

# Override Question and Answer Information Sheet

## 1. What are Newton's pressing needs?

- a. Dramatic school enrollment growth (2500+ additional students since 1990)
- b. Antiquated and inadequate school buildings (e.g. Angier, Cabot, Zervas)
- c. Insufficient number of teachers and classrooms to accommodate increased number of students
- d. Crumbling and unsafe streets and sidewalks
- e. Dilapidated fire facilities and increasing traffic accidents

## 2. What has Newton done to control costs?

- a. Collective bargaining agreements will save \$178.4M by 2018, limiting annual growth to 2.5%
- b. Zero-based budget savings of \$15.1M through 2013
- c. Expense growth has been limited to 2.5% to match revenue increases—however enrollment growth and neglected infrastructure require additional funding

## 3. What's in the override?

### a. Operating override – \$8.4 million

- i. \$4.5 million—teaching staff and short-term space needs
- ii. \$1.7 million—Zervas expansion for enrollment
- iii. \$1.0 million—streets and sidewalks (repave crumbling streets, repair sidewalks within a half mile of schools and city centers)
- iv. \$0.7 million—construction of new fire department headquarters and Station 3 for improved response time
- v. \$0.5 million—police for traffic mitigation to address increased pedestrian and cycling accidents

### b. Debt exclusion overrides – \$3 million

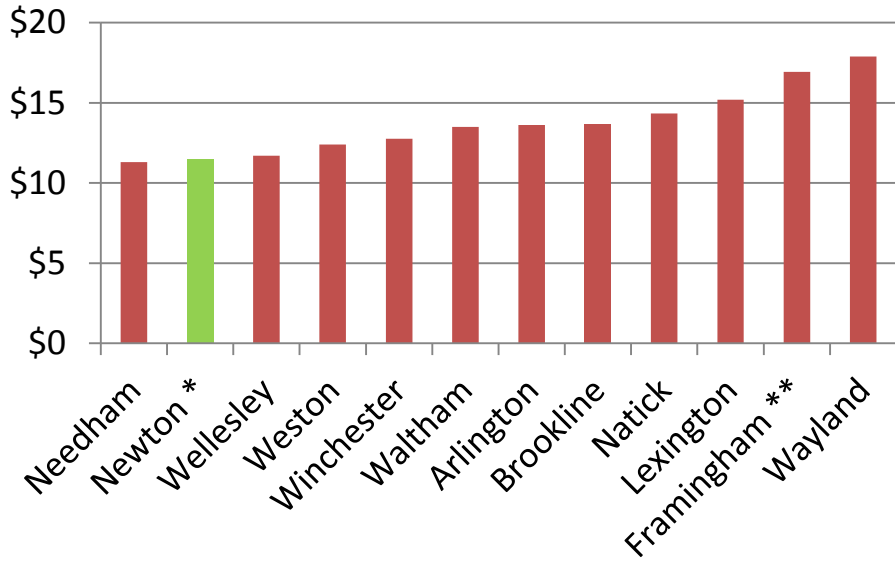
- i. Angier—\$1.3 million
- ii. Cabot—\$1.7 million
- iii. Angier and Cabot are cited as among the state's worst school buildings with failing systems, energy inefficiency, undersized classrooms that are far below state guidelines, hallways and closets being used as classrooms, and irreparable flooding, leaking, and heating problems.

## 4. What are Newton Public Schools' Enrollment History and Forecast?

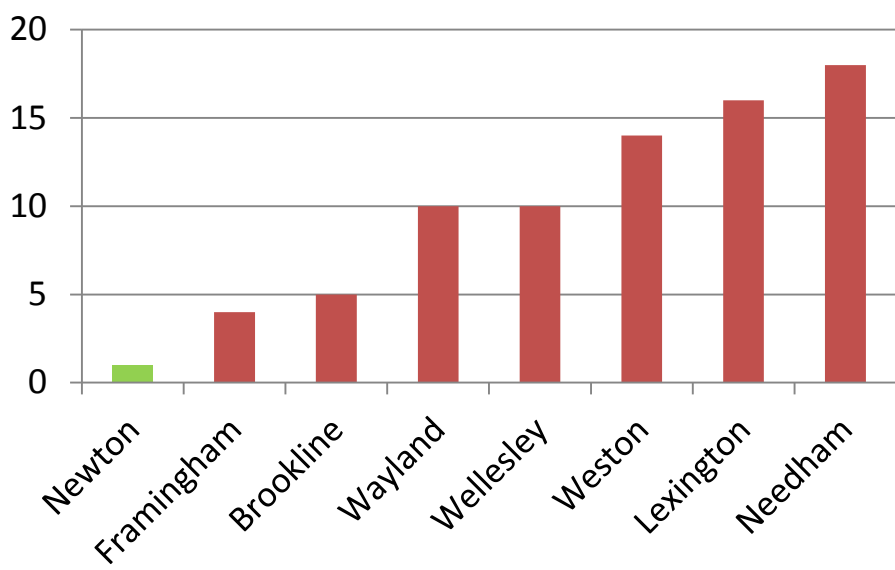
- a. + 911 students since 2005-06
- b. + 257 students from last year (FY 2012)
- c. + 572 students over the next 3 years

5. **How will the override help to address growing enrollment?**
  - a. Operating override to fund additional teachers to maintain reasonable class sizes and program breadth
  - b. Seven modular classrooms ready for September 2013 to address short-term overcrowding (located across the city at Bowen, Mason-Rice, Horace-Mann and Burr elementary schools)
  - c. Renovated/rebuilt Angier, Zervas and Cabot to provide additional classrooms
  
6. **How will the override help address long-term facilities needs?**
  - a. Funding for new Angier to open September 2016
  - b. Funding for renovated or new Cabot and Zervas
  - c. Paves the way to address NPS comprehensive facilities plan
  - d. Provides up-to-date schools for current and future educational needs
  
7. **What has been done to ensure that Newton's building projects will be well managed and stay within budget?**
  - a. Two new municipal special project managers
  - b. New MSBA oversight and close scrutiny, ability to shut down project
  - c. Architectural team with significant elementary school design experience and successes
  - d. New requirement for various Newton stakeholders to work together to oversee entire project
  
8. **What is the taxpayer impact of the override package?**
  - a. The cost of the override package is \$50 per \$100,000 valuation (e.g. for \$600,000 home, increase of \$300). The impact on your tax bill can be assessed using the city's override calculator. <http://apps.newtonma.gov/taximpacts/submit.asp>
  
9. **How does Newton compare with other communities with respect to tax rates and overrides?**
  - a. Newton has a relatively low tax rate and has passed only one override, in 2002. This is far fewer than the average number of override wins and resulting tax increases in neighboring communities.
  
10. **How do I learn more about the override package?**
  - a. Currently there are two websites with override information:
    - i. [www.newtonma.gov/gov/executive/override.asp](http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/executive/override.asp)
    - ii. [www.BuildingNewtonsFuture.org](http://www.BuildingNewtonsFuture.org)
  - b. Visit <http://www3.newton.k12.ma.us/schoolcommittee/contactus> to email your school committee representative with questions or comments
  - c. For an online version of this document as well as related graphs, please see the link at the bottom of the School Committee homepage, [www3.newton.k12.ma.us/schoolcommittee/](http://www3.newton.k12.ma.us/schoolcommittee/).

**Approved Residential FY13 Tax Rate**



**Total Elections with Override Wins**



**Enrollment Growth**

