



# BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Annual Budget Planning Guide & Calendar for Principals

FY 2026-2027

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# **Annual Budget Planning Guide & Calendar for the Bridgeport Public Schools FY 2026-2027**

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Budget Planning Guide is to produce a budget for FY 2026-2027 that advances the overall goals of the Bridgeport Public Schools in compliance with State Statutes, City Ordinances and Bridgeport School Board Policies.

## **SUPERINTENDENT GOALS FOR FY 2026-2027**

### **1. Begin the district-wide strategic planning process.**

- ✓ Engage staff, students, families and community partners in focus groups to develop a clear and inclusive vision, mission, and areas of focus to guide decision-making.

### **2. Family and Community Engagement**

- ✓ Increase family engagement and outreach through improved communication, collaboration, and access to information.

### **3. Academic Achievement and Equity**

- ✓ Improve academic outcomes in literacy and mathematics through evidence-based instruction and targeted support, with measurable progress in closing access and achievement gaps for all students.

### **4. Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability**

- ✓ Develop a long-term fiscal plan that aligns resources with strategic priorities.
  - Ensure transparent and equitable distribution of resources across schools and programs.

### **5. Talent Development and Retention**

- ✓ Strengthen recruitment and retention of a diverse, highly qualified workforce that reflects the student community and supports high-quality instruction.

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## STATE, CITY AND BOE BUDGET DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Connecticut Public School are guided in the budget development process by State Statutes, City Charters and Ordinances as well as local School Board Policies.

### STATE STATUTES

The Connecticut Statutes mandate that each town will have a BOE and the town will control the public schools within its limits through the BOE (CGS § 10-240). Among their many statutory duties, school boards must provide students with an appropriate learning environment, which includes (1) adequate books, supplies, materials, equipment, staffing, facilities, and technology; (2) equitable resource allocation among its schools; (3) proper facilities maintenance; and (4) a safe school setting (CGS § 10-220(a)).

The law requires each local BOE to prepare an itemized cost estimate (i.e., “proposed budget”) for maintaining its public schools for the following year. At least two months before the annual meeting when appropriations are made, the BOE must submit the estimate to the board of finance, to the board of selectmen (if there is no board of finance), or otherwise to the authority making appropriations for the school district.

The itemized estimate for the year, by law, must have broad categories (including at least salaries, fringe benefits, utilities, supplies, and grounds maintenance) that are divided into one or more-line items (CGS § 10-222).

Within 10 days after receiving the proposed budget, the board of finance (or other applicable appropriating authority) must make spending recommendations and suggestions to the BOE for consolidating noneducational services and achieving financial efficiencies. The BOE can accept or reject the suggestions, but must provide a written explanation with the reason for rejection to the board or the appropriating authority (CGS § 10-222).

### CITY CHARTER

The City Charter addresses the budgeting process and outlines key dates. The Bridgeport Public Schools are considered a department of the City.

#### CHAPTER 9 - BUDGET AND FISCAL CONTROLS

##### Section 1. - Budgeted Agency Defined.

- As used in this chapter, "budgeted agency" shall mean each board, commission, department, officer or agency, of the city to which funds are appropriated.

##### Pertinent excerpts from Section 5. - Budget; Mill Rate

- ✓ Each budgeted agency shall, on or before a date determined by the mayor, report to the office of policy and management an estimate of the amount of money required agency for the next ensuing fiscal year, giving details as far as practicable.

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- ✓ Each budgeted agency shall, on or before a date determined by the mayor, report to the office of policy and management an estimate of the amount of money required ...
  - ✓ The budget adopted by the city council as provided in Subsection (b) shall be submitted to the mayor not later than the second Tuesday in May of each year.
  - ✓ The draft capital budget shall be submitted to the mayor not later than the first Tuesday in February annually.
  - ✓ Not later than the first Tuesday in March of each year, the mayor shall submit a proposed capital budget to the city council.
  - ✓ Not later than the first day of November of each year, every budgeted agency of the city shall submit to the director of policy and management an estimate of the capital expenditures required in each of the next three fiscal years.

The annual dates for all key activities are published and disseminated by the City to the Departments. BOE has incorporated those key dates for the current budget cycle into **the Annual Budget Calendar: 2026-2027** found in this document.

