

March 16, 2022

Dear School Committee Members,

On Wednesday, March 23rd, 2022, the School Committee will vote on the FY23 budget for the Boston Public Schools. The total general fund budget for your consideration is **\$1,334,845,508**.

We will make progress towards these goals with new investments from Mayor Wu and the City of Boston. We have leveraged our City's unparalleled financial support to build our "Quality Guarantee". Using a three-year, \$110M operating investment, we are working to guarantee a baseline of services across all schools through a high-quality experience regardless of school, program, or neighborhood. This quality guarantee will grow to include Student and Family Supports, Curriculum and Academics, Facilities, and Enrichment.

Today, our final proposal for your review (in the form of the attached budget tables) is 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 2nd of this year.

Changes to School Budgets

Every year, the initial proposed budget contains a number of additional reserves that we intend to partially liquidate throughout the budget process. These reserves are held in the Budget Office and 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:

- Changes to school configurations - K-8s converting to K-6 (Trotter, King) and High Schools adding 7th and 8th grades (Burke and Brighton High): \$1,795,618
 - Trotter & King: Removed 7th and 8th grade classroom and specialist teaching positions, reduced WSF and Title I allocations, adjusted school psychologist FTE allocations. Held harmless for all other positions and non-personnel lines.
 - Burke & Brighton: Added Grade 7 and Grade 8 classroom and specialist teaching positions, increased WSF, Soft Landing, and Title I allocations, increased school psychologist FTE, added Librarian FTE, increased supply and substitute budgeted amounts.
 - P.A. Shaw: Our team will also be working with the P.A. Shaw to add 4th grade for next school year. This is not yet reflected in the school's budget; it is currently held in reserve while we work with the school leader to modify their program.
- Madison Park Technical Vocational High School: The school leader, in collaboration with the Chief of Schools and school superintendents, has decided to cap their enrollment. As a result, their WSF allocation decreased by \$586,965.

- Implementation of School Psychologists expansion, creating a districtwide ratio of 1 psychologist for every 500 students, meeting national standards: \$2,334,556 for an additional 22 FTE across schools
- Implementation of Library and Librarian expansion: \$3,588,156 which represents 33.5 FTE to 38 schools
- School-based allocation decisions reviewed by the School Budget Review Committee: Increase individual school budgets by \$999,234.
 - The change affecting many schools related to lunch monitors: updated lunch monitor FTE formula to include Grade 6 projections. We added 15 new lunch monitors at a total cost of \$139,740.
- Finalizing School-based Soft Landing decisions: Increase individual school budgets by \$1,633,412
 - Maintained 30 lunch monitors at schools
 - Hold harmless for King, Trotter, Burke, and Brighton as part of grade 7-12 expansion
 - English Learner and Special Education compliance requirement increases

Across these three areas, school budgets have increased by a total of \$9,341,217 since the original proposal. Ninety-eight schools have seen increases in their individual budgets since February 2nd.

Changes to Central Budgets

There have been a number of small changes to the proposed budget for central departments. These are more limited in scope and represent transfers between central departments and between account types within a department.

The only change to central budgets reflected in the tables involves the addition of central support staff for the library investment. 1 FTE was added centrally, an Assistant Director of Library Services. Funds were also added to the library services operating budget to cover library system fees across schools. These changes total \$346,087 added to the Academics department.

I have also directed the Finance team to make several changes to central budgets based on feedback received during the budget process. These changes are not reflected in the current budget, but will be incorporated once the Finance team has the opportunity to identify offsetting one-time costs that can be moved to another funding source. These include:

- \$1M in additional funding for the Division of Equity, Strategy, and Opportunity gaps to support the Anti-Racist Strategic Leadership Cohort, Targeted Innovative Programming, OAG Policy Consultation and Professional Development.
- \$800K in additional funding for the Office of Recruitment, Cultivation, and Diversity to expand several initiatives and proactively prepare for the staffing shortages anticipated to impact the start of SY 22-23.
- \$500K for the Athletics Department to expand their central team to support and coordinate district wide athletic programs.

I would be remiss if I didn't end this letter by thanking the dedicated staff who helped develop this budget, including our school leaders, school site councils, finance team and department heads. They represent the very best of BPS and embody our commitment to our students, our families and our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda Cassellius".

Dr. Brenda Cassellius
Superintendent