCE

At Lagrange Street



PROPOSED TRAIL ENTRANCE

At Lagrange Street



PROPOSED TRAIL ENTRANCE

At Lagrange Street

How does our garden grow?



Schools in the Garden City: Newton Public Schools

Dr. Anna Nolin, Superintendent and Mr. Liam Hurley, CFO
City Council – Programs & Services Committee
November 6, 2024



- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Empathy
- Adaptability
- Learner's Mindset

Newton Schools Portrait of a Learner



Our Goals

Foster Joyful and Supportive Learning Environments

Provide Culturally Responsive, High Quality, Rigorous Instruction for All

Ensure Equitable Access to Effective Educators

Optimize District Planning and Budgeting Ecosystem

School Committee
[DRAFT budget guidelines](#)
for FY26 budget.



Where every student can thrive

**Growing minds,
hearts and bonds
for students to
independently
and safely
navigate the
world, and in
doing so, change
it for the better.**

OUR PROMISE AND WHAT NEWTON FAMILIES EXPECT:

STRONG, CHALLENGING AND ENGAGING ACADEMIC PROGRAM OF STUDY



- Reasonable class sizes with personalized learning
- Specialist teachers to support classroom instruction
- Academic coordination across district
- Multiple pathways for diverse learners (AP classes, CTE, etc.)
- Multiple World Language offerings, including **Spanish, French, Mandarin Chinese, and Italian**
- Seven distinguished, state-recognized **Career and Technical Education programs—we NEED to add more! (Both sides of town to be able to attend.)**
- Approximately **20 College-Board approved Advanced Placement** courses—not enough space in them for all interested students!
- **Neighborhood schools** that build community and connection
- **Thirty-four varsity sports** at each Newton high school, and 10 additional interscholastic sports at the middle school level
- **Award-winning fine and performing arts** programming
- A wide range of **student clubs and academic teams and other learning opportunities** at the middle and high school level



OUR PROMISE AND WHAT NEWTON FAMILIES EXPECT:

INCLUSIVE & WELCOMING SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL COMMUNITIES



- Smaller elementary schools
 - With parent support networks built in
- In-district special education programming to serve needs of diverse learners vs. sending students to outplaced programs
- English Learner programs - more than 50 languages supported
- Athletics, fine arts, clubs, and activities beyond academia
- Adaptive assessments to provide personalized intervention blocks



OUR PROMISE AND WHAT NEWTON FAMILIES EXPECT:

ROBUST AND MEANINGFUL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

● ● ● ● ● ● ●

- Staff Specialists
 - School guidance counselors
 - Social workers
 - Adjustment counselors
 - Psychologists
 - Social emotional interventionists
- Programming
 - Social & emotional learning programs
 - Partnerships with community mental health organizations
 - K-8 social emotional screening assessment for all students
 - Connectedness surveys for all students



OUR PROMISE AND WHAT NEWTON FAMILIES EXPECT:

MODERN, INNOVATIVE, AND ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGY

● ● ● ● ●

- Dedicated 1:1 device program for grades 6-12
- Adaptive digital tools to personalize learning and practice
- Sophisticated and adaptive assessment tools (K-8)
- Digital creation tools
- Access to content by text, audio, & video

Current Challenges



Old and dated buildings not conducive to 21st century learning



District lacks Early College & Certification Programs (e.g., early child care, computer repair, web design) that are available across rest of Commonwealth.



Growing mental health needs of students



Curriculum that has not been updated in over two decades with exception of elementary math and literacy/reading. Few curricular or lab resources.



Newton in 1994 vs. 2024: The Difference 30 Years Makes

Increased State Mandates

Examples:

- All MIAA games required a certified athletic trainer on site/staff
- Specific curriculum frameworks in all subjects
- Must employ a district physician
- Students can no longer be suspended or expelled, must have behavior assessments and plans
- All students must pass MCAS to graduate including disabled or English Language Learner students
- All staff must have a sheltered English immersion designation / training to be certified
- Required legal and cyber security requirements and trainings.