## BRIDGEPORT SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

Section 3000 of Bridgeport's Board of Education Policies provides designates the authority and responsibility for budget creation, approval and monitoring. Below are excerpts that directly impact the budget creation process discussed in this manual.

### **3000 Concept and Roles in Business and Non-Instructional Operations**

*The Board shall have responsibility for securing adequate finances for the school district via its approving an annual budget, securing grants and for the evaluation of school expenditures.*

*Financial management for Bridgeport Public Schools shall be the joint responsibility of the Board, the Superintendent, the Chief of Staff, and the School Business Administrator.*

*The Board shall have control and management of educational appropriations, and shall use such funds as it deems necessary and proper to support the mission and goals of Bridgeport Public Schools.*

### **3010 Goals and Objectives**

*The Board of Education recognizes the important trust it has been given with the responsibility of managing a large amount of public resources. As trustee of local, state, and federal funds allocated for use in public education, the board will be vigilant in fulfilling its responsibility to see that these funds are used wisely for achievement of the purposes to which they are allocated.*

### **3100 Operations Budget / Budgeting System**

*The budget shall represent the controlled expenditure plan for the Bridgeport Public School System. The Superintendent shall make expenditures and commitments in accordance and in harmony with such budget. The Superintendent shall be responsible for the preparation and implementation of the annual school budget adopted by the Board of Education.*

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### **Excerpts from 3110 Budget: Planning**

*As a preliminary part of the development of the budget, the Board of Education shall study the school program in relation to the present and future instructional needs of the students, the strategic plan, and the community.*

*In an effort to make the budget a comprehensive reflection of the financial needs of the school system, recruited in a special committee will be representatives of the community, students, certified and non-certified staff, and the administrative staff in the budget process. Their names will be submitted to the Board of Education. The procedure for the involvement of these representatives shall be developed by the Superintendent of Schools and implemented by the Superintendent's office with notification to the BOE of selected participants in this process.*

#### ***Setting Budget Priorities***

*The Board of Education will, on an annual basis, establish and approve budget guidelines and priorities.*

#### ***Adoption of Budget***

*A recommended budget shall be compiled and submitted to the Board of Education and Mayor in accordance with the City Charter. Before taking action, the board shall hold at least one budget workshop. It shall be examined, altered if necessary, and approve the school budget, which shall then be submitted to the city.*

#### ***Preparation of Budget Document***

*The Superintendent of schools shall be responsible for the preparation of the annual school budget.*

*In an effort to make a budget a comprehensive reflection of the financial needs of the school system, steps shall be taken to involve representatives of the certificated and non-certificated staff, and the administrative staff in the developmental process.*

*An annual budget calendar shall be developed and distributed in October of each year to all involved in the budgeting process.*

## ANNUAL BUDGET CALENDAR: 2026-2027

Date	Action
November 21, 2025	Capital Improvement Request Form sent to Principals and Department Heads
December 3, 2025	Superintendent’s Cabinet Meets to Finalize Budget Planning Activities
December 4, 2025	Budget Kickoff with Principals and Department Heads
December 5, 2025	Principals and Department Heads Submit Capital Needs Requests for Consideration
December 8-19, 2025	Budget Planning Sessions held with each Principal and Department Head Return School-Based Allocation Forms to District within three days of the Budget Planning Meeting
December 15, 2025	Board Workshop—Budget Calendar/Process Overview
December 23, 2025	BOE submits Five Year Capital Improvement Plan Budget to the Board for review and approval
December 2025 through January 2026	Superintendent and Cabinet develop Operating Budget and Food Nutrition Center Budget
January 5, 2026	Special Full Board Meeting—Presentation of Five-Year Capital Budget
January 9, 2026	BOE Submits Five-Year Capital Budget Request to City/OPM
January 1–15, 2026	Superintendent/BOE seeks input on the Budget from community through Thought Exchange
January 10, 2026	Superintendent/BOE Community Forum #1
January 12, 2026	Superintendent/BOE Community Forum #2
January 15, 2026	<b>Special Full Board Meeting</b> - Superintendent and CFO present the 2026-2027 Operating Budget and Food Nutrition Center Budget
January 21, 2026	BOE Finance Committee Reviews budget referrals from BOE meeting on 1/15/26
January 26, 2026	BOE Regular Meeting: Approval – Operating and Food Nutrition Center Budget
February 7, 2026	BOE Submits Operating Budget to Mayor/OPM
March 3, 2026	Mayor submits Capital Budget to City Council
March 23, 2026	Mayor submits the Proposed General Fund Budget to the City Council.
June 16, 2026	The City Council sets the mill rate within seven (7) days after action on the budget is complete.

