

PROGRESS IN JEOPARDY

A REPORT ON THE STATE OF EDUCATION FUNDING
IN MASSACHUSETTS

FEBRUARY 2004

- Massachusetts Municipal Association
- Massachusetts Association of School Committees
- Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents
- Massachusetts Teachers Association
- Massachusetts Federation of Teachers

Progress in Jeopardy
A Report on the State of Education Funding
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Executive Summary

State per-pupil spending on public schools has declined by a greater percentage in Massachusetts than in any other state in the country over the last two years. Those reductions are taking a toll on our schools. While some districts have managed to stave off significant cuts through use of one-time revenues or increased local taxes, many others have lost staff, increased class sizes, hiked fees and cut programs and services to students.

School superintendents across the state were surveyed about the impact of budget cuts in their districts. We received responses from 187 districts representing almost two-thirds of the teaching force. The responding districts reported a net loss of almost 1,400 teachers between last year (fiscal year 2003) and this one. Most of those losses were accomplished through attrition, by not replacing teachers who had retired or resigned. Assuming a similar rate of loss in the rest of the state, that means schools lost an estimated 2,160 teachers this year, or 2.8 percent of the 77,000-member teaching force.¹

We also asked about class size increases. Of the 153 districts that provided data on class size, three out of five (59 percent) reported larger average class sizes than in the previous year. The trend toward larger class sizes is probably the result of two factors. First, the overall reduction in state aid for education led to cuts in the teaching force, which, in turn, has led to larger class sizes. Second, some districts were affected by the elimination of the Class Size Reduction Grant program in fiscal year 2003. This \$18 million program was established to help districts that have a high percentage of low-income students reduce class sizes in the early elementary grades. The underpinning for this initiative is extensive research showing that students, particularly low-income and minority children, learn better in smaller classes.²

A third question asked about specific program reductions as a result of budget cuts. Those reductions varied greatly from district to district. For example, some districts eliminated high school electives and increased study halls, while others reduced elementary art and after-school tutoring, and still others began charging for full-day kindergarten, athletics and busing. Some did all of the above, and more. Rather than generalize from the surveys, we have included

¹ Districts also reported losing administrators, education support professionals and other staff, but we were unable to obtain enough data on those reductions to extrapolate the losses statewide.

² Tennessee STAR study on class size: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/classsize/eval/projstar.htm>.

information about the specific impact of budget cuts on a variety of districts across the state. We selected districts from different regions and included a mix of urban, rural and suburban communities. We make no claim that these districts are representative of the state as a whole, but instead include them in Appendix A because they provide specific examples of ways in which school districts have had to cope with reduced funding. One generalization is fair to make. Every superintendent interviewed for this survey expressed concern about the future. Stoughton Superintendent Anthony Sarno's comment was typical: "We've been cutting for two years and have nowhere else to cut without drastically increasing class sizes." Each superintendent noted that a "level-funded" budget would pose serious challenges since the cost of providing services is anything but "level."

It is our hope that information about the impact of budget cuts already made will inform the legislative debate about state funding for public schools in the coming year and in future years. In order to continue the progress made over the past decade – and that progress has been substantial – we need to restore the funding that has been cut, rebuild successful programs that have been dismantled and move forward toward the goal of giving all children the opportunity to succeed in the Massachusetts public schools.

Introduction

Students in Massachusetts benefited greatly from increased state spending on public education after the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled in the landmark *McDuffy* case that the Commonwealth was not meeting its constitutional obligations on behalf of public school students. The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, signed into law a few days after that ruling, laid out a formula for increasing state spending on public schools, with most of the increases going to low-income districts.

In the early years, the increased spending was needed simply to restore state education funding to the level it had reached prior to steep budget cuts from fiscal years 1990-92. Adjusted for inflation, Chapter 70 education aid – the primary source of state education funding – did not reach 1989 levels until 1996.³ Nonetheless, state funding increases were substantial in the decade after the new law was signed. Chapter 70 aid rose from \$1.3 billion in FY93 to \$3.3 billion in FY03, before falling by \$148 million between FY03 and FY04.

Most districts used new state funds to hire and train teachers so that they could reduce class sizes, implement new programs and give students more individual attention. Many were able to improve curricula, buy new textbooks, upgrade their technology, improve services to special needs students and offer disadvantaged students more preschool, after-school and summer school programs.

The results have been gratifying. By any measure, Massachusetts students perform well in school, on average, and their performance has been improving. Our students have among the highest scores in the country on the SAT⁴ and the National Assessment of Educational Progress.⁵

³ Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, *Trading Places: The Role of Taxes and Spending in the Fiscal Crisis*, Feb. 2003

⁴ Massachusetts Department of Education press release, *Combination of Scores and Participation Rank State at Top of SAT Chart*, Aug. 26, 2003. Based on information from The College Board, the DOE reported that Massachusetts students have high SAT scores and that these scores have risen significantly over the past decade. In 2003, Massachusetts students scored an average of 516 on the verbal exam and 522 on the math test, significantly higher than the national averages. The combined scores were 35 points higher in Massachusetts than they were in 1993. In 2003, 82 percent of Mass. high school seniors took the test, the third-highest participation rate in the country.

⁵ Massachusetts Department of Education press release, *2003 NAEP Results Show Massachusetts Students Lead Nation In Math And Reading*, Nov. 13, 2003. Massachusetts' fourth and eighth graders beat the nation's average in reading and mathematics and scored among the highest in the country on the NAEP exams in 2003. Fourth graders tied with those in four other states for first in reading and those in nine other states in mathematics. Eighth graders tied with those in two other states for first in reading and with those in eight other states for second in mathematics.

We also have among the highest rates of high school completion and college attendance in the country.⁶

These indicators of success are gratifying, but the mission of educating all students to high standards has not yet been accomplished. As in other states, an achievement gap persists in Massachusetts. On average, low-income students score lower on all measures of academic performance than do their more affluent peers. On average, African-American and Hispanic students lag behind white and Asian students. Even in affluent districts, many students have not reached their full academic potential or met the standards mandated by state and federal law.

Providing all students with a high-quality education and narrowing the achievement gap are difficult tasks, but not insurmountable ones. Massachusetts can do more. Even with the increases in state funding following passage of the Education Reform Act, Massachusetts only ranks 44th in the country in spending on elementary and secondary education as a share of personal income.⁷

Research data and educator experience support the need for enhanced services in several areas, including high-quality preschool and full-day kindergarten, good nutrition, small class sizes, ensuring there is a highly qualified teacher in every classroom, and offering extended-day and extended-year programs to students who need more help. Most educators also believe that all students should have a varied and well-rounded curriculum that includes the arts, physical education, library skills and extra-curricular activities, all of which can improve cognitive abilities and social skills, as well as make school more interesting and appealing to students.⁸

Unfortunately, state budget cuts in local aid and public education over the past two years, coupled with the rising cost of services, are taking a toll on many of the services and programs that help students reach their potential. These reductions were caused in part by the weak economy, but also by the substantial loss of revenues from 42 state tax cuts approved between 1991 and 2002. Even after considering the tobacco tax increases enacted during the 1990s and

⁶ The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Measuring Up 2002*.

⁷ Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, *Public School Funding in Massachusetts: How Does the Commonwealth Compare to the Rest of the Nation?* January 2004. This ranking is based on FY01 data, the most recent comparative data available from the U.S. Census Bureau.

⁸ Indeed, under the Education Reform law, Curriculum Frameworks specifying what public schools should be teaching were established in seven subject areas: English language arts, mathematics, science and technology/engineering, history and social science, arts, comprehensive health and foreign languages.

the tax package approved in 2002, the net loss in tax revenues from the tax cuts is \$3.7 billion a year.⁹

The impact of state budget cuts has been uneven. Some municipalities have escaped making deep cuts in their school budgets so far by relying on reserves or other one-time sources of funds, or by increasing local taxes or fees. Others have not been so fortunate, as documented in surveys conducted this fall by state-based educational and municipal organizations. In those districts, the budget cuts are already beginning to undo some of the progress made under education reform. In order to get back on track, the Commonwealth would need to restore spending to levels achieved before the recent cuts and adjust spending for inflation and changes in enrollment. Those reforms would just get us back to where we were: More ambitious goals for our students would require an even greater commitment to education in the future. Another year of inadequate state funding could have a significant negative impact on students who live in districts that have already lost staff and programs, as well as on those in districts that have spent down their reserves.