Increased Complexity

Examples:

- Board Certified Behavior Analysts
- Behavior Technicians
- Assistive Technology Experts
- Athletic trainers
- District Technology and Cybersecurity Director
- Instructional Technology/Library Science staff
- Cybersecurity and AI protections and procedures/investments

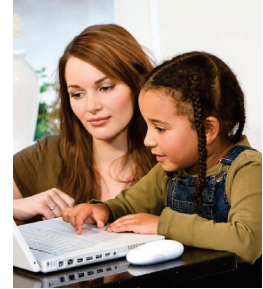




Newton in 1994 vs. 2024: The Difference 30 Years Makes Parental Expectations

Examples:

- **Frequent communication and teacher feedback updates, full curricular and lesson transparency, 24 hour response time from all administrators and staff**
- **Full breadth of after school programming and athletics**
- **Extra weeks of summer special education programming**
- **Multilingual learner options**
- **Global travel and field trips without financial restrictions**
- **Neuropsych level evaluations in basic special education testing**
- **Individualized College Counseling**
- **Average English, math and STEM teachers write over 50 college recommendations a year**
- **Field trips at every grade level**
- **Arts experiences woven into school day**
- **Medical care on site for diabetics, those with catheters, particular therapies and allergies, medication administration on site**
- **Safeguards from trauma of geopolitical events**
- **Therapeutic on-demand supports**



Enrollment is down: Shouldn't Expenses Be?

Complexity and severity of both mental health and academic recovery need is extended in NPS because of **lack of common and systematic emotional and academic curriculum and services.**

Prior budget cuts have created **key holes/gaps** in our ability to provide the strongest general education academic programs.

- Statewide, special education needs have outpaced state and federal funding and **promised reimbursements for programs and transportation have not been realized** (expected 75%, received 44% in FY 24).
- Newton has **redeployed general education resources to create in-house programming and added special education supports** that has reduced out of district and other special education costs.
- **While overall enrollment has decreased in Newton, special education enrollment has risen.**
- Statewide, Student Opportunity Act (SOA) monies have been infused in many poorer districts but **not in Newton** to a meaningful result.
- Like the rest of the Commonwealth, special education transportation and placement costs outpace budgets and Newton receives less aid proportionally than other districts.

The actual savings and how...

- In FY 24, the district saved
- the expected \$3million carryforward
 - \$1.6 million additional savings in personnel
 - \$1 million additional in various operations accounts

How?

- Smart hiring
- In-house special education programs guard against outside placements (OSD 14% increase in one year two years ago, NPS programming guards against this volatility)
- Cutting down on redundant tools, programs and materials
- Implementation of checks and balances on purchasing
- Removing many HR support contracts and unorganized teaching and learning contracts

