

Greenfield School Committee
Budget, Finance & Warrant Sub-Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2026

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m.

AC read the Chair Statement relative to meeting recordings.

2. Roll Call of Members:

Present: Ann Childs, Chair (AC), Melodie Goodwin (MG), M. McKenzie Webb (MW) (via Zoom)

Also present: Andy Paquette, Business Manager (AP)

3. Public Comment:

There were no members of the public present for comment at this time.

4. Approval of September 2, 2026 draft sub-committee minutes:

On a motion by MG, 2nd by AC, the minutes were approved as presented. The roll call vote was unanimous.

5. Post-mortem overview of last year's budget:

AP reviewed the written overview of the budget, as shared with the sub-committee members:

- Salary/Wages – Full-time, part-time, temporary, subs, transportation, etc.
- Purchase of contracted services
- Supplies and materials
- Out-of-district tuition
- Dues/Travel
- Equipment
- We will be turning back \$86 to the City
- Vacancy savings were used to offset the contracted services (Consultants were hired for special education positions that we were not able to fill)
- Transportation – Staff has the potential to work full-time, so we budget full-time for them even though they may work less hours – As a result of the lesser worked hours, there was an approximate \$250,000 surplus in the transportation salary line item
- We were able to use local funds for special education tuitions due to the surplus in salaries/wages, which set us up for future years and eliminated our need to ask the City for anything additional at that time
- We need to attract more candidates to fill our vacancies in the form of offering more competitive wages, especially for special education positions

6. Schedule Listening Sessions:

MW provided a scheduling spreadsheet to the members of this sub-committee which included three (3) dates and times already populated into the document. (She is still waiting to hear from the remaining 3 building principals/PTOs.)

Discussion ensued relative to member availability to attend scheduled PTO, ELPAC and SEPAC meetings. It was suggested to develop a rubric for these sessions so that all members are on the same page relative to what questions they will be asking and what information they will be bringing back to the sub-committee. This will be further discussed at the October 5 warrant meeting.

7. Staffing Update:

AP noted we still have open posted positions that we are hoping to fill. Superintendent Kruser asked him to clarify that the newspaper misquoted her regarding the Health & Wellness Services position - The position is, in fact, posted as well. Some vacant positions include: IAs at each building, building subs, speech-language pathologist, special education teacher for Newton School, etc.

Discussion also ensued relative to the following positions:

- Grade 7 science and social studies positions
- Sub-nurses
- Grade 4 band position
- Assistant Director of Special Education position from half-time to full-time status
- Health & Wellness Services position

AC summarized another discussion relative to the half-time to full-time special education assistant director position: “In light of our special education vacancies, is the .4 that we added to that position doing anything to alleviate the pressures caused by those vacancies?” (We should be able to obtain additional information on this topic from stakeholders at the upcoming SEPAC meeting.)

8. Call for future topics:

October 5 Warrants meeting:

- Rubrics and how to conduct the listening sessions
- Warrants

October 19 regular sub-committee meeting:

- Curriculum update
- Swimming for students (Grades 2-5?)
- Course enrollment as a way of reflecting our budgetary priorities
- We are currently spending \$14,000 per pre-school child - Which is more cost effective:
Funding our pre-school program vs. paying to have our pre-school students attend local pre-school programs?

9. Adjournment:

On a motion by MG, 2nd by AC, the meeting adjourned at 12:27 p.m. The roll call vote was unanimous.

Approved:

Purpose of Listening Sessions:

Active stakeholder outreach for community input, to inform the year's budgetary priorities

Provide overview on budgetary process and important dates

It's a good idea to have copies of the latest Budget Calendar (see: 8.12.26 full committee meeting, subcommittee reports, "SC Budget Cal FY28 - draft 2.pdf") on hand, as they will help lay out all of the dates and the ways people can give input (to us, the full committee, the city, and the state)—and in a way that doesn't require people to scramble to jot down dates.

FY28 Important Dates

Dec 9, 2026 - School Committee discusses FY28 budget priorities

Jan 27, 2027 - Governor's state budget released

March 3, 2027 - Publication of superintendent's proposed budget

March 10, 2027 - School Committee receives budget presentation

March 15, 2027 - School Committee Public Budget hearing

March 24, 2027 - School Committee special meeting to approve budget

April 22, 2027 - Mayor's proposed budget released

May 19, 2027 - City Council Public Budget hearing

July 1, 2027 - State final budget due

Abbreviated budget story:

In fall through December of each year, the administration meets with building leadership and department heads to collect and discuss budget requests and needs. The Budget subcommittee does additional community outreach.

The Budget subcommittee works with the superintendent in February, in preparation for the release of the full proposed budget in March (publication, presentation, public hearing, and approval). The budget as approved by the school committee will almost never be the final budget in use.

