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TO Bella Wong., Superintendent
FROM: School Committee
DATE: September 28, 2025
RE: *FY27-31* Budget Guidelines (second draft)

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 and facilitate construction of the budget for the upcoming and future fiscal years, (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 FY27-31** 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.
   b. **Continue for FY27**: Maintain an intensive focus on literacy and MTSS roll-out. Ensure that reading, writing, and math skills are the sustained focus across all educational activities.
   c. **Continue for FY27**: Fund Extended School Year (ESY) programming for eligible students with disabilities that increases access to ESY by providing coordinated

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

wraparound opportunities, including but not limited to socioemotional learning, therapeutic recreational activities and enrichment.

d. **In FY28, contingent upon override funding:** 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. **By FY29, contingent upon override funding:** Fund/support educational opportunities for students beyond grade level.

f. **By FY30, contingent upon override funding:** 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.

g. **Upon the availability of federal and/or state subsidies:** Establish universal pre-Kindergarten.

2. COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIONS

a. **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.

3. CLIMATE AND CULTURE

a. **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.

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:

Override Scenario	Dollar Amount
(1) Level Services Budget (LSB) - includes bargaining considerations	
(2) Identified efficiencies	
(3) Budget 1 - Budget 2	
(4) Possible generated revenues	
(5) Budget 3 - Budget 4	
(6) Funding to support ongoing K-8 Literacy Implementation and District-Wide MTSS Development	
(7) Budget 5 + 6	
(8) Restoration of FY26 reductions	
(9) Budget 7 + 8	
(10) 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.	
(11) Budget 9 + 10	

c. Consequences of failed override:
    i. Budget gaps for FY27-29
    ii. Possible areas of reduction to close those gaps