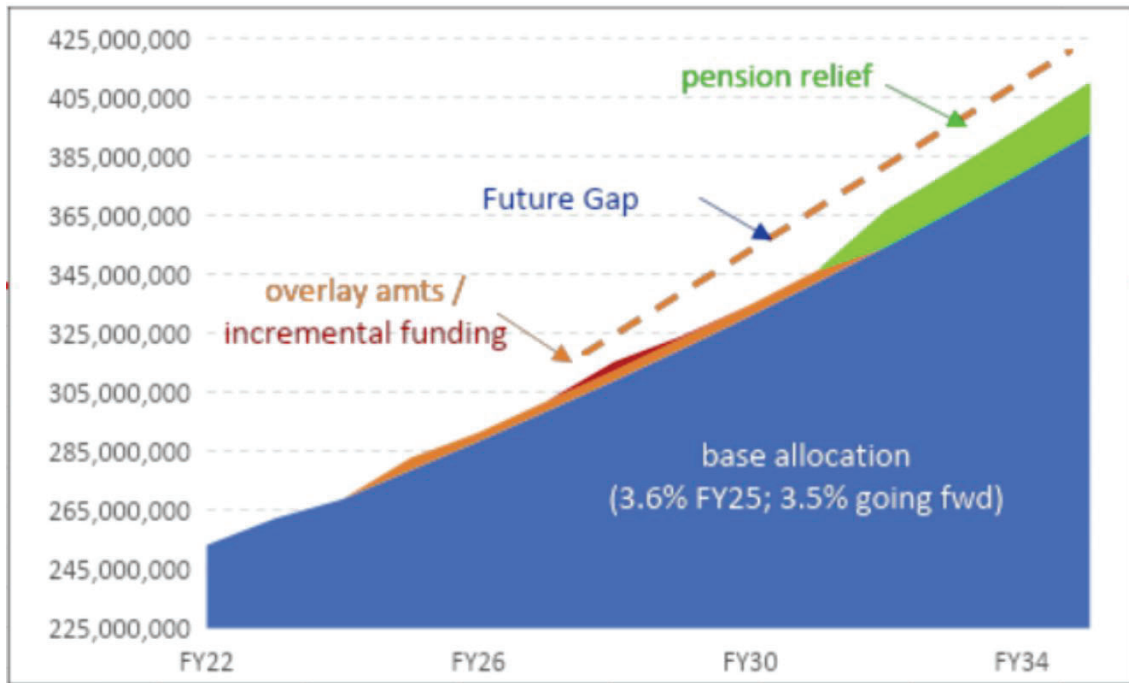
Future:

We will have to continue to bring in our own revenue and reduce other costs! Need support for ideas like school choice, fee increases, and other changes.