In the spring, the Mayor releases a budget for approval by the City Council. The City Council gets the final say on what the funding amount provided from the city for the schools will be for the year.

Along the way, state funding levels are decided (with governor's budget as the starting point for the legislature), to be finalized in the early summer.

Questions to Ask at a Listening Session

- What do you see as the biggest needs right now for your school/group?
- If all needs are taken care of, what would be your wants for your school/group?
- Needs and wants aside, what is your pie-in-the-sky dream wish for your school/group?
- What are the schools doing well, and do you see these strengths as areas to invest further in, areas to maintain, or successes that can be checked off the list?

Additional Notes

Anticipate giving people time to ask questions both before and after saying their piece. Answer factually wherever you can, and if you are giving an opinion you can and should be open about it being your opinion, rather than an official stance or statement for the subcommittee or committee as a whole.

If possible, we should start keeping reports not just on the full discussion and overall budgetary priorities year to year, but also for each group we meet with—ideally, we could provide the previous year's report (both over email and bring to the meeting)

We should also provide the previous year's Budget Priorities/Guidelines to the groups.

GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Greenfield School Committee

Priorities & Guidance for Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Development

“The Greenfield Public School District is a place where every child is supported on their path to success.”

Overview

This document provides the community with information about the School Committee’s priorities for the Fiscal Year 2027 School Department Budget. It is also designed to provide guidance to the Superintendent of Schools and the School Department administration regarding the development of its initial Fiscal Year 2027 School Department Budget proposal.

For FY27, we look forward to progress in pursuit of our Strategic Priorities as we weather the anticipated transition to a new Superintendent. With this context we set forth the following budget priorities and guidance for development of the FY27 annual operating budget.

Priorities

The initial FY27 School Department Budget proposal shall include resources to address each of the following priorities that the School Committee has set:

1. Curriculum and Instruction

- To continue to fund and support high-quality instructional materials and assessment tools adopted by the District over the last 4 years
- To invest in and support implementation—including but not limited to professional development, curriculum materials, staffing needs—of new literacy interventions identified by the District to support students in need of more intensive supports beyond high-quality Tier I instruction
- To support the District’s SEL curriculum development and implementation of restorative practices programming as designed in the 5 year restorative plan
- To support anti-bullying programs, growing the work in the Restorative Justice Pilot at Federal Street School, as well as continuing our Active Bystander preventative program and anti-bullying presentations based on individual school needs
- To maintain and expand art and music opportunities, and support long-term stability and expansion in these areas
- To ensure that opportunities for activities and programs aligned with grade-level standards and curriculum units are accessible to all students
- To continue supporting exploratory integrated arts

2. Staffing/Volunteers

- To maintain a level of staffing needed to provide small class sizes and provide individual supports students need
- To consider additional resources that may be necessary to fill needs for substitute teachers
- To support fully staffing our schools, including prioritizing attracting full-time school employees to positions we've previously been forced to use outside contractors and services for

3. Professional Development

- To provide needed resources to support all staff in teaching neurodivergent students, including consistency of IEP implementation
- To provide needed resources to support staff in teaching our English learner population
- To provide support for professional development for instructional assistants
- To support continued investment in advancing our core value of equity, particularly as it works to advance anti-racism throughout our school communities.
- To support expansion of restorative practices through professional development for staff at all levels and related programming for students

4. Transportation

- To continue to ensure equitable access to sports and extracurricular events, as well as to increase accessibility for parent engagement in related district groups and events.

Assumptions & Guidance

It is assumed that the initial FY27 School Department Budget proposal will:

1. Provide adequate resources to meet all legal mandates required of the school district
2. Reflect the terms of collective bargaining agreements and other contractual obligations
3. Provide sufficient resources to maintain a) the existing educational programs and b) staffing levels necessary to meet mandates and priorities
4. Utilize the best available information to project changes in costs (such as tuition) and revenues (such as state funding through the Chapter 70 and Circuit Breaker programs, grants, etc.)
5. Estimate level funding for all federal and state grants and plan for the continuation of programs or services, as desired
6. Examine ways to reduce or shift costs in order to achieve district priorities without requiring additional funding allocations wherever possible
7. Align with Greenfield School Committee policy DBD Budget Planning by:
 - a. ensuring the educational welfare of the children in our schools while attempting to balance the valid interest of taxpayers
 - b. achieving the greatest educational returns and contributions to the educational program for dollars expended, and
 - c. establishing levels of funding that will provide high-quality education for all students.

The Greenfield Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, marital status, race, color, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, ancestry, genetic information or military service. The Greenfield Public Schools maintain a commitment to ensuring that the school community is free from discrimination in education and employment.



UPDATE
PICTURES!



