



# **Boston Public Schools Inter-district School Choice Program SY 2025-2026**

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## Inter-district School Choice Program

According to the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, school districts are automatically included in the Inter-district School Choice Program **unless** their School Committee votes to **withdraw** by June 1 each year.

Since 1994, the Boston School Committee has voted annually to opt out of the program.



## Factors for Consideration

Each year, Boston reviews several key factors before making a recommendation to the School Committee about participating in the Inter-district School Choice Program:

- **Access to High-Demand Schools and Programs**

Accepting non-resident students may increase competition for high-demand seats and reduce availability for Boston residents.

- **Remaining Nimble for Late Registration**

Many Boston families enroll after the start of the school year, especially between July and October. Boston residents who register late may have fewer school options available to them.

- **Reciprocal Benefit**

Boston residents will not have reciprocal access to seats outside of the district due to non-participation of surrounding districts.



## Do Boston's neighbors participate in school choice?

In School Year 2024–2025:

- **147 school districts chose not to participate** in the Inter-district School Choice Program, including Boston Public Schools.
- **None of the cities and towns near Boston participated**, including Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Dedham, Milton, Needham, Revere, and Somerville



# Factors for Consideration

- **Financial considerations**

- Cost per student

- Expenses related to specialized services

- Transportation costs

- According to state law, the tuition for a non-resident student enrolling in a receiving district is 75 percent of the receiving district's actual per pupil spending, but not to exceed \$5,000. The current per pupil spending in BPS is \$30,408.

- **BPS Priorities**

- We are making positive strides to provide equitable access to a rigorous and inspiring education to all BPS students. Serving the diversity of needs of our students requires us to concentrate our resources on our identified priorities.



# School Committee Priorities

## **Priority 1: Accelerating Academic Performance**

- High-quality academic experiences
- Equitable literacy
- High-quality instructional materials

## **Priority 2: Ensuring Access for All Students**

- Inclusive education: multilingual learners, students with disabilities, multilingual learners with disabilities
- Expanding programs for multilingual learners including: dual language, transitional bilingual education (TBE), students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) and newcomers
- Focus on serving our diverse population well: Socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, geography, language

## **Priority 3: Consistency in High-Quality Learning Opportunities**

- Implementation of the Long-Term Facilities Plan
- Access for every student to a High-Quality Student Experience
  - Rigorous and culturally affirming learning experiences
  - Wellness and enrichment
  - Supportive network of caring adults
  - Physical spaces that support learning



## Recommendation

Due to these factors, it is our strong recommendation that the Boston School Committee **vote to opt out** of the Inter-district School Choice Program for School Year 2025–2026.



## Understanding the Yes/No Vote

Annually, school committees in Massachusetts must vote by **June 1** to determine if their district will participate the Inter-district School Choice Program for the next school year.

A **"Yes"** vote means:

The School Committee decides **not to join** the Inter-district School Choice Program. This means Boston Public Schools (BPS) will continue to **accept only students who are residents of Boston.**

A **"No"** vote means:

The School Committee **agrees to join** the Massachusetts Inter-district School Choice Program. This means the district will start accepting **students who live outside of Boston** beginning in SY 2025–26.





## Boston Inter-District School Choice Program Key Dates

- **April 16:** Presentation to School Committee
- **May 14:** Required Hearing and School Committee Vote
- **By June 1:** Resolution submitted to DESE