Multi-Year Efficiencies & Savings

Potential Efficiencies and Savings relative to FY24 Budget												
Description of Actual Actions /Savings	FY25 Estimate	FY26 Estimate	FY27 Estimate	FY28 Estimate	FY29 Estimate	FY30 Estimate	FY31 Estimate	FY32 Estimate	FY33 Estimate	FY34 Estimate	FY35 Estimate	
Contracted /Consulting Services Savings due to addition of Williams Reflection Classroom	-\$217,000	-\$224,595	-\$232,456	-\$240,592	-\$249,012	-\$257,728	-\$266,748	-\$276,085	-\$285,748	-\$295,749	-\$306,100	
Additional Revenue from Strong Fee Collection Practices	-\$50,000	-\$51,750	-\$53,561	-\$55,436	-\$57,376	-\$59,384	-\$61,463	-\$63,614	-\$65,840	-\$68,145	-\$70,530	
Thrive Development and Alumni Development and Donations Campaign	-\$10,000	-\$10,350	-\$10,712	-\$11,087	-\$11,475	-\$11,877	-\$12,293	-\$12,723	-\$13,168	-\$13,629	-\$14,106	
Helpsy Textile Bins	-\$39,000	-\$40,365	-\$41,778	-\$43,240	-\$44,753	-\$46,320	-\$47,941	-\$49,619	-\$51,356	-\$53,153	-\$55,013	
Reduction of Asst. Director	-\$89,000											
Reduction of HS program due to attrition	-\$103,000											
Total Per Year	-\$508,000	-\$327,060	-\$338,507	-\$350,355	-\$362,617	-\$375,309	-\$388,445	-\$402,040	-\$416,112	-\$430,676	-\$445,749	
Cumulative Total		-\$835,060	-\$1,173,567	-\$1,523,922	-\$1,886,539	-\$2,261,848	-\$2,650,293	-\$3,052,333	-\$3,468,445	-\$3,899,120	-\$4,344,869	
Savings and Efficiency Ideas under Consideration												
Private School Busing Change - saves us from adding 2 buses needed for overcrowding		-\$250,000	-\$258,750	-\$267,806	-\$277,179	-\$286,881	-\$296,922	-\$307,314	-\$318,070	-\$329,202	-\$340,724	
Expand tuition preschool classrooms at elementary schools		-\$25,000	-\$25,875	-\$26,781	-\$27,718	-\$28,688	-\$29,692	-\$30,731	-\$31,807	-\$32,920	-\$34,072	
Peschool programs tuition rate increase		-\$50,000	-\$51,750	-\$53,561	-\$55,436	-\$57,376	-\$59,384	-\$61,463	-\$63,614	-\$65,840	-\$68,145	
FY26 - Use of School Building rate increase		-\$50,000	-\$51,750	-\$53,561	-\$55,436	-\$57,376	-\$59,384	-\$61,463	-\$63,614	-\$65,840	-\$68,145	
Fee Increases in accordance with actual rate increase			-\$150,000	-\$155,250	-\$160,684	-\$166,308	-\$172,128	-\$178,153	-\$184,388	-\$190,842	-\$197,521	
Transition to Chromebooks or BYOD at HS' for students (Needs more investigation)		-\$150,000	-\$155,250	-\$160,684	-\$166,308	-\$172,128	-\$178,153	-\$184,388	-\$190,842	-\$197,521	-\$204,435	
Bus Depot Parking				-\$350,000	-\$362,250	-\$374,929	-\$388,051	-\$401,633	-\$415,690	-\$430,239	-\$445,298	
Total per year incremental		-\$525,000	-\$693,375	-\$1,067,643	-\$1,105,011	-\$1,143,686	-\$1,183,715	-\$1,225,145	-\$1,268,025	-\$1,312,406	-\$1,358,340	
Cumulative Total		-\$525,000	-\$1,218,375	-\$2,286,018	-\$3,391,029	-\$4,534,715	-\$5,718,430	-\$6,943,575	-\$8,211,600	-\$9,524,006	-\$10,882,346	
Major Policy and Community Impact Savings and Efficiency Ideas												
Consider State Mandated transportation (only K -12 students residing more than 2.0 miles from attending school). Would result in needing approximately 6 total buses		-\$2,500,000	-\$2,587,500	-\$2,678,063	-\$2,771,795	-\$2,868,808	-\$2,969,216	-\$3,073,138	-\$3,180,698	-\$3,292,023	-\$3,407,243	
Acceptance of School Choice students (Assumes 50 student @\$7,500 per student)*		-\$375,000	-\$388,125	-\$401,709	-\$415,769	-\$430,321	-\$445,382	-\$460,971	-\$477,105	-\$493,803	-\$511,087	
*\$7500 is the state average for reimbursement of all types of school choice students/sped and gen ed												
Total per year incremental		-\$2,875,000	-\$2,975,625	-\$3,079,772	-\$3,187,564	-\$3,299,129	-\$3,414,598	-\$3,534,109	-\$3,657,803	-\$3,785,826	-\$3,918,330	
Cumulative Total		-\$2,875,000	-\$5,850,625	-\$8,930,397	-\$12,117,961	-\$15,417,089	-\$18,831,688	-\$22,365,797	-\$26,023,599	-\$29,809,425	-\$33,727,755	
All Savings Combined from above (Includes Actual, Considerations, and Major Policy and Community Impact)												
Total per year incremental	-\$508,000	-\$3,727,060	-\$4,007,507	-\$4,497,770	-\$4,655,192	-\$4,818,124	-\$4,986,758	-\$5,161,294	-\$5,341,940	-\$5,528,908	-\$5,722,419	
Cumulative Total		-\$4,235,060	-\$8,242,567	-\$12,740,337	-\$17,395,529	-\$22,213,652	-\$27,200,410	-\$32,361,704	-\$37,703,644	-\$43,232,552	-\$48,954,971	

The City Financial Ecosystem and NPS Gap



Future Proofing NPS

Catch-Up

Reliance on one-time funds to address what needs ongoing attention.