State funding for higher education also has been cut deeply – by \$223 million, 21 percent in actual dollars, over the past three years. When inflation is taken into account, the loss is even larger: 26 percent. State and community colleges and the University of Massachusetts have lost full-time faculty, reduced courses and services, deferred maintenance on their facilities and sharply increased student fees. With rapidly rising tuition rates at private institutions, the need for affordable, high-quality public higher education is greater than ever. Since about three-quarters of the graduates of the state’s public higher education system remain in Massachusetts to work, the quality and affordability of public higher education have a direct impact on the state’s economic health.

This report presents survey findings on pre-K-12 districts statewide and provides more detailed information about the impact of budget cuts in a variety of districts around the state. It is beyond the scope of this report to provide a campus-by-campus breakdown of the impact of budget cuts on higher education, though such an analysis would be illuminating.

⁹ Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, *Trading Places*.

State Budget Cuts

Massachusetts cut state aid for schools more than any other state

The fiscal crisis has been severe in Massachusetts. The recession, coupled with the loss of revenue from recently enacted tax cuts, led to substantial budget deficits over the last two years. Spending was reduced in most major areas of state government, including public higher education and public schools. As of this writing, the House Ways and Means Committee estimates that the budget gap in FY05 will reach \$1.5 billion. The Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation estimates the deficit at \$1.1 billion–\$1.4 billion, while the governor’s estimate of \$1 billion is the most optimistic of all.

According to a December 2003 report, *The Impact of State Government Fiscal Crises on Local Governments and Schools*, the cut in state education aid per pupil was greater in Massachusetts than anywhere else in the country between FY02 and FY04. This report, authored by Andrew Reschovsky of the University of Wisconsin in Madison, concludes that real (inflation-adjusted) state aid per pupil (including grants and reimbursements) dropped by 14.3 percent between FY02 and FY04 in Massachusetts. Across the nation, the average decline was just 4 percent in those two years.

Professor Reschovsky notes that municipalities in some states are able to respond to state budget cuts by raising local fees or property tax revenues. Several states, including Massachusetts and California, do not have that property tax option readily available during a fiscal crisis because these states have previously enacted strict limits on local tax hikes.

Current spending on public schools in Massachusetts is from a mix of local, state and federal resources. Statewide, the revenue sources for current spending (excluding capital spending) in FY01, the most recent year for which comparative data are available, are as follows: local government, 54 percent; state government, 41 percent; and federal government, 5 percent.¹⁰ Needless to say, the proportions vary by community, with some low-income districts receiving the vast majority of their school funding from state sources and most affluent districts relying more heavily on local property taxes.

¹⁰ Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, *Public School Funding in Massachusetts*.

Overall, state government contributes a smaller share to public education in Massachusetts than the national average (50 percent). Massachusetts ranks 42nd among states by this measure. Though relatively low, state funding still accounts for a significant share of public education spending, so any reductions in state aid have a notable impact on schools.

State funding for operating pre-K-12 education comes in three forms: direct school aid (Chapter 70); categorical grants and reimbursements¹¹; and unrestricted local aid, up to half of which communities allocate to public education.¹² Between FY02 and FY04, state funding of these three accounts declined by \$527 million in actual dollars. Most of those reductions – \$433 million – were made in the second year, between the start of FY03 and FY04. In that period, state aid used directly to operate the public schools was cut by nearly a quarter-of-a-billion dollars, as follows:

- Chapter 70 aid declined by \$148 million, from \$3.258 billion to \$3.111 billion.
- Grants and reimbursements dropped by \$100 million, from \$490.4 million to \$390.8 million.

In addition, funding for the major categories of unrestricted local aid dropped by almost \$186 million, from \$1.233 billion to \$1.048 billion.

It bears repeating that all of these cuts are even more severe when adjusted for changes in enrollment and inflation. In fact, simply to keep pace with inflation and the change in enrollment, Chapter 70 school aid should have *increased* by \$60 million in FY04.

The loss of Chapter 70 and unrestricted aid is felt across a wide range of educational services, while the loss of grant and reimbursement funds generally affects specific programs. Many of the programs affected are ones that were established to bring Massachusetts schools to a higher level of excellence – to help make sure all children have the opportunity to succeed in

¹¹ For purposes of this report, "grants and reimbursements" are defined as the total Department of Education budget minus Chapter 70 aid and School Building Assistance. Approximately 90 percent of the allocations in this category are for various grant and reimbursement programs. Much of the remainder is for DOE administration (\$12 million and \$10 million, respectively, in FY02 and FY04) and student assessment (\$22 million and \$19 million).

¹² A fourth source of state funding is School Building Assistance, funds allocated to school construction and renovation projects. Since these are funds for capital projects, they are not included in the analysis of state funding trends for the operation of schools. SBA funding increased between FY03 and FY04 because the state had to meet obligations to districts for school building projects already in the pipeline. However, funding for new projects has been severely curtailed. As a result, many schools in need of repair or rebuilding remain on the state's lengthy waiting list.

school and in life. Below are some of the significant spending changes on grants and reimbursements from the initial FY03 budget to the final FY04 budget.

- Class size reduction: Eliminated, for a loss of \$18 million.
- Early literacy: Reduced from \$18.3 million to \$3.9 million, a cut of 79 percent.
- Full-day kindergarten: Reduced from \$27.9 million to \$23 million, or 18 percent.¹³
- Early childhood education: Reduced from \$94.7 million to \$74.6 million, a cut of \$20.1 million, or 21 percent.
- MCAS remediation: Reduced from \$50 million to \$10 million, a cut of 80 percent.
- Transportation: Eliminated for non-regional districts, a loss of \$51.8 million. Reduced for regional school districts from \$41.7 to \$26.4 million, or 37 percent.
- Attracting Excellence to Teaching (teacher student loan reimbursements): Eliminated, for a loss of \$817,000.
- School breakfast pilot program: Reduced from \$5.4 million to \$2 million, a cut of 62 percent.
- Special education circuit breaker: Countering the trend, this reimbursement program was increased by \$51 million, from \$70.6 million to \$121.6 million. Even with that new funding, however, this line item is less than half of the amount required by state law.

One other reimbursement line item is worth further comment: the line item to provide temporary reimbursement to districts that lose funding to Commonwealth charter schools. The reimbursement formula was established by law. Nonetheless, funding for that line item was eliminated in FY03. It was partially restored in FY04, but only to 42 percent of the total required to comply with state law. Even if that line item were fully funded, many of the superintendents surveyed commented that the loss of funds to Commonwealth charter schools places tremendous financial burdens on the regular public schools, and those burdens have been increasing as the number of charter schools grows. In theory, school districts should not be negatively affected by the loss since “the money follows the student.” In practice, superintendents report that the current

¹³ Gov. Romney vetoed an additional \$10 million from this account, but the Legislature overrode his veto.

Commonwealth charter school funding formula costs school districts far more than they are able to save when students in their districts enroll in a charter school.

Regardless of which line item or state policy accounts for the loss of funds, the losses cause disruptions in particular services. Many administrators and staff also reported an additional loss that is very real, though difficult to quantify – a decline in morale among educators who have lost colleagues to the budget cuts or who were moved into different programs or schools not of their choosing. Morale is also hurt when reduced funding means that educators have insufficient supplies, limited professional development options, fewer opportunities for collaborating with colleagues and deteriorating working conditions.

In addition, it was widely reported by both superintendents and local teacher association leaders interviewed for this report that a negative consequence of the budget cuts has been downward pressure on salaries and benefits. Poor morale and inadequate compensation are leading causes of teachers seeking jobs in other districts, other states or other professions. It is often the most highly educated and highly qualified teachers who are able to take advantage of these other career opportunities. When a district has trouble attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers, that has a direct effect on education quality. Thus, although it is not possible to put a price tag on morale and marketplace forces, these factors must be taken into consideration in the debate over education spending.

