



# TOWN of BROOKLINE

Massachusetts

## BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Charles A. Simmons  
Director of Public Buildings

### INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** School Committee  
Dr. Linus Guillory, Superintendent of Schools

**FROM:** Charles A. Simmons, Director of Public Buildings *CAS*

**SUBJECT:** School Repair and Maintenance Funding FY 2023

**DATE :** September 10, 2021

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In order to fully fund the Repair and Maintenance Budget for FY 2023 and properly test, maintain and make repairs to School Buildings, the total budgeted amount needed is \$3,287,550 for outside service contractors and \$1,697,422 for personnel costs.

This is an increase of \$802,591 over last year's appropriation for services. There is no increase for Personnel. Last fiscal year, I requested an increase of \$545,000 under personnel to add staff – four HVAC Techs, one Electrician, one Plumber and one Carpenter.

The justification for the R&M increase is due to the following factors:

- 1) The budget amounts requested last year and the previous years were not fully funded
- 2) Inflation for construction and maintenance has been above 5%

This is in line and following the 5 year plan and the Matrix Report.

The need for increases to the School R&M budget for services is being driven due to larger and advanced infrastructure of renovated school buildings. Last fiscal year as noted, I had requested \$545,000 for additional staff. This needs to be changed from hiring staff to hiring contractors. The reason for not adding staff is based on our inability to recruit and hire qualified staff. We are not able to hire staff due to the economy and the Town's compensation plan. Therefore to meet the service needs, more outside contractors would be needed. By law, the Town needs to pay prevailing wages to outside contractors. The owner of the company adds to this amount health, overhead and profit. We are presently charged \$198/hr for an HVAC technician and \$99/hr for an



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electrician. For this year, due to COVID and HVAC requirements, there has been a substantial increase in costs for these services.

If full funding is not provided, the following would impacts would be felt:

- HVAC – There would be no proactive maintenance and testing of the HVAC equipment other than boilers and pumps. There would be responses for complaints or if the EMS detects a failure of some kind. Filters would be changed but only bi-annually.
- Electrical – No preventative maintenance will be completed. The amount budgeted for repairs would be cut in half. All additional repairs would need to be taken care of by the in- house staff (3 electricians). There will be a severe setback for timely completion of work orders.
- Plumbing - No plumbing work would be done by outside contractors. The two in house plumbers would be responsible for all repairs. This will create a severe backlog on plumbing repairs which presently exists. Plumbing preventative maintenance will not be completed including science acid tanks, domestic hot water tanks, mixing valves, water coolers, filters and sewerage injectors. By not being proactive with this work, system failures will result causing costly, unscheduled shutdowns.
- Carpentry - There would be no work of any kind. This work would need to be done by the three in house carpenters. This will create and has currently created a severe backlog. Preventative Maintenance work for overhead (garage) doors would not be done. Also checking, repairing and adjusting the hardware for outside doors would not be done. Any kind of work would be reactive. If a door fails, it will need immediate repairs which will be costly and inconvenient. It also allows for a security breach.
- Flooring - There would be no repairs or installations of flooring (carpeting, tile, etc.).
- Painting – There would be no painting.
- Window Treatments – There would be repairs or replacements for window shades or blinds.
- Windows - Windows would not be cleaned.

These requests will only increase over the next several years as more (new) space is added for the Schools (Pierce and Driscoll) and there will be a severe shortage of staff and monies for outside services.

I am also aware of the difficulties and challenges that the upcoming budget process will have. Requests have been made over several years to get the budget in line for proper maintenance. The Matrix Report detailed those needs many years ago. A five year plan was created to incorporate these increases into the budget on a stepped up basis. By not addressing these requests, in a timely manner, and allowing for increases, the problems will continue to snowball until it gets to a point where no maintenance work can be performed only reactive repairs will be done. This type of approach would most likely lead to a reserve fund transfer. I am available to discuss these needs with you.