- Purchase of curriculum resources
- New Buildings
- Capital improvements
- End the Break/Fix Technology and Infrastructure Model
- Cycle of reliable onboarding professional development
- Professional development for an experienced teaching staff (60% have been here 15 years or more).
- Early College and College Block experiences in high schools
- Adequate Early intervention staff and systems.

Thriving

What we need to do to serve today's students and community.

- Revise all curricular programs to meet current standards, technology integration and real-world applications via our Profile of a Learner
- Expand in-house special education programs to reduce out of district program tuitions
- Reduce student learning gaps through general education supports, materials and training for teachers to design personalized instruction
- Expand mental health lessons and interventions.

Futuring

What's Coming down the Pike, Rt. 9, Comm Ave and the Global Superhighways.

- Universal Pre-K
- College and Career Pathways and work experiences built into academic program for all students
- Certification pathways for students upon graduation (computer, fitness, preschool, web design)
- Expansion of CTE/VoTech Offerings for all sides of city and any student
- State of the art STEM middle school facility
- Sustainability practices such as EV busing and up-to-date heating and cooling options/eliminate fossil fuels.

Content Area Focus	Phase 1: Self-Study	Phase 2: Design/ re-design/ pilot (purchase year)	Phase 3: Professional Development implementation	Phase 4: Monitor, Refine and Evaluate (Year 1)	Phase 4: Monitor, Refine and Evaluate (Year 1)
ELA	2021- 22	2022-23	2023-24 (K-2) 2024-25 (3-5)	2024-2025 (K-2) 2025-26 (3-5)	2025-27 6-12
ELL	2023-24	2024-25	2024-2025 (3-5)	2025-2026 (3-5)	K-12
Math	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027- 2028	2027-2028
Social Studies	2025-26	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2031
P.E./Health/ Wellness	2024-25	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Science	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
Technology/ Business	2024-25	2024-2025 (6-8) 2025-26 (K-5) 2025-26 (HS)	2025-26 (6-8) 2026-2027 (K-5) 2026-2027 (HS)	2026-27 (6-8) 2027-28 (K-5) 2027-28 (HS)	2027-28 (6-8) 2028-29 (K-5) 2028-29 (HS)
World Language Fine Arts	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Fine Arts Performing Arts	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31

The Major Catch-Up The Academic Program: Curriculum Renewal Cycle: *Note Cost Years in Phase 2 Column through 2031



Your Questions!



Electric Bus Update

Electric Bus - Information Gathering

Current Yellow Bus Service Details -

- Currently in year 3 of a 5-year contract with Eastern Bus Expires June 30, 2027.
- Two bus depots located within Newton are leased by Eastern Bus
- 42 total buses (31 In-City, 5 METCO, and 6 shared)+ 5 backup buses/drivers
- 83 morning routes, 77 afternoon routes, 22 late bus runs (across all schools)
- Late buses for middle and high schools run every day
- Buses also serve NPS' robust athletic program for fall, winter and spring sports
- Buses are used for field trips in between AM and PM routes
- 14 bus routes for Newton private schools (5 morning, 7 afternoon, 2 Late routes)
- 3,624 bus passes issued for 2024-2025 school year (as of 10/23/24)
- In FY25, \$120,600 for each in City bus per year.



Electric Bus - Information Gathering

Benefits of Electric School Buses*

- Zero tailpipe pollution -- students, drivers, and members of the community will be exposed to significantly less harmful diesel emissions like PM and NOX
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions compared to diesel school buses
- Reduced maintenance costs
 - Less brake wear due to regenerative braking and no engine or exhaust system maintenance
 - Potential for reduced fuel costs compared to diesel depending on electricity costs
- Quiet, clean operation
- Potential for [fleets to partner with local utilities to feed power back into the grid when buses are not in use](#) and electricity demand is high
- Improved student attendance and academic achievement

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

EPA Clean School Bus Program provides \$5 billion over five years (FY 2022-2026) to clean a substantial portion of the nation's fleet of nearly 500,000 school buses.