Impact on Services Statewide: Survey Results

Much of the data on the impact of budget cuts on school systems is not collected until districts file their end-of-year reports. In order to determine how the state funding cuts have affected schools this year, the Massachusetts Teachers Association, with assistance from the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, distributed a survey to superintendents in all the districts in which the MTA represents teachers and to several of the larger districts – including Boston – represented by the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers. The MTA received responses from 187 districts, which account for almost two-thirds of the state’s total public school enrollment and teaching force. The districts that responded varied in size and geography, and represented more than 49,000 teachers, or 64 percent of the 77,000 full-time-equivalent teachers in Massachusetts.

This survey asked questions regarding funding and staffing levels and services in FY03 compared to FY04. Of those 187 responding, 105 (56 percent), reported reductions in teaching staff, while 38 (20 percent) reported no significant change and 44 (24 percent) reported increases in the number of teachers employed.

The net loss of teachers in the 187 districts surveyed was almost 1,400, or 2.8 percent of the approximately 49,000 teachers working in those districts in FY03.

If the loss rate was similar in the remaining 141 districts that did not respond to the survey, that would translate into a total loss of nearly 2,160 teachers across the state.

The MTA sought to determine whether the experience of the 187 districts that responded to the survey was representative of all districts statewide by calculating whether the loss of Chapter 70 school aid in the responding districts as a share of FY03 spending was similar to that in the remaining 141 districts. In fact, the relative loss of aid was twice as large in the 141 non-responding districts as in the 187 responding districts. Thus, the impact of state budget cuts on the teaching force, class size and other services may actually be greater than suggested by the MTA survey.

The loss of teachers can reduce services to students in one of two ways: Class sizes can be increased or specialists – such as art, music, physical education, health, library, family and consumer science and computer teachers – can be eliminated, or both. The MTA survey looked at whether class sizes have increased as a result of cuts in state aid. Of the 187 districts that

responded to the survey, 153 provided average class size data. Of those, 90, or 59 percent, reported an increase in average class size between FY03 and FY04, while 27, or 18 percent, reported a reduction and 36, or 24 percent, reported no change. (See Appendix C: Figure 3.)

Survey respondents also provided some district-specific information about fee increases and/or the loss of programs in their schools. As noted above, some districts have been affected more severely than others. In Appendix A, we have summarized results from a sample of 17 districts that reported at least some loss of staff between FY03 and FY04. Where possible, we followed up the written surveys by talking with school administrators about how services to students have been affected by budget cuts. Unless otherwise noted, the information included in this section was provided by district superintendents.

We also include more detailed budgetary information in Appendix B on the impact of funding cuts on public higher education in Massachusetts. Although this report primarily focuses on pre-K-12 education spending, we include information on higher education as a reminder that the quality of life in Massachusetts and the health of the economy rest on a strong and healthy system of public education, from preschool through graduate school.

Conclusion

State support for public schools in Massachusetts grew throughout the 1990s, leading to significant gains in student achievement. However, even prior to the major recent budget cuts, many educators believed that state aid continued to be insufficient to provide students with the resources needed to reach state academic standards. The *McDuffy* case of 1993 was reopened in 1999 when the Council for Fair School Finance filed a lawsuit on behalf of students in 19 urban and rural districts. This suit, now called *Hancock v. Driscoll*, is named after Brockton High School student Julie Hancock and Education Commissioner David Driscoll. The plaintiffs contend that school districts do not have adequate resources to provide all of their students with a constitutionally required education. The trial began in June 2003 and ended in January 2004. The trial court is expected to rule on any findings of fact and rulings of law by the end of February.

With that case as a back-drop, it is unfortunate that state spending on schools has been in a free fall. The cuts have taken a toll on the quality of education in some districts. At the same time, state and federal mandates for improving student achievement continue to grow. There is a disconnect between these two trends.

The education and municipal organizations that produced this report together embrace the idea that “every child should be a winner” in our schools. That means providing all students with a rich, rigorous and exciting curriculum, small class sizes and a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. Funding cuts undermine efforts to achieve these goals: They place progress in jeopardy. Governor Mitt Romney’s budget plan, released on Jan. 28, attempts to stop the free fall. However, if this is all that is accomplished, we will be stuck at a lower level than we were before, and a far lower level than necessary to accomplish ambitious education reform goals. The significant cuts in education aid, grants and local aid that were enacted over the past two years should be seen as an aberration that must be fixed, not as a reasoned policy decision to establish a new and lower baseline for our schools. Collectively, representing the teachers, education support professionals, administrators, school committee members and municipal leaders across this Commonwealth, we call upon state policy-makers to stop the cuts, restore funding for education that was previously cut and develop a plan for future education funding that provides the one million students we serve with the quality education they deserve.

Arlington Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

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781-646-4734

Total student enrollment (02-03): 4,481

Information provided by Rob Addelson, business manager

Arlington lost a substantial amount of state aid for the current school year. This loss, coupled with rising costs, has resulted in significant disruptions in the schools. Arlington's teaching force went from 382 last year to 340 this year, a loss of 42 teachers, or 11 percent. Other staff, including administrators and education support professionals, were reduced from 223 to 162, a loss of 61 positions, or 27 percent. Here are some of the consequences:

- ✓ Class sizes have increased, with maximums exceeding 30.
Average class sizes have increased, as follows:

	FY03	FY04
Pre-K-3	21	21
Grades 4-5	19	23
Middle School	20	23
High School	24	27

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced
 - Elementary art, librarians, computer technology – gone
 - Small-group math/English for some middle school students with special needs – gone
 - Middle school talented and gifted program (ACE) – gone
 - High school electives – reduced, with middle and high school students placed in more “directed studies” than before
 - Middle school drama and health – reduced
 - MCAS remediation – reduced
 - Social services – reduced
- ✓ Fees have been increased
 - Full-day K: \$500 in FY03 to \$1,500 in FY04
 - Athletic fee: Raised to \$175 in FY03, where it remained in FY04.

Additional challenges for next year.

- ✓ District eliminated all seven elementary reading specialists in FY04, but brought them back when parents raised \$250,000. Private fundraising is an unstable base for basic services.
- ✓ Teachers and other town employees have received no raise since contracts expired in August.

Barnstable Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Andre R. Ravenelle, Superintendent

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Jack McLeod, Barnstable Teachers Assn.

508-775-8625

Total student enrollment (02-03): 6,705

Barnstable Public Schools have been adversely affected by budget cuts over the past three years. These have had a “devastating impact on staff and parent morale,” the superintendent explains. Barnstable lost 17.5 teachers between last year and this one, and 53 teachers altogether over the last three years, or 10 percent of the teaching force. The schools also lost 20 other staff, including administrators, education support professionals and nurses, last year, and 59 in total over the last three years. As a result, Barnstable has increased some class sizes, especially at the high school level, where averages have increased by one or two students in most subjects, including science, English and social studies. The district also has lost programs and services.

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced.
 - Instrumental music for grades 3 and 4 – eliminated.
 - Industrial arts and home economics for middle school students – eliminated
 - PM school, the alternative program for high school students – eliminated
 - Programs for gifted and talented students – reduced
 - Elementary foreign language program – reduced
 - High school electives – reduced

- ✓ Fees have been implemented
 - Instrumental music: \$300 per child, with a cap of \$600 per family
 - Full-day kindergarten: \$1,800 per child, with a cap of \$2,000 per family
 - Transportation grades 5-12: \$200 per child, with a cap of \$400 per family
 - Athletics: \$100 per sport, with a cap of \$400 per family

Additional challenges for next year. The town is projecting a loss of approximately 50 teachers and other staff if spending cuts are not restored. This would have a significant impact on class size, increasing the average to 22 in grades K-2, 25 in 3-8 and over 30 in many high school classes. The elimination of All Day Kindergarten and an increase in fees are also being considered.

