

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT

Finance Committee of the
Trumbull Board of Education

Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 23, 2025

Location: Long Hill – Ellie’s Room

Attendees:

- **Committee Members:** Jackie Norcel (Chair), Julia McNamee
- **Staff:** Alison Pierce, Joe Chella
- **Other:** First Selectwoman Vicki Tesoro, Cindy Katske

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the September 18, 2025 meeting were approved 2-0 (Motion: Ms. McNamee; Second: Ms. Norcel).

Discussion with Mr. Chella, Director of Human Capital & Talent Development

Mr. Chella provided an overview of the Human Resources Department, highlighting the strategies that have been implemented and the positive results achieved. He reviewed the teacher substitute data, with a specific focus on building substitutes, which are being effectively managed and have resulted in a year-over-year savings of \$60,000 to date. Paraeducator substitute coverage continues to be closely monitored, and the year-over-year fill rate has improved. Due to less absences, this yields a \$30,000 year over year savings. We have also partnered with our substitute recruiting company, ESS Northeast, and will be hosting a job fair for paraeducators. Overall, the report represents very positive trends for the department..

Review of FY26 Financial Statements for the months ending July 31, 2025

Key Takeaways

Early fiscal-year timing pattern. Only about 2–3% of total expenses have been posted to YTD actuals (most are encumbrances). The majority of salary and benefit costs are committed for the year, so cash flow will mirror payroll timing going forward

Watch List

1. **Health Insurance** - Review projected vs. actual claims and possible midyear adjustment.
2. **Facilities Repair Overruns** - Identify whether early repairs were planned and one-time or signal structural maintenance pressures.
3. **Transportation and Special Education Tuition** - Continue monitoring; both show potential midyear variance risks.
4. **Salary Budget Integrity** - Review any positions or contract settlements pushing certain accounts > 100%.
5. **Encumbrance Timing** - Clarify which overages are due to over-encumbrances vs. true overspending.

Ms. McNamee requested 205 Athletics be added to the pulled out data.

Review of FY26 Financial Statements for the months ending August 31, 2025

Key Takeaways

The budget is stable but the need to watch expenses is critical.

Watch List

1. **Salaries** - Stable and predictable, locked in through contracts.
2. **Benefits** - underfunded; healthcare is the biggest risk area.
3. **Transportation** - Maxed out; no flexibility for fuel or unexpected routes.
4. **Facilities** - repairs/supplies overspending
5. **Equipment** - already overspent; points to capital needs outpacing budget.

Review of FY26 Financial Statements for the months ending September 30, 2025

Key Takeaways

In most lines you're seeing about 5–10% in actuals, 85–100% in encumbrances, and almost no discretionary spending yet. The staffing structure is stable across the district but leaves no buffer. October is too early to gauge variances—monitor again after the first quarter closes. Every elementary, middle school, and PPS cost center shows:

- Teacher salary lines: 98–100% encumbered
- Paras/support roles: fully loaded
- Admin secretarial lines: slightly over-encumbered in many buildings

Watch List

1. **Salaries and benefits (51XX & 52XX)** account for the largest exposure—fully loaded with little flexibility, and some lines already over-encumbered.
2. **SPED** costs are the common pressure points across 51XX, 52XX, 53XX, and 55XX.
3. **Facilities and utilities (54XX)** show signs of cost creep (repairs + energy).
4. **Transportation and tuition (55XX)** are heavily encumbered early and vulnerable to midyear changes.
5. **Offsets** may come from underused lines (subs, PD, stipends, travel), but only temporarily.

Motion to approve and forward to the Board of Education: Ms. McNamee; Second: Ms. Norcel. Motion passed 2-0.

Ms. Tesoro requested the Final BOE budget be put up on the Trumbull Public Schools website.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn: Ms. McNamee; Second: Ms. Norcel. Motion passed 2-0. The meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Pierce