

Frequently Asked Questions about the BPS budget.

What are the sources of revenue for the district?

BPS receives funds from several different sources. Revenue from the City of Boston is referred to as “General Funds” and includes state funding (Chapter 70). The table below contains our estimated fiscal year 2017 (FY17) revenue.

Source	Amount	Percentage of Total Budget
City of Boston General Funds ¹	\$1,027,000,000	89.3%
State & Federal grants ²	\$110,436,772	9.6%
Private Fundraising (est.)	\$12,000,000	1.0%
Total Estimated Revenue	\$1,149,436,772	

What is the impact of state financing decisions?

In Boston, our total education costs this year, combining both Boston Public School and public charter spending, will grow by 5%, or more than \$55 million. Yet our state aid for education, combining Chapter 70 and reimbursements, will increase by only 2%, or about \$5 million. This is in part because the public charter tuition reimbursements required by law are being increasingly under-funded—this year by more than 50%. This ongoing disparity has translated into shortfalls of \$12.2 million in FY15 and \$18.6 million in FY16, for Boston alone. *[From Mayor Martin J. Walsh’s testimony to the Education Committee on October 13, 2015]*

What is Weighted Student Funding (WSF)?

Weighted Student Funding is also known as fair student funding or student-based budgeting. It advances the following goals:

Equity: Students are funded equitably, regardless of which school they attend.

School Empowerment: Schools have both the autonomy and the responsibility to design their schools to best meet their student needs.

Innovation: Within the constraints of their budgetary resources, principals have the freedom to organize their school in whatever way they believe will best serve their students.

Accountability: Every school controls its own budget and school leaders are responsible for resource decisions and related outcomes.

Transparency: A WSF formula makes it clear to all relevant stakeholders how much money schools receive and how the allocation process works.

¹ Includes State funding (Chapter 70)

² Projected. Actual Revenue will be finalized in August.

Under a weighted student funding formula, dollars follow students. BPS calculates per-student funding by assigning a value to the various factors that go into meeting a student's academic needs, and then adding them up. This means BPS anticipates what each student needs each year and then delivers the appropriate funds to the school that the student attends. A school's budget is calculated by adding the individual funding estimates for every student projected to attend that school in the fall. Weighted student funding is about spending limited dollars much more wisely.

Our current WSF model accounts for:

- Grade-level
- Poverty
- English Language Learner status
- Student disabilities
- Vocational status

For more information on WSF, please visit the [budget webpage \(http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/1107\)](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/1107).

How was the WSF formula changed this year?

1. **High School:** For many years, funding to high schools assumed a 6-period day, with teachers teaching 4 of 6 periods and utilizing the other two periods for a variety of responsibilities including planning, grading, and duties. For the coming school year, the funding model has changed, to assume a 7 period day with teachers teaching 5 periods. While no school was obligated to run a 6 period day in the past, and no school must shift to a 7 period schedule now, this year's budget provides less resources, which has resulted in a reduction in the number of teachers a high school Headmaster is able to fund with their budget allocation. This reduced level of funding continues to ensure that high schools have enough resources to comply with contractual and legal requirements (see 'What are "compliance services?"' below), but makes it more difficult for high schools to provide many of the supports and enrichments that have historically been provided to our students.
2. **Special Education:** BPS will continue to maintain lower class size for students with autism and emotional impairments than the state-recommended maximum. However, due to budget constraints, the class-size maximums for these two programs were increased to bring class sizes closer to the state limits. This change resulted in a decrease in the number of dollars schools received for each student in these programs. The weights for other special education programs were not changed because BPS class-size maximums for these students were already in line with the state maximum class size.

How and why is school enrollment changing?

Overall enrollment in BPS is not changing. We project that we will serve 57,182 students in FY17, as opposed to 57,150 students in the current school year. However individual schools experience changes to their enrollment for a variety of reasons, including the rollout of the new Home Based Assignment Plan, changes in school programming, and changes in demographic trends across neighborhoods.

What are “compliance services?”

While WSF gives each school more autonomy over how it spends its resources, there are certain services for which ALL schools must budget. These include services required by the individual education plans of students with special needs and services for students who are English Language learners. In addition, there are contractual requirements governing the amount of teaching time any one staff member can be scheduled for, the number of support staff for lunch periods, the amount of funding set aside to pay substitute teachers, and the amount of money budgeted for supplies.

What is the Master Facilities Plan?

[Build BPS](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/buildbps) (<http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/buildbps>) is a 10-Year Educational and Facilities Master Plan for Boston Public Schools (BPS). Build BPS will provide a strategic framework for facilities investments, the grade configurations of our schools, as well as curriculum and instruction reforms that are aligned with the district’s educational vision.

What is the 100-Day Plan?

The [100-Day Plan](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/domain/1910) (<http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/domain/1910>) is centered around five value statements, which are at the heart of Superintendent Tommy Chang’s approach to transformation in the district:

1. All youth can and must achieve at high levels.
2. We innovate and transform teaching and learning to inspire excellence.
3. Those closest to students must be empowered and held accountable for making the most critical decisions that lead to student achievement.
4. Every child should have access to a high-quality school of their choice close to home.
5. We must build a “Culture of We” that is embraced by students, staff, families, and community.

Under each value statement, there are one or more projects. Among them is an initiative to expand the Advanced Work Class program to all students and families who are interested. This will include increasing rigor for fourth-graders and offering additional enrichment opportunities.