Boston Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

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Richard Stutman, Boston Teachers Union
617-288-2000

Total student enrollment (02-03): 61,552

Information from John McDonough, Office of Budget Management

Boston Public Schools were hit by budget cuts, particularly local aid and grant reductions. As a result, the district lost a significant number of teachers and other staff and reduced some programs and services. The number of full-time equivalent teachers went from 4,890.7 in 2002-03 to 4,494.3 this year, a loss of nearly 400 teachers (396.4), or 8 percent. The district lost an additional 389 other staff, including administrators and education support professionals, a loss of 10.7 percent.

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced
 - Summer academic support for students other than 10th graders – eliminated
 - Transition programs for most-in-need students to receive support in critical transition year during and after school – eliminated
 - Maintenance deferred and custodial services scaled back
 - School allocations reduced by 8 percent
 - Consolidation or elimination of certain academic programs, electives, specialized courses, alternative programs and “safety net” programs
 - Individual school budgets cuts by 8 percent (\$27 million)

Priorities for restoration: If additional resources were available, priorities for funding would be additional resources for underperforming schools, summer academic support for students entering grades 3 and 6 and restoration of the \$27 million cut from individual school budgets.

Additional concerns: The district administration has repeatedly expressed concerns about the loss of funds due to the increased number of charter schools and has opposed lifting the cap on the percentage of a district’s budget that can be consumed by these schools.

Braintree Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Peter A. Kurzberg, District Superintendent

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Larry Kramer, Braintree Education Assn.

781-545-5704

Total student enrollment (02-03): 4,941

Braintree lost more than \$2 million in Chapter 70 and other local aid between FY03 and FY04, and the loss has taken a toll on the schools. Braintree's teaching force went from 439.5 to 383.5 in just one year, a loss of 56 teachers, or 13 percent. The district also lost 20.8 other staff (15 percent), including administrators and education support professionals: from 135.6 to 114.8. Here are some of the consequences:

- ✓ Class sizes have increased, with maximum classes of 33 students.
Average class sizes have increased by 2-3 per grade span as follows:

	Average FY03	Average FY04
K-3	18	21
4-12	21	23

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced
 - Kindergarten specialists in art, music and PE – eliminated
 - Gifted/talented program for grades 4 and 5 – eliminated
 - Director of elementary curriculum – eliminated
 - Middle school family and consumer science, computers (7, 8) and Industrial Arts/Technology – eliminated
 - High school teachers cut across the board, increasing class size and eliminating some electives
 - Two professional development days for teachers – eliminated
 - Custodial assistance and textbooks – reduced
- ✓ Fees have been instituted
 - Student Activity Fee (9-12): \$100
 - Bus fee (7-12): \$180/student; \$250/family

Concerns for the future: Superintendent Kurzberg said, "The ability to have provided quality services to our students has rested, to a large extent, upon the resources that have been made available to us. Without being able to restore positions and programs, we will not be able to maintain the quality of services that we have been able to provide to the students in Braintree."

Bridgewater-Raynham Regional District: Budget Cut Synopsis

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Christopher Slater, B-R Education Assn.
508-697-8211

Total school enrollment (02-03): 6,156

Information provided by Assistant Superintendent Bob McIntyre

While Bridgewater-Raynham did not lose Chapter 70 aid in the current year, the school district was adversely affected by the loss of grants and local aid to the sending communities, along with rising costs. As a result, the district reduced the teaching staff from 400 last year to 365 this year, a reduction of 35, or 9 percent. The district lost an additional 53 other staff, including administrators and education support professionals. Here are some of the consequences:

- ✓ Class sizes increased:

Grade levels	Average class size FY03	Average class size FY04
K-3	25	27
4-12	28	29

In the five academic subject areas at the high school, last year there were 31 classes with more than 30 students, while this year there are 60.

- ✓ Programs and services reduced or eliminated:
 - Cut all aides except those in special education (formerly had aides in kindergarten and grade 1 classrooms, but they are gone)
 - Lost the school psychologist at the high school, and there are not enough guidance counselors
 - Reduced MCAS remediation
 - Eliminated one curriculum coordinator
 - Strict limits on maintenance
- ✓ Fees have been instituted
 - Athletic fee: \$200
 - Bus fee: \$175
 - Extra-curricular fee: \$50

Concerns for the future: The district has been “level-funded” for the past two years, though costs have continued to rise. “There is nowhere left to cut,” McIntyre said. Level-funding or additional cuts next year would adversely affect class size and basic educational programs.

Fall River Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Richard D. Pavao, Superintendent

508-675-8420

E-mail: tpacheco@fallriver.k12.ma.us

Bill Kaylor, Fall River Educators Assn.

508-679-4392

Total student enrollment (02-03): 12,132

Information provided by Jim Tickle, assistant superintendent for administration

Fall River is a Southeastern Massachusetts community with a high concentration of low-income residents. Schools in that district have been adversely affected by budget cuts. The number of teachers declined from 873 last year (FY03) to 846 this year, a loss of 27. The district lost an additional six non-teaching staff, as well. Over the past two years, an estimated 50-60 positions have been lost. Class size information for Fall River was not available for the current year.

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced.
 - Grades 4-8 academic support – eliminated
 - Literacy collaborative – eliminated
 - Counselors and nurses – reduced
 - Extended-day and extended-year services – reduced
 - Professional development for teachers – reduced
 - Building maintenance – reduced
 - Instructional materials – reduced

Priorities and challenges: Assistant Superintendent Tickle said that “staffing has been reduced to levels that strain our ability to deliver effective services,” a concern in a district that serves many disadvantaged students who have relatively low MCAS scores. Priorities for restoration include reducing class sizes, increasing support services and increasing professional development. “The decrease in the state budget has made our district nearly totally dependent on federal grants for professional development, extended-day and extended-year, and other support services,” Tickle said. “Adding to that, Fall River has a charter school and an increasing portion of our budget is going to that.” Any additional cuts next year would go directly to staffing, he reported.

Fitchburg Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

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 978-345-3200
 E-mail: lameyt@fitchburg.k12.ma.us

Deborah Dion, Fitchburg Teachers Assn.
 978-345-3287

Total student enrollment (02-03): 5,977

Fitchburg lost a significant number of teachers between last school year (FY03) and this year, going from 532.5 down to 485.5. That’s a loss of 47 teachers, or 9 percent. The district lost one-quarter (26 percent) of all other staff, including administrators and education support professionals. There were 260 other staff last year, down to 192 this year. Here are some of the consequences of the cuts:

- ✓ Class sizes have increased, with the largest classes reaching 37 students. The averages and ranges are below:

	Range FY03	Range FY04	Average FY03	Average FY04
K-3	9-23	20-26	17.5	20
4-12	12-29	9-37	22	25

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced
 - Guidance services – reduced
 - Middle school art – reduced
 - High school choral program – eliminated
 - High school extra-curricular activities – reduced
 - MCAS remediation – cut from \$400,000 to \$70,000
 - Textbooks and supplies – reduced by 25 percent
 - Full-day kindergarten classes – reduced from 11 to 7
- ✓ Fees have been increased
 - New bus fee: \$180 per year
 - Athletic fee raised from \$30 to \$40 per student

Concerns for next year: Fitchburg is a low-income community that is currently “under review” by the state for low student MCAS scores. If the school district is “level-funded,” that will amount to a budget cut relative to the cost of providing services. Such a cut could impede Fitchburg’s ability to implement required changes.

Gill-Montague Regional District: Budget Cut Synopsis

Sue M. Gee, Superintendent

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Nancy Daniel-Green, Gill-Montague Education Assn.

413-863-9341 (school)

Total student enrollment (02-03): 1,425

The Gill-Montague Regional School District is made up of four elementary schools, one middle school and one high school in Franklin County. It has suffered significantly from budget cuts and recently has been in a downward spiral: The fewer services the district can offer, the more likely families are to move or send their children to schools in other districts, to private schools or to the charter school in Greenfield. As enrollment declines, state aid drops and services are cut again. This situation is stressful and detrimental to students and staff alike. This district lost 19 teachers, from 131 to 112, between last school year (FY03) and this year, as well as five other staff. As a result:

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced:
 - Grades combined in elementary schools: e.g., 1-2, 3-4 and 4-5 are combined
 - Art and music teachers – eliminated for elementary students and reduced for secondary students
 - Elementary PE – reduced to one day a week
 - Certain high school electives cut and replaced with study halls, and/or students assigned as “interns” to assist teachers with administrative tasks
 - Certain high school classes combined, such as French 2, 3 and 4
 - Libraries have long been run by parent volunteers
 - Supplies and textbook purchases – cut drastically; parents asked to purchase supplies
 - Two full-day pre-K classes reduced to two half-day classes
 - Athletic fees increased and student parking fee instituted
 - Administrative, custodial, special education, food services and technology/grants support – eliminated or reduced

Concerns about the future: The district is building a beautiful new high school, which will be completed by next fall, but it is not likely to have the staff needed to run the art programs, TV studio and other enrichment services the new school was designed to house. Funding is badly needed to break the cycle and restore programs to students in this district.

Greenfield Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Joseph Ruscio, Superintendent

413-772-1311

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Frank Brower, Greenfield Education Assn.

413-772-1360

Total student enrollment (02-03): 2,244

The Greenfield Public Schools experienced significant budget cuts over the past two years, largely attributable to the loss of state aid. The teaching staff was reduced from 215.9 in FY02 to 186.6 in the current year (FY04), a loss of 29.3 teachers, or more than 13 percent. Other staff, including administrators and education support professionals, were reduced from 94 in FY02 to 87 this year. As a result of the cuts, services have been lost and class sizes have increased, especially at the middle and high schools. Some high school classes now reach the mid-30s.

	Average FY02	Average FY04
K-3	17.4	18.5
4-5	20.8	21
Middle	16.2	24.2
High School	21	24

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced
 - Professional development for teachers – reduced
 - Elementary specialists – greatly reduced, from 12 to 2
 - High school electives – cut in half
 - Middle school courses reduced and middle school concept “weakened”
 - Custodians lost – “buildings filthier”
 - Secretarial and maintenance – significantly reduced

- ✓ Fees have been instituted
 - Athletic fees remained at \$100 for the second year
 - Music fee: \$100 for after-school music at the elementary and middle schools
 - Private donations required to pay for clubs and activities at the middle and high schools

Priorities and concerns: The superintendent is very concerned about the cuts, noting that the budget situation “continues to put lead in my stomach every time I look at it.” Should funding become available, his priorities include restoring specialists to the elementary schools, electives that were cut from the middle and high schools, and music programs at the elementary and middle schools. Custodial and secretarial services are also depleted and should be restored, he noted. Looking ahead, Superintendent Ruscio would like to institute extended-day programs year-round and have more resources to address the needs of a diverse student population

Haverhill Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Arthur W. Tate, District Superintendent
978-374-3400
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Jean Rimas, Haverhill Education Assn.
978-372-7079

Total student enrollment (02-03): 8,308

Haverhill's budget woes began earlier than most. Schools have experienced significant budget cuts for the past two years, losing \$15 million in state and local funding during that period. As a result, Haverhill has lost one-fifth (19 percent) of its teachers and one-quarter (26 percent) of its administrators since FY02. The number of teachers has plummeted from 759 to 616. Here are some of the consequences:

- ✓ Class sizes have increased, and maximums can reach the mid-30s.
Average class sizes have increased by 2-3 per grade and now are:
 - Kindergarten 20
 - Grade 1 24
 - Grades 2-3 25
 - Grade 4 26
 - Grade 5 27
 - Middle 29

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced in recent years:
 - Six school buildings closed, from 21 to 15
 - Middle school languages, shop, family and consumer sciences – gone
 - Fifth grade instrumental music – gone
 - Middle school band is now a “pay-to-play” after-school program. Participation has dropped from around 300 students to 100
 - Full-day kindergarten – gone
 - Library and media services in smaller elementary schools – gone
 - Reduced staffing for libraries/media and computers in larger schools
 - Significant loss of MCAS remediation programs
 - Four elementary school principals are now each in charge of two buildings
 - Administrative support and supplies cut drastically
 - Reduction in curriculum coordinators: remaining staff combine disciplines

- ✓ Fees have been increased
 - Athletic fee increased: \$50 in FY03 to \$300 in FY04
 - Instrumental Music: \$250 fee instituted for after-school program

Concerns for next year: Superintendent Tate reported that a new Commonwealth charter school will open next fall, costing the regular public schools an estimated \$600,000-\$800,000 a year. More funds are needed to support the new English Language Immersion program. And contracts for six unions are expiring and must be renegotiated.

Lynn Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Nicholas P. Kostan, District Superintendent
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Alice M. Gunning, Lynn Teachers Union
781-599-5591

Total Student Enrollment (02-03): 15,114

Information provided by Alice Gunning.

Lynn Public Schools experienced substantial budget cuts between last year and this year, costing the district staff and materials. The teaching force was reduced from 1,221 to 1,136, a loss of 85 teachers, or 7 percent. The district lost an additional 71 other staff, including 39 paraprofessionals. As a result of staff losses, class sizes have increased moderately at the secondary level and programs have been cut.

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced
 - Full-day kindergarten – eliminated
 - Regular education pre-K programs – eliminated
 - After-school and Saturday tutoring – drastically reduced
 - Three schools were closed: a middle school, an alternative middle school and an alternative high school
 - Middle school sports – reduced
 - Busing services – reduced
 - Supply budgets – reduced

Additional challenges for next year. The budget battle for next year promises to be bruising, and could be “devastating” if two proposed charter schools are approved and opened. One of them alone, a middle school designed to serve 80 students, would cost the district an estimated \$750,000 to \$800,000 a year.

Melrose Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Rosemary LeBlanc, Superintendent

781-662-2000

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Ted Mateus, Melrose Education Assn.

781-979-2113

Total student enrollment (02-03): 3,498

Information provided by Barbara Quinlan, business manager.

Melrose has been affected by budget cuts for the last two years, losing 13 teachers and several support staff in 2003-03 and another 27 teachers, a principal and a secretary in the current year. The loss of 40 teachers represents a reduction of about 12 percent. Melrose has recently closed two schools, reducing the number of elementary schools from seven to five. That closure, coupled with staff layoffs, led to significant increases in class size at the elementary level. Average class sizes for the elementary grades was approximately 18-20 last year, and is now 22-24, the district reports. There were more modest class size increases at the middle and high school levels. The district has not yet eliminated specific educational programs. It has instituted new fees, however:

- ✓ Fees instituted
 - Full-day kindergarten: \$2,050 a year
 - Athletic fee: \$275 per sport, no cap
 - Instrumental music: \$125 per student

Concerns for the future: Minimally, the district is hoping to maintain a “level services” budget for next year. Level-funding would result in more cuts and would undermine core educational services.

Pittsfield Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

William Travis, Superintendent
413-499-9513
E-mail: wtravis@pittsfield.net

William Berryman, Education Assn. of Pittsfield
413-448-9640

Total student enrollment (02-03): 6,781

Pittsfield schools have suffered from budget cuts over the past two years, and that has resulted in the loss of staff, increased class sizes and a reduction in services. The number of teachers declined from 494.3 in 2001-02 to 471.2 in 2002-03 to 442.7 in the current year, for a total reduction of 51.6 teachers, or 10.4 percent. Other staff, including administrators, education support professionals and nurses, were also reduced, from 419.2 in 01-02, to 410.7 in 02-03 to 401.3 this year, for a total loss of 17.9 other staff, or 4 percent.

- ✓ Class sizes have increased, with maximum classes approaching 40 in the high school. Average class sizes have increased by 1-3 students per grade span as follows:

Grade span	FY03 Class Size Average	FY04 Class Size Average
Pre-K-3	19	21
4-5	22	23
Middle School	22	23.2
High School	25	28

The number of large classes has increased. Last year, the number of K-3 classes with 20-30 students was 18, while this year it has risen to 84. The number of grade 4-12 classes with 25-40 students rose from 448 last year to 592 this year.

