



## The Public Schools of Brookline

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TO: Bella Wong., Superintendent  
FROM: School Committee  
DATE: September 17, 2025  
RE: *FY27-31 Budget Guidelines* (first draft)

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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 multi-year guidelines to (1) inform construction of the budget for the upcoming and future fiscal years, (2) allow us to review all spending proposals *with a cooperative vision through a shared lens*, (3) guide us as we make difficult, important choices, and (4) enable us to maintain a relentless focus on our priorities.

~~T~~Since last year's guidelines, the FY24-27 strategic plan ~~should have been finalized, which will~~ drive the vast majority of the upcoming budget decisions. With this shared understanding of the importance of the strategic plan in guiding the budget, the **primary guideline for FY27-31** continues to be that all activities described in the strategic plan (and future iterations thereof) 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. **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. *Our goal must remain to focus on our priorities and to support long-term budget sustainability. Finally, it is noted that all major educational activities funded through the budget have clear guidelines for measuring achievement based on the benchmarks set in the Strategic Plan.*~~This is important for the additional focus on our priorities and to support long-term budget sustainability.~~

Further, the School Committee affirms its commitment to full funding for the district's literacy initiative, including curriculum materials and professional development aligned with the Science of Reading. Above and beyond this emphasis on the budget as the strategic plan, specific guidelines include:

### 1. **STAFFING/ENROLLMENT/CURRICULUM:**

- a. **For FY27:** Ensure class sizes at the high school remain closer to recent historical trends. Leverage K-12 enrollment forecasts to identify where positions can be shifted. Maintain K-8 class sizes within guidelines.
- b. **In FY27:** Maintain an intensive focus on literacy roll-out through FY27 to ensure that reading skills are developed and strengthened and that intervention is identified via MTSS.
- c. **In FY27:** Ensure that, in addition to reading, both writing and math skills are the sustained focus across all educational activities.
- d. **In FY28:** Return World Language as a robust option in lower elementary grades. Will require planning in FY27. This time frame is to allow for intensive focus on literacy roll-out through FY26.
- e. **Upon the availability of federal and/or state subsidies:** Establish universal pre-Kindergarten.

2. ~~EDUCATIONAL EQUITY~~ **LEARNING FOR EVERYONE:**

- a. **For FY27:** Continue to fund Extended School Year (ESY) programming that increases access to ESY by providing coordinated wraparound opportunities, including but not limited to socioemotional learning, therapeutic recreational activities and enrichment.
- b. **For funding no later than the year following any adoption:** Should a policy on life of the school be adopted that requires funding to implement policy, identify said funding.
- c. **By FY27:** Fund an educational equity strategy, to be ~~articulated by the Office of Educational Equity and~~ approved by School Committee, that right-sizes the resources directed towards educational equity, whether they are centralized or decentralized.
- d. **By FY30:** Fund robust summer programming that meets a variety of student needs - for example, expanding summer offerings for high school students to provide enrichment and so that those on IEPs may access summer electives. We encourage partial/full implementation to begin in earlier fiscal years, as resources allow.

3. **BUDGET:**

- a. **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.
- b. **Continuing in FY27:** 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.

- c. **By FY27:** Because of the importance of the strategic plan in driving all decisions, dashboards ~~are to~~<sup>should</sup> be developed that will allow stakeholders to track the plan's progress.
- d. **For FY27:** Ensure that a critical review is made of all programs in the District with an eye towards identifying those programs that are bringing sustainable value and require future funding to continue and those programs that can, in the possible face of a funds shortage, be downsized or eliminated. Attention should also be given to dependence on grants and their included stipends for supporting ongoing or proposed, new programs.

**4. PREPARATION FOR POSSIBLE OVERRIDE IN FY27**

- a. Evaluate current operations and programs for possible efficiencies.
- b. Establish a level services budget.
  - i. Minus the identified efficiencies
  - ii. To include anticipated growth needs to support K-8 Literacy Implementation and District-Wide MTSS Development
- c. Evaluate impact of FY26 reductions for possible restoration.
- d. Evaluate program data and studies to determine recommendations to support educational equity for all students, including, but not limited to socio emotional and academic learning.