

[Mohawk Trail Regional School Committee OKs \\$27.2M budget](#)

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BUCKLAND — The Mohawk Trail Regional School Committee has approved a \$27.2 million budget for the 2026 fiscal year.

The budget, voted on Feb. 26, includes a \$1.05 million [increase](#) over the current year. “I do think this is an excellent budget and I’m proud of us for getting it done,” School Committee chair Martha Thurber said.

The budget covers increased costs for insurance and retirement benefits, transportation, teaching and support staff salary raises, as well expanded after-school and summer programming, additional classroom supplies, and more.

The committee broke the budget into two separate votes: one for three elementary school operating budgets totaling \$12.3 million and capital debt payments of \$185,290, and one vote for the middle/high school, central administration and district-wide budget totaling \$14.9 million, along with debt payments of \$123,516.

The board also voted to use \$275,000 in excess in deficiency funds to reduce local assessments. Local assessments for FY26 are as follows:

- Ashfield, \$2.86 million.
- Buckland, \$3.06 million.
- Charlemont, \$807,443.
- Colrain, \$2.58 million.
- Hawley, \$243,681.
- Heath, \$998,725.
- Plainfield, \$1.13 million.
- Shelburne, \$3.02 million.

While Mohawk Trail has set its budget for the next year, the towns of Hawley and Charlemont still need to vote on the budget for the Hawlemont Regional Elementary School. The Hawlemont School Committee presented its \$2.93 million budget at a public hearing last week, and is expected to vote on the budget at its March 11 meeting.

The Hawlemont Budget includes a 1.57% increase from last years budget, covering increases to salaries and benefits, facility maintenance and \$45,442 in increased school choice tuition.

“This budget represents the Hawlemont School and what it costs to run the school and support our students the best we can,” business manager William Lataille said. “It’s as affordable as can be for our towns while still providing an education.”

Lataille said he, the School Committee and other administrative staff trimmed the budget the best they could and cut \$170,926 in instructional costs, student services, maintenance, administration and half a bus route from the first draft of the budget.

“As much as I’d love to cut those supply lines, we do still need to buy paper,” Hawlemont Principal Amber Tulloch said.

The only public comment during the meeting came from a teacher at the school who asked why it was necessary to pay for math and English language arts coaches.

Superintendent Sheryl Stanton said the coaches help the district cut down on professional development costs by aiding teachers in learning and teaching a new curriculum. Bringing a new curriculum and instructional methods to the classroom can be difficult, and the coaches can offer one-on-one support.

In the coming months, the school budgets will be presented to the Selectboards of the member towns and voted on at annual Town Meeting.

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