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced
 - Combined some K-1 classes to support full-day programs
 - Significant loss of MCAS remediation
 - Eliminated after-school programs for middle school
 - Reduced extracurricular and remedial class for middle school
 - Reduced bus service, increasing time for ridership
- ✓ Fees have been increased
 - Student Activity Fee (9-12): Instituted \$100 per student fee this year
 - Bus fee (7-12): 0 in 01-02; \$180/student in 02-03; \$250/family in 03-04

Rockland Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

William Compton, Superintendent

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Mary Flanagan, Rockland Education Assn.

781-878-0041

Total student enrollment (02-03): 2,796

Rockland, a small community in Southeastern Massachusetts, has been hit by recent state and local budget cuts. The school district lost 14 teachers between last year (FY03) and this year, down from 205 to 191. That's a reduction of 6.8 percent. The district's loss of other staff members, including classroom aides, custodians and support staff, began two years ago when the first of two override votes failed. The district lost 50 other staff between FY02 and FY04.

Since student enrollment has also been declining, the loss of teachers has not affected class sizes. However, the budget cuts have led to a significant reduction in services, as follows:

- ✓ Programs eliminated or reduced
 - Elementary music – eliminated
 - Grades 5-12 health education – eliminated
 - 37 instructional aides – eliminated
 - Custodial services – reduced
 - Counseling services – reduced
 - School psychological services – reduced

- ✓ Fees instituted
 - Transportation fee: \$180 per year grades 8-12
 - Athletic fee: \$165/student, \$300 max/family to participate in high school sports
 - Extra-curricular fee: \$50 per student, grades 8-12

Priorities for restoration: Superintendent Compton said that should funding be restored, his priorities would be to bring back teachers, eliminate fees and restore music and health programs.

Concerns for the future: Rockland is a plaintiff in the *Hancock* lawsuit, and, therefore, is one of the communities maintaining that current state funding is not adequate to ensure all students are able to meet state education standards. Superintendent Compton warns that a "level-funded" budget would cause an increase in class sizes and further reductions in services, and would make it that much more difficult to achieve state and federal educational goals.

Springfield Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Joseph P. Burke, Superintendent

413-787-7000

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Timothy Collins, Springfield Education Assn.

413-782-8300 X150

Total student enrollment (02-03): 26,594

Information provided by Carey Sheehan, business manager

Springfield public schools have suffered from budget cuts over the past two years, and that has resulted in the loss of staff and a reduction in services. The number of teachers declined from 2,807 in FY02 to 2,707 in FY03 and 2,617 in the current year, FY04. That is total two-year reduction of 190 teachers, or 6.8 percent. Other staff, including administrators, education support professionals and nurses, experienced relatively minor reductions. Some class sizes have increased at the middle and high schools, but class sizes have not increased significantly in the elementary grades.

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced in recent years.
 - Counseling services – reduced
 - MCAS remediation – cut 90 percent
 - Hot breakfasts – eliminated
 - Breakfast and lunch supervision – reduced
 - New charges to attend SHS athletic events

- ✓ Teacher morale harmed
Teachers have not had a raise since their contract expired last June. In addition, Springfield is the only district in the state in which teachers have been denied their “step” increases (based on the number of years teaching) or “lane” increases (based on obtaining additional educational credits). This is now the subject of a lawsuit and has taken a toll on teacher morale, as well as the district’s ability to attract and retain highly qualified staff. The administration says that honoring the district’s contractual obligations would be the highest priority should revenues be restored.

Concerns for the future. Springfield was able to cushion the blow from recent budget cuts through use of \$2 million in one-time revenue sources. Those sources will not be available for next year. The administration predicts a \$4 million to \$5 million budget gap for next year should state aid be level-funded rather than restored. This would lead to major disruptions in educational services.

Stoughton Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Anthony L. Sarno, Superintendent

781-344-4000

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Gary Gilardi, Stoughton Teachers Assn.

781-871-0409

Total student enrollment (02-03): 4,121

Stoughton Public Schools have experienced fiscal problems for two years, resulting in a loss of teachers and other staff, increased class sizes, a loss of programs and higher fees for students. The number of full-time equivalent teachers in Stoughton declined from 343 in FY02 to 325 in FY03 to 298 in the current year, FY04. That's a two-year decline of 45 teachers, or 13 percent of the teaching force. The district also lost other staff, including administrators and aides. Below is a chart on increases in the average class sizes in Stoughton.

	Average FY02	Average FY04
K-3	19	20
4-5	18.5	21.5
Middle	23	26
High School	22	26

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced
 - Professional development for teachers – reduced
 - Home economics, industrial arts and career education – gone
 - Kindergarten aides – gone
 - Maintenance services – reduced
 - Reductions in curriculum development, music, high school electives, PE and others

- ✓ Fees have been increased
 - Bus fee: New fee of \$180 per year
 - Athletic fee raised from \$125 per student per year to \$100 for the first sport, \$75 for the second and \$50 for the third
 - Music fee: New fee of \$100 per activity

Concerns for next year: Superintendent Sarno said, “We’ve been cutting for two years and have nowhere else to cut without drastically increasing class sizes.” The superintendent is strongly advocating that the state fully fund the special education “circuit breaker” provision since those funds go directly to the schools to offset some of the rapidly rising costs of special education.

Winthrop Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

Thomas F. Giancristiano, Superintendent

617-846-5500

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Mary Anne Ulrich, Winthrop Teachers Assn.

781-846-4012

Student enrollment (02-03): 2,138

Since funding for Winthrop's public schools has been declining steadily over the last decade, the loss of state aid for the current year struck a major blow to an already beleaguered system. The number of teachers in Winthrop declined from 185 in FY03 to 168 in FY04, a loss of 17, or 9 percent. Six other staff positions were also lost. Here are some of the consequences:

- ✓ Some class sizes have increased, especially at the high school level. Last year, 11 high school classes had 30 or more students; this year, 38 classes have 30 or more. Class size averages at most other grades have been protected this year, and are now approximately as follows:

Grades 1-4:	18
Grades 5-6:	23
Grades 7-12:	25

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced:
 - All school librarian positions were eliminated and the libraries are closed, further threatening the high school's accreditation, which is already in jeopardy
 - French was eliminated; only Spanish is offered, and not until eighth grade (program eliminated for grades 5, 6 and 7)
 - Significant loss of MCAS remediation programs
 - Technology education, business and family and consumer science courses – eliminated
 - The number of high school extra-curricular activities dropped from a high of 23 in 1983 to five today, and some are only offered because of private fundraising
 - Administrative staff reduced to “skeletal” levels
- ✓ Fees have been increased
 - Full-day K: Formerly free; now \$1,000 per child
 - Athletic fee: \$150/sport, \$300/family in FY03; \$325/sport, \$975/family in FY04

Concerns about the future: Winthrop voters rejected a Proposition 2 ½ override on Feb. 9 that would have provided additional resources to the schools and other municipal services. Prior to the vote, the administration warned that, if the override failed, the district would have to cut 17.5 more teachers and increase class sizes to 25-28 in grades 1-8 and 27-34 in the high school. All bus service may be eliminated.

Worcester Public Schools: Budget Cut Synopsis

James A. Caradonio, Superintendent
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Janet Dufault, Educational Assn. of Worcester
508-791-3296

Total student enrollment (02-03): 25,712

Worcester Public Schools have been affected by the loss of state grant monies and unrestricted local aid. Most notable were cuts in kindergarten expansion, class size reduction and MCAS remediation grants, along with reduced funding for the high school career pathway program through the foundation budget, and underfunding of the special education circuit breaker reimbursement. As a result of budget shortfalls, Worcester schools lost 55 teachers between FY02 and FY03 and another 135 between FY03 and this year (FY04), for a total of 190, or 8 percent, over the two years. Other staff positions, including administrators and education support professionals, were reduced over those two years from 1,013 to 897, for a total loss of 116 positions, or 11 percent.