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## 2026-2027 BUDGET ALLOCATION MODELS BY SCHOOL LEVEL

To ensure that the budget is developed in an equitable manner, based on total student enrollment by campus and the special needs of the students enrolled at each campus. The following allocation models were developed in collaboration by the district leaders for PK thru Grade 6, Pre-K thru Grade 8 and Grade 9-12. To the extent possible, each model incorporates state and federal mandates, as well as provisions contained in bargaining agreements for the category for employee categories.

Category	Position	Grades	Descriptor	Allocation Standard (Formula)
Administration	Principal, Program Support: Director (Aqua), Supervisor (Skane, BLC), AP (JDC)			One (1)
	Assistant Principal			
	Elem	PK-6*	All schools	None (No Assistant Principal allocated)
		Pk-8 *	If register 0 - 400	Half (0.5)
			If register 401 - 800	One (1)
	*	If register >= 801	Two (2)	
	HS	Gr. 9-12		*Superintendent discretion for additional support based on student needs
			Bassick, Central, Harding	Three (3)
			Magnet HS: 500-600 students	One (1) Magnet School Supervisor
			FCW Magnet HS Campus	One (1) (.33 For Each Campus)
	BMA	One (1)		
Clerical Assistant, Clerical Specialist or Typist				District has launched Centralized Enrollment Center
Elem	PK-6	Base Allocation	One (1) per elementary school	
		If register >= 450	Two (2)	
PK-8	PK-8	Base Allocation	One (1) per school	
		If register >= 510	Two (2)	
HS	HS	If register >= 800	Three (3)	
		BMA	One (1)	
		FCW Magnet Campus	Four (4) : 1 Main Office and 3 Bldgs	
		Comprehensive High School	Harding (4), Bassick (4), Central (5)	
Class Teachers	Elem	Grades PK	Class Size = 18, (Discovery 15)	Student register divided by class size
		Grades K-1	Class Size = 24, (Discovery 15)	Student register divided by class size
		Grades 2-8	Class Size = 29, (Dscvry 22), (Magnet 25)	Student register divided by class size
			ELA Coach: Barnum, Columbus, Roosevelt	As allocated by grant
			Math Coach: Barnum, Columbus	As allocated by grant
		Grades K-1	Bilingual Classes = 24	Student register divided by class size
		Grades 2-8	Bilingual Classes = 29	Student register divided by class size
		Grades K-6	Preparation Coverage	Prep: 6 preps/week .24 x total # classroom teachers
		Grades 7-8	Prep/Subj Area Coverage	6 pds/wk .24 x total # classroom teachers
	ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS	At the elementary level, grades K-8, principals are required to program, for each grade, a double common planning period for the teachers on the grade once per week.		
	Specialist Allocation	The specialist teacher allocations are designed to enable the provision of art, music, and physical education , in accordance with State regulations, during scheduled preparation and planning periods. Any balance may be utilized, at the principal's discretion, to provide targeted enhancement and/or intervention services, based on the specific assessed needs of the students.		
		Principals decide upon the subject areas for prep/enhancement; e.g., Art, Music, Physical Education, Writing, SRBI etc.		
Class Teachers	HS	Grades 9-12	Class Size = 29 (FCW 25)	Superintendent approval required for lower class size.
			[Excluding bilingual & SPED classes, allocated separately]	
	Adv. Placement, Early College Dual Course		10 Students Minimum	Superintendent approval required for lower class size.
Specialized Teacher	ESL			One (1) ESL teacher: 95 students
	All Grades			
Special Education	Elementary Schools			
	Self-contained Classes			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-contained Teachers</li> <li>Special education paras</li> </ul>			1 Teacher: 2 paraprofessionals: 14 students
Resource Services				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource Teachers</li> <li>Resource Paras</li> </ul>			Elementary: 1 Teacher per 20 Resource students Elementary: 1 Paras per 30 Resource students (Revised)	
				A SPED Resource para is assigned to work with students who are registered in special education or are in a general education class and are in need of specialized supplementary instruction in an individual or small group setting for a portion of the school day.
Special Education	High Schools			

