

To: School Committee Members  
From: Superintendent Tommy Chang  
Date: March 21, 2016  
RE: FY17 Budget vote

On Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> the School Committee will vote on the FY17 budget for the Boston Public Schools. While our structural deficit means that next year will present some challenges and tradeoffs, we are confident that the proposal represents our values of equity, coherence and innovation. We ask that you vote to approve this budget.

Updated budget tables for FY17 can be found at <http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/5867>. Please note that only one change has been made in the proposal versus what was presented last week on March 16<sup>th</sup>. That change is in the Opportunity and Achievement Gap Office, where we have increased our proposed investment by \$197,336.

In summary, the FY17 proposal includes the following:

- Three critical investment priorities are directly represented in the budget:
  - Expansion of 200 additional K1 seats
  - Significant supports for our delivery of special education services
  - Investment in the Opportunity and Achievement Gap Office
- We will reinstate a series of additional investments contingent upon confirmation of additional state and federal revenue. These investments were highlighted as part of earlier budget presentations. The most significant of those investments includes:
  - Excellence for All pilot
  - Preparation for ELT expansion in FY18
  - Transportation data system
  - Personalized learning and innovation
  - Translation
  - ELL Coordinator pilot
  - Safety office and technology
- In order to balance the budget, we are suggesting a series of reductions, the largest of which include:
  - Efficiencies within transportation
  - Modifications to Weighted Student Funding in the area of special education to reflect staffing ratios at or below state requirements
  - Central office staff and non-personnel
  - Modifications to our Early Hiring Initiative
  - Supplement to EECs and ELCs without reducing hours
  - Partnerships
  - Consolidation of Educational Options sites

As reviewed with the School Committee on March 16<sup>th</sup>, our final proposal differs from the original proposal of Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> in a number of important regards. Most importantly, we have restored the originally proposed reductions to the high school weights. In addition, as noted above, there are a series of planned



strategic investments which have been removed from the current budget proposal. We plan to officially reinstate these investments if additional state and federal dollars are confirmed.

As a person new to BPS, I was able to observe our district's current practices regarding enrollment projects, student assignment, and Weighted Student Funding. While there is much to be celebrated about the transparency and equity that we strive for in these areas, I believe that we can do even better in the future than we do today. I would like our community to be aware that we plan to revisit those processes and will make adjustments for next year.

Lastly, we would like to highlight our goal of funding the Diploma Plus program at Charlestown High School. While we have not yet resolved how to do so, we are hopeful that through a combination of private fundraising, staffing choices at Charlestown, and future state revenue we will be able to make it happen.

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.