Class size averages have increased only slightly, with a rise from 21 to 22 at the secondary level. The biggest impact has been felt in the loss of programs and services.

- ✓ Programs and services have been eliminated or reduced
 - Closed three elementary schools and eliminated a middle school program
 - Reduced full-day pre-school program to half-day
 - Reduced spending on instructional supplies and materials and instructional technology by 68 percent
 - Reduced spending on staff professional development by 70 percent
 - Eliminated extended day programs in 10 schools in FY03
 - Significant reductions in MCAS tutoring for elementary, middle and high school
 - Reduced athletic programs, including elimination of programs at the elementary level
 - Reduced building maintenance and repairs funding by 25 percent
 - Reduced spending on fine arts programs by 36 percent over two-year period
 - Reduced collaboration with juvenile court by 75 percent
 - Reduced and/or eliminated spending for curriculum and restructuring planning
 - Reduced spending for substitutes by 20 percent

Additional concerns: According to Superintendent Caradonio, Worcester's budget problems are significantly worsened by the state formula used to fund area charter schools. Charter schools receive an amount equal to the "average cost per pupil" for each Worcester student who attends. The administration contends that this is not an appropriate formula, since Worcester's average cost per pupil includes "the expensive cost for programs that do not exist in the city's two charter schools (grades K-8), such as vocational programs... and special education placements in collaborative programs."

Higher Education Spending Cut Deeply for Three Years

The importance of public higher education to the Massachusetts economy can hardly be overstated. “Higher education is *the* driver for economic development,” states the Mass Insight Corporation in its 2002/2003 study, *An Economy at Risk*. At the same time, Mass Insight warns, “Massachusetts is starving its public higher education system.”

Another dire warning comes from the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) and the Center for Education Policy at the University of Massachusetts in their 2002 study, *Massachusetts Public Higher Education: A Shrewd Investment with Significant Returns*. “If the Commonwealth does not awake to the importance of educational investment in public higher education,” the study says, “it will sadly lose its spot atop the list of high performing states in the nation.”

The numbers tell the story:

In the three years between FY01 and FY04, Massachusetts public higher education was cut by \$223 million, or 21 percent. This year alone, in FY04, public higher education was cut more than \$132 million, or 13 percent.

The cuts break down as follows:

The University of Massachusetts was cut \$102.5 million between FY01 and FY04, or 20.6 percent. In FY04, it was cut \$56.3 million, or 12.5 percent.

The state colleges were cut \$20.1 million between FY01 and FY04, or 10.3 percent. In FY04 (after a 4.8 percent hike in FY02 and a 2 percent cut in FY03), they were cut \$25.4 million, or 12.7 percent.

The community colleges were cut \$44.3 million between FY01 and FY04, or 18.5 percent. In FY04, they were cut \$32.2 million, or 14.2 percent.

Campuses are coping with the cuts in several ways.

According to a 2003 study by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Massachusetts public colleges, community colleges and UMass increased tuition and fees between FY02 and FY03 by a greater percentage – 24 percent – than in any other state. The following year, FY03 to FY04, tuition and fees increased by another 18 percent.

At the same time, according to the study, state grant aid for students also fell 24 percent, the largest drop in the nation.

Declining budgets have also led to declining numbers of full-time faculty and their replacement by part-timers who often teach courses on several campuses and, thus, are unable to participate fully in the life of any one college.

According to the Massachusetts Society of Professors, full-time faculty on the UMass/Amherst campus declined from approximately 950 in 2000-2001 to approximately 815 today. (In 1987, the number of full-time faculty was 1,244.)

According to the Massachusetts State College Association, full-time faculty at the state colleges declined by approximately 50 positions in the past three years.

In the community colleges, according to the Massachusetts Community College Council, full-time faculty positions declined by about 100 between July 2003 and January 2004.

Especially hard-hit have been campus libraries, which have had to cancel subscriptions to professional journals and severely restrict book purchases. Since FY01, state funding for the libraries of our 29 public campuses has gone from \$14 million to zero – and Governor Romney has proposed no money for the libraries in his budget.

Public higher education is an indispensable resource for Massachusetts. As the MISER study notes, “Public institutions not only serve more Massachusetts residents [than do private institutions] but also, due to strategic geographic positioning, have established a rich yet unheralded tradition of responding to the distinct needs of Massachusetts’ communities and their residents.”

The study notes that 77.6 percent of state college graduates and 74.5 percent of community college graduates are employed in Massachusetts within one year of graduation. And our Commonwealth is equally served by UMass and its graduates. According to the UMass President’s office, 85 percent of Massachusetts residents who graduated from UMass still live and work in the state.

Figure 1

Chapter 70 Aid, FY02 - FY04*
(Current and Adjusted \$Million)

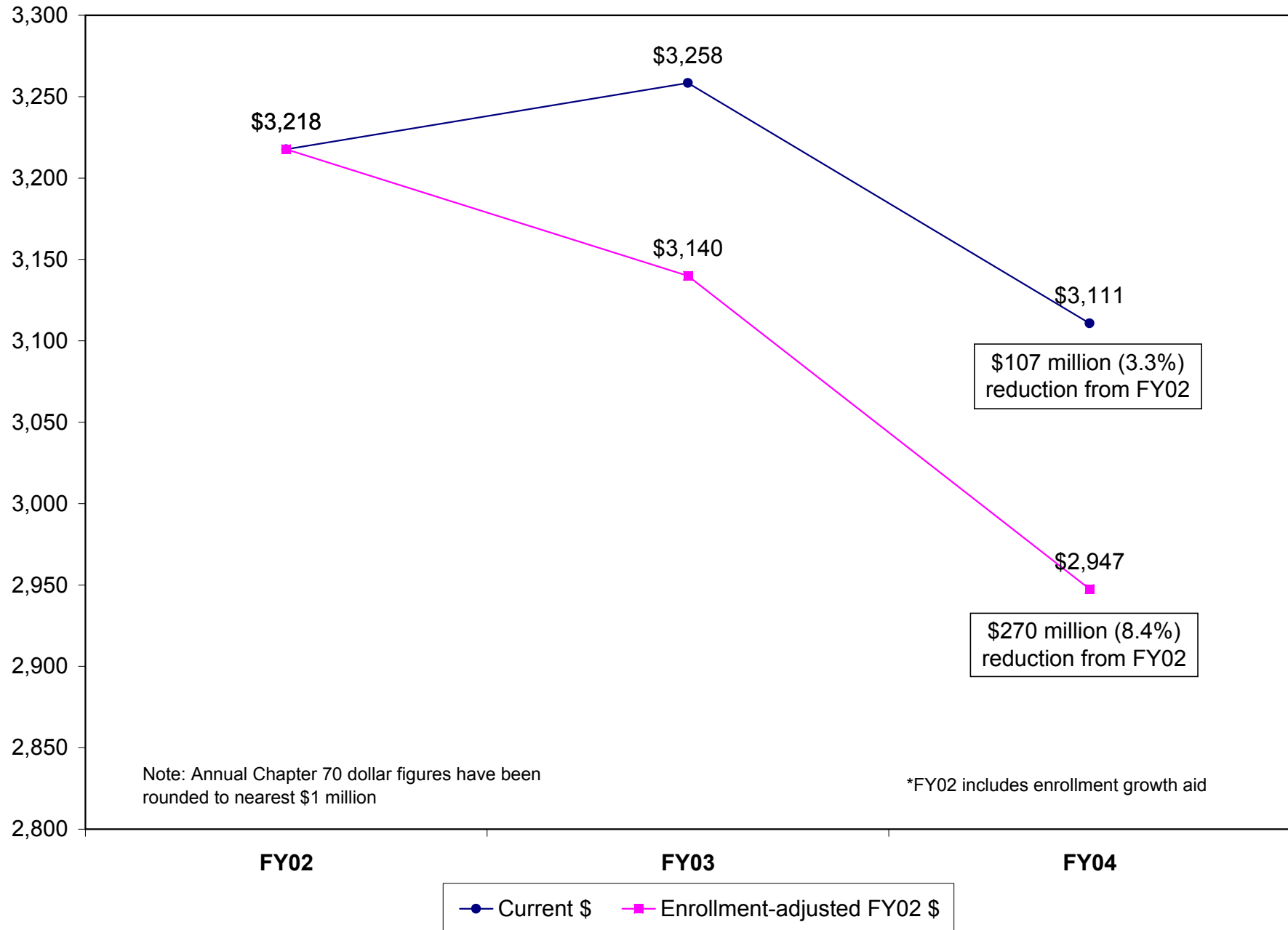


Figure 2

Major K-12 Grants and Reimbursements, FY02 - FY04
FY02 - FY04 Change (\$Million)

