

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE  
FY 2019 SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUDGET DEVELOPMENT  
GUIDELINES AND PRIORITIES  
9/20/2017 DRAFT FOR FIRST READING**

The Brookline School Committee (BSC) is responsible for approving and overseeing the Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) annual budget. In accordance with those responsibilities, the BSC annual process begins with this statement of priorities and guidelines to inform the Superintendent's initial construction of a budget for the next fiscal year.

**BUDGET DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES**

The budget should serve to accomplish the Public Schools of Brookline **Strategic Plan Goals**:

1. Every Student Achieving
2. Every Student Invested in Learning
3. Every Student Prepared for Change and Challenge
4. Every Educator Growing Professionally

The BSC urges the Administration to follow these **best practice principles** for budget development:

1. Emphasize transparency and accountability in the development, presentation, and management of the annual budget, with expenditures and/or reductions expressed in a format readily understandable by the public and anchored in clear goals, initiatives, and supporting investments for both the district as a whole and for individual program budgets.
2. Describe the effect on the teaching and learning experience (i.e. students, families, and staff) of any proposed budget changes that are substantive (increases and decreases).
3. Minimize reliance on one-time revenues for ongoing operating budget needs.
4. Plan adequate contingency funds for uncertainties and fluctuations in known areas of budget pressure such as (but not limited to) enrollment, special education, and State budget commitments.
5. Maintain solvency within Revolving funds (such as school lunches and adult education).
6. Seek savings through efficiencies within existing programming and/or staffing before seeking additional revenue, provided the proposed change(s) achieve both sustainable improvements in teaching and learning as well as operational efficiencies.
7. Continue the sustainable growth budget model urged by the 2007 Override Study Committee (OSC), approved by the BSC in 2008, and affirmed by the 2014 OSC: ... "consistent with our obligations to engage in good faith bargaining pursuant to M.G.L.c. 150E, [the BSC will] incorporate into our approach to bargaining in the coming year the approach recommended in the Override Study Committee Report of January 2008 on managing total personnel costs, so that the combination of salaries, employee health benefits, and staffing levels grow at a sustainable rate."

**BUDGET DEVELOPMENT CURRENT CONDITIONS & PRIORITIES**

Due to unabated enrollment growth, the FY 2019 budget will likely produce structural deficits for the Town budget requiring additional funding through an operating override to sustain. The 2015 operating override was structured to cover three years of budget growth, and FY 2018 is the last year in that budget. PSB enrollment increased from 7,417 K-12 students as of Sept. 2016 to 7,555 K-12 students as of Sept. 2017, and in FY 2019, the PSB anticipates further growth to 7,696 K-12 students<sup>1</sup>. The BSC and PSB will collaborate with the Board of

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<sup>1</sup> FY 2019 student enrollment projections are taken from the 2017 Public Schools of Brookline Enrollment Report

Selectmen and an Override Study Committee during the establishment of this budget to determine the additional funds required to sustain educational equity and excellence. To that end, the budget should remain consistent with the **PSB's ongoing commitments** to:

1. **Low student-to-teacher ratios**, especially in the early grades
2. **High quality curriculum**, including:
  - **Program Review** – a periodic fact-based evaluation and revision of our core programs for students; one curricular program currently under review is Math
  - **Evidence-based student achievement initiatives** that advance our curricular goals
3. **Student and staff diversity, equity and inclusion**, as large inequities in opportunity and achievement by race, income, special needs and language continue to persist in the PSB. Investments should include but are not limited to core education program areas that address these inequities, diverse educator and administrator recruitment, professional development, and the METCO and Materials Fee programs
  - **Financial assistance policy** – The FY 2019 budget should also include funding for a new BSC financial assistance policy aimed at ensuring equitable student access to opportunities, including an assessment of fees charged to students and ensuring an appropriate supplies budget
4. **High quality in-district programming and inclusion classrooms for students with special needs**, including resources required to provide for increasing need for medical support, as well as identifying targeted investments and innovations in district-wide programs;
5. **District-wide capacity to collect, analyze, and use student data** to understand both individual student growth and access to opportunities, and longitudinal trends for the district;
6. **K-12 art, music, foreign language, recess, and physical education** as part of the school day;
7. **Educational technology**, including investments required to maintain a robust and flexible technology infrastructure, equitable and universal access to advanced technology for all our students in a growing School population, professional development and support to bolster approaches to teaching and learning, and costs of implementing and supporting a new statewide testing system.

The budget should also reflect the following **current conditions**:

1. **Operating Implications of Capital Needs**: Continued enrollment growth has had, and will continue to have both operating and capital implications. The pressing needs of the schools for physical expansion and the operating budgets for those buildings are inextricably linked: limitations and/or expansions in the physical plant can drive decisions about class sizes, the number of courses offered and other program choices, and rental space—all of which have implications for the operating budget. The PSB Administration should plan for and highlight those incremental operating costs in the FY 2019 budget, including but not limited to BEEP capacity, High School expansion, the addition of a 9<sup>th</sup> Elementary School, and the reopening of the renovated Devotion School.
2. **Collective Bargaining**: The BSC signed new contracts with all of its unions during FY 2017. The 2019 budget should reflect the new contracts, and future projections should reflect new contracts consistent with the sustainable growth budget model indicated above.
3. **State Mandates**: The BSC expects the PSB to continue to budget to meet the demands of various mandated initiatives. Mandated initiatives for FY 2019 include:
  - a. **Educator Evaluation**. Piloted in 2013-14 with system-wide implementation in 2014-15, the new system requires changes in both training and supervision, with additional implications for personnel hiring and assignment. Subsequently, the BSC and Brookline Educators' Union (BEU) reached a new Educator Evaluation Agreement for Unit A Personnel in 2017. Commitment to educator evaluation and, most critically, development is an important pillar of our educational system.
  - b. **Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL)**. Effective July 1, 2016, all licensed educators are required (teacher and administrators) to earn a Sheltered English

Immersion (SEI) Teacher Endorsement. Most educators earn their RETELL SEI Teacher Endorsement by completing the 45-hour graduate-level Teacher Endorsement course. The impact to the district is that if a student has a non-RETELL endorsed teacher, they cannot have any unendorsed teacher for the rest of their time at the Public Schools of Brookline.

- c. **Legislative and DESE regulatory changes.** The PSB will review and update policy, guidelines, and services in accordance with new legislative mandates and DESE regulatory changes.
4. ***Special Revenue Funds.*** Continue to review and analyze the sustainability of reliance on these funds for basic and specialized program needs.

Submitted by the Brookline School Committee as voted on \_\_\_\_\_.

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