

HINSDALE, NEW HAMPSHIRE • PUBLIC FORUM

NH HB 1300

What the new school tax-cap law
does — and what residents should
know

Overview - October 27, 2026

Based on the final law, Chapter 324, approved July 15, 2026.



Today's Agenda

1. Brief presentation of HB1300
2. What does it mean for Hinsdale?
3. Question and answer period

Notes:

- *This is a ballot question mandated by NH RSA 32:5.*
- *The school board will not issue a collective vote on the caps.*
- *The school board and administration will provide factual information only and must refrain from answering all subjective questions.*

The Hinsdale Question:

“Shall the Town of HINSDALE limit property tax growth for HINSDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT (SAU #92) under RSA 32:5i? If adopted for a two-year period: (1) the local property tax levy may not grow beyond the prior year’s amount, adjusted for inflation and new construction; (2) SAU central office spending may not exceed 6 percent of total school district appropriations; and (3) bonded capital costs are excluded from both limits. These caps apply only to administrative operations of the SAU central office and do not affect classroom instruction, school-based services, or other municipal expenditures. These limits may be overridden as provided in RSA 32:5-i. Adoption requires a three-fifths ($\frac{3}{5}$) majority vote.”

HB 1300 in one minute

THE BIG PICTURE

1 • ONE LOCAL VOTE

A school-district property-tax growth cap and a SAU central-office spending cap are included in one question.

2 • 3/5 TO PASS

The cap takes a supermajority (60%) yes vote among voters in the district/SAU communities.

3 • NOT AUTOMATIC

The caps apply only if voters approve them. The law schedules votes in Nov. 2026 and Nov. 2028.

For Hinsdale: the law concerns the Hinsdale School District and SAU 92 central-office administration.

It does not automatically cut the school budget or guarantee a lower property-tax bill.

When do residents vote?



NOVEMBER 3, 2026

First vote

If approved, applies beginning July 1, 2027

One question, two outcomes:

The school tax cap and SAU cap are combined in one vote; voters can approve both or neither.

NOVEMBER 7, 2028

Second vote

If approved, applies beginning July 1, 2029

Look for the ballot language

The questions are required by state law; a citizen petition or separate warrant article is not needed.

Two caps — one question — different targets

A. School-district local tax cap

Limits annual growth in the local property-tax raised for the school district.

Formula: prior-year school tax (excluding qualifying bonded capital costs), adjusted for inflation + net new taxable property growth.

B. SAU central-office cap

Caps SAU central-office administrative spending at 6% of total appropriations across the school districts in that SAU, excluding qualifying bonded capital costs.

**The school tax cap is a growth formula;
the SAU cap is a fixed percentage ceiling.**

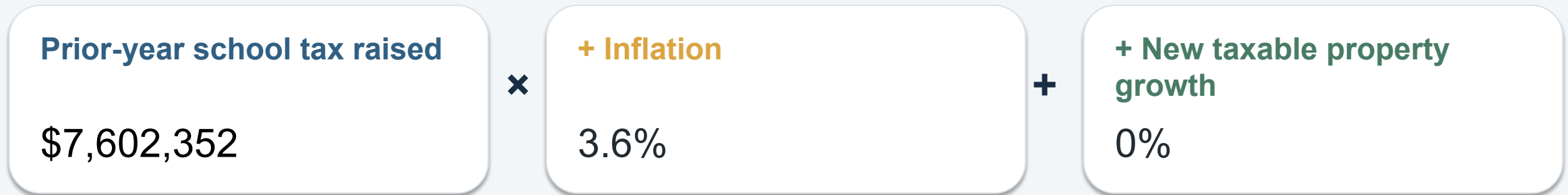
Calculation Estimate of the Total Assessment for 2026

2026-2027 Approved Budget	\$16,027,262
Local Revenue	(\$662,025)
State Revenue	(\$184,500)
Federal Revenue	(\$899,00)
Medicaid	(\$105,000)
Adequacy Funding from State of NH	(\$5,184,843)
SWEPT (Statewide Education Property Tax)	(\$455,195)
Fund Balance (End of 2025-2026 School Fiscal Year)	(\$834,409)
Debt Service	(\$99,938)
Final Local Tax Assessment 2026	\$7,602,352

How the appropriation cap is calculated

CAP #1

A simplified illustration — not Hinsdale's actual tax or forecast



Illustrative cap: $\$7,602,352 \times (1 + 3.6\% + 0\%) = \$7,876,037$

Maximum increase to appropriation is \$273,685

Market appreciation and a town-wide revaluation do not count as “net new taxable property growth.” New construction and certain physical improvements can count.

