

To: School Committee Members  
From: Superintendent Tommy Chang  
Date: March 21, 2018  
RE: FY19 Budget

On Wednesday, March 28th the School Committee will vote on the FY19 budget for the Boston Public Schools. The total general fund budget for your consideration is \$1,108,740,327. We are confident that the proposal represents our values of equity, coherence and innovation.

Today, our final proposal for your review (in the form of the attached budget tables) are being posted online and shared with School Committee members. This memo summarizes the changes reflected in this proposal versus the original budget proposed on February 7<sup>th</sup> of this year.

### **Investment in English Learners**

A theme of School Committee feedback has centered around our investments in English Learners. In the updated FY19 proposal, we have included the following investments:

- A proposed investment in curriculum and professional development of \$400K for EL classrooms and teaching staff (an increase of \$300K from the Superintendent's original February 7<sup>th</sup> proposal)
- A new position in the Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gap to focus specifically on gaps faced by immigrant families and English Learners, a new proposal versus the Superintendent's original February 7<sup>th</sup> proposal
- With the new position in OAG plus curriculum and professional development investments, the total new investment in central budgets will be \$508K in order to directly support English Learners in our schools.
- School budgets include an additional \$6.2M in new dollars for English Learners, bringing *the overall total investment to \$6.7M.*

### **Transition of partnership funding approach**

The FY19 proposal includes a new approach to engaging and funding 13 specific central partner organizations. Historically, the selection of this select group of partners and their placement at individual schools was done centrally. Under the new proposed approach, dollars are allocated to schools based on student need and schools lead the decision-making process.

We have been listening carefully to feedback on this proposal from the School Committee and broader community. We remain excited for the long term potential for this change, but also are committed to ensuring that the transition goes smoothly. Based on the feedback we've received, our revised FY19 proposal includes the following updates versus the original proposal:

- Transitions for schools: \$200K is being added to our reserve for schools with declining enrollment and partnership changes are being considered as those funds are allocated. This includes, for instance, \$30K for the Condon, which is a City Year site in FY18, but did not qualify for partnership funding under the new formula. These funds are



being concentrated in our lower performing schools. We continue to work school-by-school to make sure every site manages the transition effectively.

- Working with our partners: We have worked one-on-one with each partner to ensure a smooth transition. We appreciated the deep collaboration with these organizations and thank them for their commitment to BPS. In some cases, there are partner organizations that have had system-wide roles in the past and in those cases, we are working preserve important elements of those assets. For instance:
  - Boston Debate League: In the first year of transition, BPS will support the overhead costs to fund citywide tournaments for \$125K.
  - MassInsight: The organization identified changes in its FY18 contract that allows them to take \$100K in remaining dollars from the current year funding allocation of and move into FY19 to support select AP professional development next school year. This is made possible because funding from MassInsight comes from Title I and we are able to rollover FY18 Title I funds into FY19.

### **Social Emotional Learning and Student Wellbeing**

The social emotional wellbeing of our students is a fundamental aspect of student academic excellence. BPS has expanded supports and services to address social emotional learning and student well-being. However, we must continue to work on identifying needs and capacity to better assess quality and equity of supports as they are coordinated across schools, students, and families. We appreciated the School Committee feedback in last week's presentation on Social Emotional Learning and Wellness (SELWELL). We recognize there is a need to improve our methodology for the deployment of specific services and supports in BPS.

At last week's meeting, School Committee members received testimony indicating that the American Psychological Association's (APA) recommended ratio of school psychologists to students is 1:500-700. Although this may be the ideal, the APA recognizes that full implementation of the National Association of School Psychologist (NASP) Practice model is "most often a multi-year process, particularly in states and districts that must build toward the recommended ratio." The NASP practice model is a robust and comprehensive support service delivery model – one that has not been currently adopted in BPS. The ratio of BPS school psychologists to students is currently 1:848 (65.9 school-based psychologists serving 55,900 students). Additionally, BPS commissioned a study in the 16-17 school year, conducted by Futures Education, a Massachusetts-based consulting agency, that determined at the time of the study, "using a standard metric of 1 psychologist for every 1,000 students (all), the 59 school psychologists is considered a reasonable staffing model." We are in the process of collecting additional data that will be available to share shortly and will inform longer term planning.

In our proposal for FY19, we have shifted resources from another capacity building position that supported adult learning in Behavioral Health Services to create a new Behavioral Health Services Program Director position. The Senior Director of Behavioral Health currently supervises 65.9 school-based psychologists and two centrally-based psychologists. The new Program Director will support the Senior Director of Behavioral Health to build the capacity of school psychologists and evaluate a subset of school psychologists to ensure quality services are provided to BPS students. The Program Director will lead on service delivery data collection and analysis to ensure equity of services and supports across BPS schools. This individual will collaborate with the Senior Director of Behavioral Health Services to coordinate and galvanize internal and external resources

and partnerships, such as those available to BPS through the School-Based Mental Health Collaborative, Boston Children’s Hospital, the University of Massachusetts, and Sandy Hook Promise Initiative.

### **Allocation of soft landings for Level 3, 4 and 5 schools**

The district entered the FY19 planning process committed to supporting lower performing schools with declining enrollment. With that goal in mind, the district continued the strategy put in place last year to create a reserve for these schools, to be allocated through the budget process. As schools have moved through the budget process in the last two months, dollars from the centrally-held reserve have been allocated to school budgets.

Forty schools received additional funding for both decreased enrollment and the impact of the change in partnership funding. The amounts were given primarily by the size of the budget’s decline, with some adjustments made by Instructional Superintendents using information from school applications and their understanding of the building’s needs. The largest awards went to the schools with the largest enrollment impacts: Brighton High School (\$198K), East Boston High School (\$135K), and the Winship (\$86K). Full detail can be found online at [goo.gl/58csqe](http://goo.gl/58csqe)

### **Changes to School Budgets**

Every year, the initial proposed budget contains a number of reserves that we intend to partially liquidate throughout the budget process. These reserves are typically held in the Budget Office, but are eventually transferred to school budgets. Below is a summary of those changes for this year. While we are still holding some reserves that will be liquidated during the summer and fall, the following funds have moved from central reserves onto school budgets:

- Enrollment adjustments through WSF, \$640K: We identified a number of schools that will receive additional classrooms funded by increased enrollment projections.
- Other Supplemental School Supports, \$440K: This represents additional programmatic or sustainability allocations to schools, details of which can be found on our School Allocation Tracker available at [bostonpublicschools.org/budget](http://bostonpublicschools.org/budget).
- Additional Funding to Low Performing Schools \$1M: Low performing schools were able to apply for a soft landing for negative budget impacts. These proposals were reviewed by the Instructional Superintendents to account for the unique situation of each involved school.
- Additional Funding to Schools Affected by Partnerships \$200K: We provided soft-landings to schools who are not able to continue a partner that was centrally funded in prior years.

### **Changes to Central Budgets**

There have been several changes to the proposed budget for central departments. These are more limited in scope and represent transfers between central departments. This mostly involves our school support reorganization and smaller adjustments within divisions. The reorganization to central school supports was outlined in a memo from the Superintendent to the School Committee on Friday, March 9th.

We thank you and our community for the productive public dialogue over the past two months. I would also like to thank the dedicated staff who have helped develop this budget, including our school leaders, school site councils, finance team and department heads.