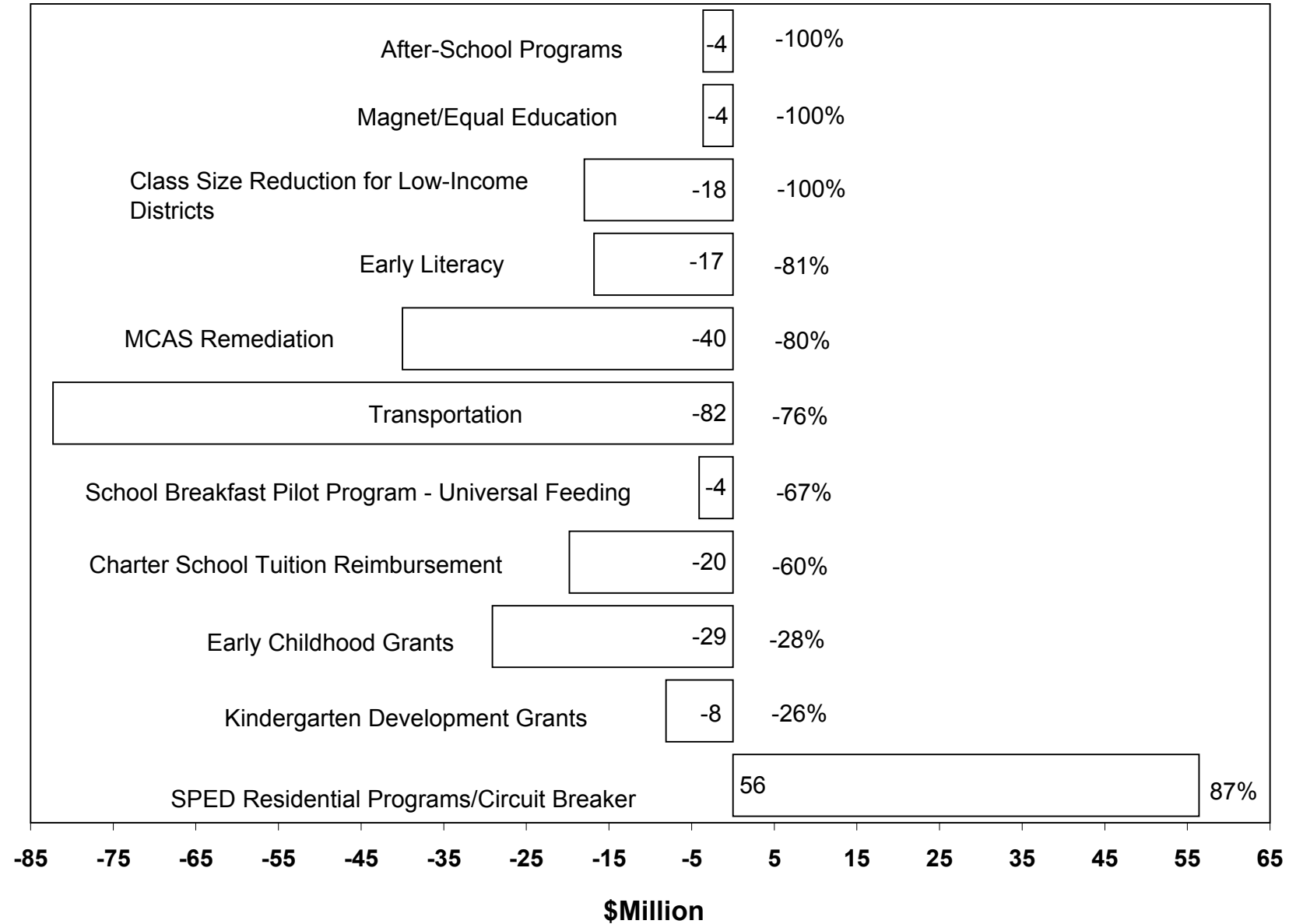
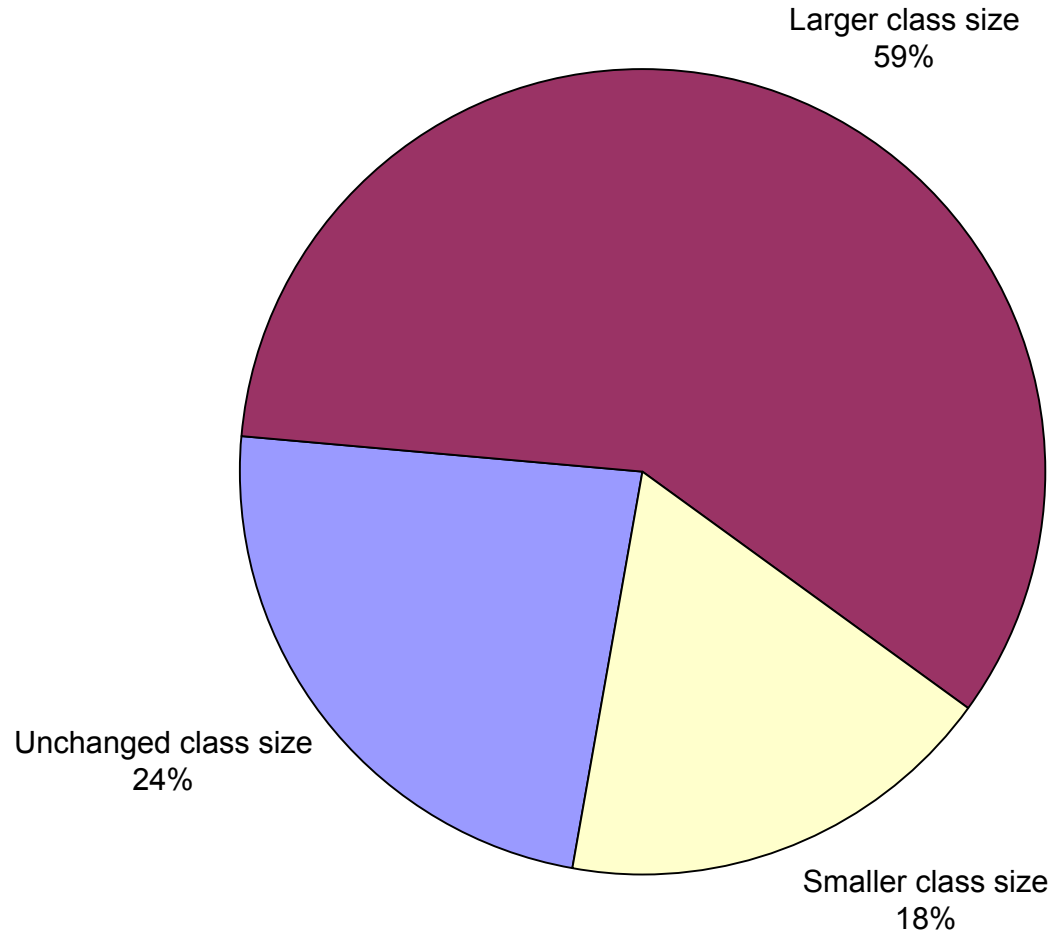


Figure 3

Change in District Average Class Size, FY03 - FY04

Percent of Districts with Larger, Smaller, or Unchanged Average Class Size*



*Based on data from 153 of 328 operating districts