Contractual Items to Be Covered

Teacher Salary Increases per Collective Bargaining Agreement (Year 3 of Contract)	\$182,231
Health Insurance increase of 26% for 2027-2028	\$639,601
Support Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement Increase (In Negotiations Now)	Currently Bargaining
Total Contractual Obligations (not including Transportation)	\$821,832
Amount of Estimated School Appropriation Increase Cap	\$273,685
Example Deficit - Contractual Obligations over the School Tax Cap	\$548,147

What is — and isn't — covered?

SCOPE

SAU central-office functions included

- Superintendent services
- Business administration, HR, finance, payroll
- Purchasing, district-level IT administration
- Legal services
- Some curriculum leadership

(4.11% for 2026-2027)

Explicitly excluded from the SAU cap

- School-based administrative staff
- Teachers, paraprofessionals, and other instructional support
- Special education services
- Transportation and food services
- Facilities operations and maintenance
- Qualifying bonded capital costs

Important: the law's 6% SAU cap is not a 6% cap on the entire school budget.

Can a cap ever be exceeded?

- Yes. HB 1300 includes override procedures; the cap is not an absolute, no-exceptions ceiling.
- **For districts with annual meetings, an appropriation that exceeds a cap requires a ballot vote; a 60% yes vote (or applicable charter supermajority) approves it.**
- For SB2 districts without annual meetings, the law requires a 60% supermajority vote to override the amount on the March warrant.
- If there is no valid override, the Department of Revenue Administration can require the school district to reduce the budget to fit within the statutory limit.

Can a cap ever be exceeded?

- If the proposed budget plus all warrants total more than the tax cap allows, the school board can reduce the general fund expenditures by the amount that they are over.
- **Revenues are not finalized until October 2027, and forecasted (budgeted) revenues can change.**
- If the final revenues are less than those forecasted (budgeted), the final local education tax effort set in November 2027 would be above the ceiling without an override vote. Therefore, the Department of Revenue Administration would most likely direct the school district to reduce spending to meet the cap.

What might this mean for Winchester?

Trade-off to examine

If costs rise faster than the cap formula, officials may need to find other revenue, or seek an override.

For instance, FY28 health insurance premiums rose **26.5%**

Potential benefit

More predictable limits on school property-tax increases and central-office administration.

Not a tax guarantee

Your total tax bill also depends on other taxing entities, assessed value, and the tax rate.

Three things HB 1300 does not mean

“School taxes can’t rise.”

Not quite. The tax cap adjusts for inflation and qualifying new taxable property, and bonded capital costs are excluded.

“All school spending is capped at 6%.”

No. The 6% figure applies to SAU central-office administration, not classroom instruction or the full school budget.

“The caps start right away.”

No. A cap must pass by 60%. A successful 2026 vote applies starting July 1, 2027; a successful 2028 vote applies starting July 1, 2029.

What do voters decide with this bill?

A YES vote:

Supports adopting the local tax cap and SAU services spending limit for the two year period.

A NO vote:

Opposed adopting the limitations; existing school district budgeting and voter approval procedures would continue.

Key Points:

Adoption requires 60% of voters to vote YES.

The question will appear again on the November 2028 general ballot.

Sources & where to verify



Final enacted HB 1300 / Chapter 324

<https://bills.nhliberty.org/bills/2026/HB1300/revision/52751>

NH General Court — official bill status and chaptered final version

<https://gc.nh.gov/house/legislation/billinfo.aspx?id=2080&sy=>

NH Department of Education — SAU directory (Winchester is SAU 94)

<https://my.doe.nh.gov/myNHDOE/Help/PublicReports.aspx?ReportName=SAUList>

Winchester School District — Budgets and Elections

<https://www.wnhsd.org/o/district/page/budgets-and-elections>

Town of Winchester — HB 1300 information session listing (Oct. 24, 2026)

<https://www.winchester-nh.gov/Calendar.aspx?EID=1383>

Prepared October 2026. Check official sources for updated guidance, ballot details, and local calculations.

Discussion