* from the EPA's Clean School Bus website



Electric Bus - Activities to Date

- Eastern Bus applied for 2 buses in the first round of EPA EV Bus funding, but was not successful, as priority is given to Environmental Justice (EJ), low income, Bureau of Indian Affairs and rural districts.
- Met with Highland Electric for informational purposes and received a presentation on logistics of transition to EVs and also reviewed current leased bus depot locations with Highland
- Applied to MA Clean Energy Center for consulting services to help us transition to EV buses, but did not receive award, as priority is given to EJ, low income, rural and Bureau of Indian Affairs districts. *We continue to maintain contact with the point of contact at Power Options for this program.
- Applied to MA Clean Energy Center for fleet planning services. This was awarded and is being utilized through DPW, as it is tailored toward planning for **owned** vehicles.
- Worked with former Director of Transportation Planning, Josh Ostroff, on DOT project looking for feedback on use of DOT owned land in the area. Suggestion to use DOT property as an EV bus depot that could be shared by neighboring communities was not incorporated into the final recommendations.

Electric Bus - Activities to Date

- Currently reviewing possible ways to implement a 2 EV bus pilot program.
- City recently received DOE EECBG grant for EV charging stations to be installed throughout the city, including in school parking lots. This gives us an opportunity to learn about logistics and requirements for installing chargers as we continue to look for locations for one or two EV bus depots.
- Attended Altwheels Fleet Day, an annual conference of East Coast corporate, federal, municipal, and state fleet managers, as well as others connected to the energy transition in transportation.
- Exploring potential sites for bus depot location(s) in the city.
- Exploring opportunities for regional hubs for electric buses - could be a potential grant opportunity through MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Council).
- Established contacts with partners at MA CEC, Eversource, Power Options, EPA.
- Collaboration with city departments - Transportation Planning, Co-director of Sustainability, NPS
- Participating in DOE Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant webinars with communities across the country.



Electric Bus - Challenges

Challenges to implementing EV School buses for Newton:

1. City/NPS does not currently own land for a bus depot and therefore a location to install chargers.
2. The infrastructure for charging stations and electrical capacity may be a challenge, requiring coordination and engagement with Eversource.
3. Funding/Cost of EVs - initial EV Bus cost is up to 3-4 times the cost of a diesel bus.
4. Navigating the grants, rebates and technical services programs is challenging and programs generally prioritize environmental justice (EJ), rural, tribal, and low income districts.
5. Term - electric bus contact vendors prefer a 10 plus year contact to amortize up-front costs.
6. Resistance of bus vendors to transition to EVs (80% of MA districts contract out for bus services), this is due to cost, risk and complexity of buying/leasing/financing, lack of charging infrastructure, and lack of provided parking.
7. The current model of contracting out for bus services creates questions of who owns and operates the electric buses. Our vendor would need to own and operate the fleet. How does (NPS) apply for grants without owning the buses?



Electric Bus - Costs & Funding

- Buses, Charging Infrastructure, Land, etc.
- Federal and State Funding - IRA, BIL, DOE, EPA, MA CEC
- Funding for buses, charging stations and technical assistance is available
- Navigating the grants, rebates and technical services programs is challenging and programs generally prioritize EJ, rural, tribal, and low income districts.
- Funding for charging stations is available through a separate state grant program (MassEVIP) as well as federal programs.

