



**DRACUT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
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*Steven Stone*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

January 27, 2020

To: Dracut School Committee

Re: Student Opportunity Act & the FY21 Budget

As the Committee is aware, the Legislature recently passed the Student Opportunity Act (SOA), the most significant education legislation since Education Reform in 1993. The SOA is the mechanism that will significantly increase funding to public schools in Massachusetts.

While we are still unpacking the various metrics released last week as part of the Governor's FY21 budget, a number of indicators are instructive as it relates to the Dracut Public Schools:

1. The number of students used to calculate our Foundation Budget has increased 76 students (3,964) over FY20.
2. The projected Charter Assessment decreases by \$401,138.
3. The projected Charter Reimbursement decreases by \$147,256.
4. The projected School Choice Assessment decreases by \$169,873.
5. Overall, increasing enrollment is projected to reduce the Town's obligations (Charter and Choice Assessments) by \$423,755.
6. The projected Local Contribution to the Dracut Public Schools increases by \$1,052,052.
7. The projected increase in Chapter 70 funding is \$752,729.

As currently provided by the Interim Town Manager, in relation to FY21 funding:

1. Chargebacks are projected to increase by \$331,487.
2. The appropriation in Net School Spending (NSS) will be increased by \$600,000.
3. The Non-Net School Spending appropriation will be increased by \$200,000.

As we prepare the FY21 budget for public release in February, we are facing a number of challenges including:

1. A significant increase in Special Education costs.
2. As discussed repeatedly last year, an anticipated reduction in Special Education Circuit Breaker funding.
3. The district is embarking on collective bargaining with all seven bargaining groups (teachers, vice principals, paraprofessionals, office personnel, custodians, maintenance, and food service) as all agreements expire in June of 2020.

**The Town of Dracut is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer**