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## School budget will be unveiled

By **John Hilliard** / **Daily News Staff**

Sunday, October 16, 2005

**W**AYLAND -- As the town faces a \$3.3 million shortfall for fiscal year 2007, residents will get a preview of next year's school budget during a public hearing tomorrow night.

"It'll be an interesting budget season because the upcoming budget crisis is real," said Superintendent Gary Burton. "I don't know what the solution is yet."

While the Finance Committee has not decided whether to support another Proposition 2 1/2 override next year, officials expect an 8 percent cut will be needed to balance the fiscal 2007 budget without an override. Among the "budget busters" next year are climbing health care and pension costs, officials said.

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The School Committee will discuss the budget with the public during tomorrow's hearing at 7 p.m. in the Middle School. Burton said it is the first time a budget hearing has been held so early in the process, which ends with annual Town Meeting in the spring.

School Committee Chairman Jeff Dieffenbach said the hearing will identify some early budget needs, such as salary increases, rising utility costs and transportation issues. Along with a presentation of the town's fiscal 2007 budget, the committee will answer questions.

"The challenge all departments will face is deciding what services to cut" to balance the budget, said Dieffenbach.

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Burton said school officials will develop two budgets -- one based on the Finance Committee guidelines and another matching School Committee requirements.

"We need to save big dollars to remain close to (Finance Committee) guidelines without an override," Burton said.

Building principals and district administrators will spend the fall and winter months fine-tuning the two budgets, which will be presented to the School Committee again this January, he said.

"We build a budget from the bottom up," said Burton.

Finance Director Michael DiPietro said the Finance Committee has set the school budget guideline at about \$26.4 million for next year. The guideline includes increased costs for utilities and employee contracts, as well as an 8 percent budget cut. [\[continue\]](#)

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