

# Medway school budget plans discussed

## Evans: Shift priorities without spending more

By Aaron Wasserman  
DAILY NEWS STAFF

MEDWAY – Within Superintendent Judith A. Evans' \$22.8 million budget proposal for next school year are several notable staff shifts to refocus the priorities and adjust for changing enrollment.

Overall, Evans' proposal has the equivalent of one fewer part-time teacher, but adds four curriculum coaches, two each at the middle and elementary levels. She has said that additional staff, who would teach teachers how to improve instruction, is necessary to boost MCAS scores of students in the early grades.

There would also be two part-time teachers to add electives at the high school, which Evans has said are lacking. The positions could be added because class sizes in several younger grades will be smaller next year.

The total \$22.8 million proposal is a 3.7 percent increase compared to this school year's budget. Actually implementing it and having

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Diane Borgatti  
School Committee chairwoman

that much money to spend are unlikely, considering the predictions for significant cuts in state aid for fiscal 2010.

That uncertainty wove through Evans' presentation to the School Committee yesterday. But she said it was important to explain what next year's budget would hopefully look like to achieve the committee's priorities of improving MEDWAY, Page A8



DAILY NEWS PHOTO BY JOHN THORNTON

The newly renovated exercise room at Medway Middle School was dedicated in honor of Alex Handy yesterday. The room features a horse mural created by Handy's grandmother.

# Medway schools honor Alex Handy

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teacher training and special education, increasing electives and maintaining reasonable class sizes.

"This is a thoughtful budget that shifts some resources and that tries to improve the School Department and student learning while having minimal requests for extra funding," Evans said.

A full copy of the budget proposal will be available on the School Department Web site by the end of Monday.



Alex Handy

The proposal's increases from this year come from an extra \$564,000 in salaries and \$258,000 in special education and transportation expenses.

The figure for salaries could change because the School Committee is negotiating with the teachers' union on a new labor contract to start next school year.

Committee members met in a closed-door executive session at the end of their meeting to talk

about the negotiations.

The committee is being careful to push this budget proposal as one of level needs, with shifted staff, and not one of expanded services.

"I think it speaks to the creativity of your department that you could identify areas where it will not impede education to make shifts," Chairwoman Diane Borgatti told Evans.

"I thought it was important for us to show our needs first before cutting back," Evans said.

She said she will have an idea by month's end what cuts will have to be made to her proposal because Gov. Deval Patrick will have released his budget proposal by then. That will indicate what towns' state aid will be in fiscal 2010, which starts July 1.

The school budget will be a topic at each committee meeting for the next few months, with a public hearing scheduled for March 5.

Also yesterday, the middle school's completely renovated weight room was dedicated in the memory of Alexander Handy, whose memorial foundation paid for and implemented the project. The foundation is



DAILY NEWS PHOTO BY JOHN THORNTON

Principal Joanne Senier-LaBarre dedicates the newly renovated exercise room at Medway Middle School to Alex Handy, while his parents, Ann and Rich, look on yesterday. Every piece of equipment was donated by Cybex.

also paying for staff to keep the gym open for students after school.

Handy was killed in 2006 at the age of 13 in a bike accident. Since then, his family's foundation has promoted youth safety and academics through several projects. It also recently donated

\$800 to the Public Works Department to make crosswalks more visible in town.

Aaron Wasserman may be reached at 508-634-7546 or [awasserm@cnc.com](mailto:awasserm@cnc.com). This and other stories about Medway can be found at [www.milforddailynews.com](http://www.milforddailynews.com).