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TO Bella Wong, Superintendent
FROM: School Committee
DATE: November 6, 2025
RE: *FY27 Budget Guidelines – voted November 6, 2025*

The School Committee is responsible for approving and overseeing the District's annual budget (educational plan). In accordance with our responsibilities, we present our suggested guidelines to (1) inform and facilitate construction of the budget for the upcoming year, (2) allow us to review all spending proposals with a cooperative vision, (3) guide us as we make difficult, important choices, and (4) enable us to maintain a relentless focus on our priorities. These guidelines explicitly link priorities to the Strategic Plan. Our goal must remain to focus on our priorities and to support long-term budget sustainability.

The **primary guideline for FY27** continues to be that activities described in the Strategic Plan[1] (as refined in your presentation of September 18, 2025[2]) will have clearly identifiable funding in the budget and will be described as part of the work of the relevant unit(s) in their budget narrative, to be measured against the benchmarks set in the Strategic Plan.

Conversely and to the extent possible, activities that are clearly not aligned with the Strategic Plan will be identified and a strategy (multi-year and/or starting in later years as needed) for exiting, aligning, or deprioritizing these activities will be described.

Above and beyond this alignment with the Strategic Plan, specific guidelines include:

1. **TEACHING AND LEARNING**
   a. **Continue for FY27:** Ensure class sizes at the high school remain closer to recent historical trends. Maintain K-8 class sizes within guidelines.

[1] brookline.k12.ma.us/strategicplan
[2] brookline.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907509/Centricity/Domain/62/Superintendent%20Report_9.18.25.pdf

b. **Continue for FY27**: Maintain an intensive focus on literacy and Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) roll-out. Ensure that reading, writing, and math skills are the sustained focus across all educational activities.
c. **By FY27:** Identify the resources included in the budget that support the educational equity goals outlined in the strategic plan.

2. **COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIONS** - *No guidelines for this section*

3. **CLIMATE AND CULTURE** - *No guidelines for this section*

4. **MANAGEMENT AND CAPACITY-BUILDING**
   a. **Continue for FY27:** Leverage K-12 enrollment forecasts to identify where positions can be held. Return to prior practice of holding reserve funds for a limited number of staff. This can be done over multiple years to lessen the impact of any one year.
   b. **Continue for FY27:** Align SIP process as part of budget cycle. Ensure that the PSB budget reflects each school's priorities and goals as described in their SIP, such as improving student outcomes, enhancing teacher development, or expanding extracurricular programs. All spending should support the broader mission of the school, be tracked against goals, and regularly measured/reported.
   c. **For FY27, contingent upon override funding**: Because of the importance of the strategic plan in driving all decisions, dashboards are to be developed that will allow stakeholders to track the plan's progress.

5. **GOVERNANCE** - *No guidelines for this section*

6. **PREPARATION FOR POSSIBLE OVERRIDE IN FY27**
   a. Evaluate current operations and programs for possible efficiencies and revenue generation.
   b. Create budgets for different override planning scenarios that will recommend:
      i. Financial/operational efficiencies.
      ii. Revenue generation.
      iii. Ongoing K-8 Literacy Implementation and District-Wide MTSS Development.
      iv. FY26 reductions to restore.
      v. Program modifications to assure educational equity for all students, including, but not limited to, socio-emotional and academic learning.
   c. Outline consequences of a failed override:
      i. Budget gaps for FY27-29.
      ii. Possible areas of reduction to close those gaps.