Budget Development CALENDAR

Fiscal Year
2028



September 2026							October 2026							November 2026							December 2026							January 2027							February 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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March 2027							April 2027							May 2027							June 2027							July 2027							August 2027								
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September 2026

1	City Finance Director releases forms & calendar to Departments for Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
9	School Committee (SC): - approval of annual budget calendar - discussion of community budget planning involvement (policy DBD) - discussion of (CIP) requests
	B&F: develop DBD implementation

January 2027

27	Governor's FY28 state budget released
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February 2027

TBD	B&F: - receive FY28 budget development update from Superintendent - discussion of Chapter 70 aid in Governor's budget
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May 2027

TBD	W&M meetings continue
19	City Council public hearing re FY28 Operating Budget
	Senate debates & approves its proposed budget

October 2026

14	SC: - confirmation of CIP requests - receive update from Superintendent on enrollment - Approve DBD implementation
TBD	Superintendent brings forward CIP requests to city

March 2027

3	CIP due from Mayor to City Council
3	Publication of Superintendent's proposed FY28 budget
10	SC receives Superintendent's presentation of proposed FY28 budget
TBD	B&F: discussion of feedback on FY28 budget proposal and outreach
15	Annual Public Budget Hearing
24	SC Special Meeting: * approval of FY28 budget
29	Backup date for SC approval (due to Mayor by 04/01/2027)
	Joint Committee on Ways & Means public budget hearings (late winter - early spring)

June 2027

9	SC: - FY28 budget update - Approve any necessary budget amendment
	Conference Committee budget House/Senate approval Governor's vetoes Legislature's overrides Final Budget by July 1

November 2026

	Capital Improvement Committee (CIC) meets with Department heads
	SC DBD implementation
	Superintendent calls for budget requests from department heads

July 2027

TBD	B&F: develop annual budget calendar for FY29
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December 2026

	CIC votes on CIP, forwards recommendations to Mayor
9	SC Discussion of FY28 budget priorities
	Executive Leadership Team discusses budget requests with Department heads

April 2027

22	Mayor's proposed FY28 city budget released
TBD	Ways & Means Committee (W&M) budget meetings with Departments
	House debates & approves its proposed budget

Fall 2027

Aug 11	SC: discussion of proposed annual budget calendar
TBD	B&F: - finalize annual budget calendar - discussion of CIP projects existing & upcoming - post-mortem discussion of FY27



School Committee



Administration



City



State

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Greenfield School Committee policy on budget planning?

You can find this as policy BDA in the [Fiscal Management section of our policy manual](#) as follows:

The first priority in the development of an annual budget will be the educational welfare of the children in our schools. However, the District will also attempt to balance the valid interest of the taxpayers.

Budget decisions reflect the attitude and philosophy of those charged with the responsibility for educational decision-making. Therefore, a sound budget development process must be established to ensure that the annual operating budget accurately reflects this school district's goals and objectives.

In the budget planning process for the school district, the School Committee will strive to:

- 1. Engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and guide expenditures in a manner that will achieve the greatest educational returns and contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.*
- 2. Establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for all our students.*
- 3. Use the best available techniques for budget development and management. The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of, and adherence to, a budget calendar.*

If you'd like to better understand the School Committee's role in budget & finance, check out [these resources](#) from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

How can I share my views with the school administration and School Committee about the development of the budget?

There are many ways you can offer input as a student, parent or general member of the public. We want to hear the views of staff as well, however staff must be mindful of policy [BHC](#) governing staff communications

with the committee, which must go through the Superintendent.

Opportunities to share your views include:

- * Email the Superintendent via the [staff directory](#).

- * [Email the School Committee](#)

- * Make public comment at a School Committee meeting, especially at pertinent times outlined in the budget calendar such as September and October about capital improvements, during November and December about development of the next year's operating budget, and during February and early March about the proposed operating budget.

- * Have an interest in a certain school or department? Contact your school principal or department head through the [staff directory](#) to let them know your ideas, especially when individual department budget proposals are under development in the fall for the next year's operating budget. Participating in a School Council is a great way to do this; check the [district calendar](#) for upcoming meetings of the council for each school.

How can I share my views about development of the state budget as it pertains to Chapter 70 local aid to our schools?

Opportunities to share your views include:

- * [Email the Governor's Office |Mass.gov](#)

- * [Contact your state legislators](#)

- * [Provide testimony for public budget hearings in the spring](#)

How can I share my views about development of the city budget as it pertains to our local appropriation to our schools?

- * [Email the Mayor](#)

- * [Find your precinct](#) and contact your [city councilors](#)

- * Make public comment at [City Council meetings](#) at pertinent times such as March, April and May

- * Make public comment at [Ways & Means Committee meetings](#) during April and May