<https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/events-related-clean-school-bus-program>

<https://afdc.energy.gov/vehicles/electric-school-buses#introduction>

<https://www.masscec.com/accelerating-clean-transportation-act-school-bus-overview>

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-clean-cities-coalition-programs-and-projects>

<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-massevip-public-access-charging-incentives>



Electric Bus - Next Step Recommendations

- 1. Identify Land for Bus Depot(s) - either leased or owned**
 - If Newton owns or leases the bus depot location(s), the schools would save approximately \$300,000-\$360,000 per year in the bus contract.
 - If Newton owns or leases the depot(s), it gives the city the ability to install charging stations. *Voltrek was able to optimize installation for leased property in Boston.
 - If Newton owns or leases the bus depot(s), it could open up competition for the next bus contract, since one requirement of our contract is having a depot in or close to Newton.
- 2. Consider Applying for Funding for EV Buses and Chargers - 1/9/25 deadline**
 - Further investigate options for how to manage buses to be ready if/when funding is awarded. We are currently not ready to apply for grants for EV buses given the complexity and challenges identified above.
- 3. Connect with Eversource** to Evaluate Electric Capacity for Potential Depot Locations
- 4. Review / Revise Bus Contract Language for next bus contract**
 - Review contract language to ensure that it attracts multiple bidders - historically only have had 1 vendor bidding.
 - Add/edit language to support the transition to EV Bus Options



#345-24 & #297-24

	<u>FY19:</u>	<u>FY23:</u>		<u>FY19:</u>	<u>FY23:</u>		<u>FY19:</u>	<u>FY23:</u>		<u>FY19:</u>	<u>FY23:</u>	
	<u>Elem</u>	<u>Elem</u>		<u>MS</u>	<u>MS</u>		<u>HS</u>	<u>HS</u>		<u>NPS</u>	<u>NPS</u>	
Enrollment	5,626	4,951	(675)	2,903	2,652	(251)	4,082	4,015	(67)	12,611	11,618	(993)
			-12.0%			-8.6%			-1.6%			-7.9%
Principal's Office:	32.0	31.5	(0.5)	25.0	25.0	-	39.4	41.5	2.1	96.4	98.0	1.6
			-			-			-			-
General Education:			-			-			-			-
Teacher Salaries	276.0	251.0	(25.0)	194.3	192.7	(1.6)	265.9	257.2	(8.7)	736.2	700.9	(35.3)
Other	114.4	117.3	2.9	4.0	0.5	(3.5)	30.8	30.4	(0.4)	149.2	148.2	(1.0)
Total	390.4	368.3	(22.1)	198.3	193.2	(5.1)	296.7	287.6	(9.1)	885.4	849.1	(36.3)
												-4.1%
ELL:	32.9	30.1	(2.8)	9.7	7.9	(1.8)	7.4	6.5	(0.9)	50.0	44.5	(5.5)
Career & Technical Education							16.0	15.1		16.0	15.1	
Library Services	11.0	10.2	(0.8)	4.0	4.0	-	4.0	4.6	0.6	19.0	18.8	(0.2)
Student Services / Special Ed:												
Special Education Teachers	59.6	67.8	8.2	47.4	55.0	7.6	43.3	46.4	3.1	150.3	169.2	18.9
Inclusion Facilitators	21.0	19.0	(2.0)	8.6	9.5	0.9	10.0	10.5	0.5	39.6	39.0	(0.6)
Aides	105.6	108.8	3.2	51.2	44.9	(6.3)	42.1	39.9	(2.2)	198.9	193.6	(5.3)
Aide Specialists	89.9	110.7	20.8	26.8	36.9	10.1	27.6	24.6	(3.0)	144.3	172.2	27.9
Guidance Counselors	-	-	-	16.3	15.3	(1.0)	22.0	20.4	(1.6)	38.3	35.7	(2.6)
Other	65.0	75.0	10.0	19.1	19.2	0.1	35.8	40.5	4.7	119.9	134.7	14.8
Total	341.1	381.3	40.2	169.4	180.8	11.4	180.8	182.3	1.5	691.3	744.4	53.1
Custodial Services	36.0	34.0	(2.0)	19.0	20.0	1.0	26.0	26.0	-	81.0	80.0	(1.0)
Grand Total	843.4	855.4	12.0	425.4	430.9	5.5	554.3	548.5	(5.8)	1,823.1	1,834.8	11.7
			1.4%			1.3%			-1.0%			0.6%