Category	Position	Grades	Descriptor	Allocation Standard (Formula)	
Special Education	Self-contained Classes		Medically Fragile (LEAP)		
	• Self-contained Teachers			1 Teacher: 4 paraprofessionals: 25 students	
	• Special education paras				
	Self-contained Classes		Functional Education (LEAP)		
	• Self-contained Teachers			1 Teacher: 2 paraprofessionals: 14 students	
	• Special education paras				
	• Self-contained Teachers		Autism (RISE)	1 Teacher: 2 paraprofessionals: 14 students	
	• Special education paras				
	• Self-contained Teachers		AIM Classes (Behavioral)	1 Teacher: 2 paraprofessionals: 14 students	
	<b>High Schools</b>				
	Resource Services				
	• Resource Coordinator		Bassick, Central, Harding HS	One (1) Resource Coordinator	
	• SPED Resource Teacher		All High Schools	1 teacher per 25 students. Includes Transition Support.	
	<b>All Schools</b>				
Special Education Para		Adult Support (New)	As mandated by the student's IEP		
Psychological Services			Caseload: 1:80 students (IEP services, evaluation only)		
Social Worker Services			Caseload: 1:55 students (pre-referral, evaluation & IEP Svcs)		
Speech/Language Services		Based on the Integrated Model of Service Delivery	Caseload: 1:75 students		
Occupational Therapy			Caseload: 1:75 students		
Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant			Caseload: 1:79 students		
Student Support	Guidance Counselor				
		Elem	PK-8	One (1) Counselor per 600 students	
		HS		One (1) Counselor per 300 students	
	In School Suspension			9 ISS Officers District Wide - Allocations per School:	
		Elem	PK-8	(.4): Barnum, Batalla, Blackham, Columbus, Curiale, Marin; All Other (0.2)	
		HS		(.8): Bassick, Central & Harding, (.4): FCW & BMA	
	Nurse			Total Allocation: 39 Nurses for 43 Sites	
		Elem	Nurse	Services based on school size & need	
		HS	Nurse or Nurse Educator	Services based on school size & need	
		Magnet HS Campus		One (1)	
	Private Schools		(.4) St Andrews, Cathedral Upper, Cathedral Lower, Kobe; (.6) St Ann		
Paraprofessionals	Mandated		Prekindergarten Classes	One (1) PK paraprofessional per PK teacher. Connecticut Department of Public Health regulations mandate that there be no more than 10 children to an adult in a PK classroom.	
			Kindergarten Classes	1 Para: 2 Classes	
	Prescribed		Elementary Bilingual/ESL	Support for English language learners, based on assessed need	
Additional Programs	Talented & Gifted (TAG) District Program		Elementary	4 positions, subject to applicable guidelines. Batalla (1), Claytor (1), Winthrop (2)	

**STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND ALLOCATION ADJUSTMENTS**

**Allocation Adjustments**

- Position allocations will be analyzed and can be adjusted within the school year, based on actual student enrollment.
- Actual student enrollment is defined as the audited register.
- Principals are accountable for assuring that their school organization is aligned with student enrollment.
- Elementary - In October, if student registers are lower than anticipated, it may be necessary to reorganize classes.
- High School - In January, if student registers are lower than anticipated, it may be necessary to reorganize classes.

	Category	Position	Grades	Descriptor	Allocation Standard (Formula)

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## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRINCIPALS, DIRECTORS AND OTHER LEADERS

1. To begin the budget creation process, each principal and department head will receive:
  - a. A copy of this manual, which contains the Budget Calendar, Budget Assumptions, Staffing Allocation Models for campuses, a Chart of Operating Accounts, Forms and other tools needed to submit budget requests.
  - b. Capital Needs Request Form and Instructions – due back to the Operations Department by December 5.
  - c. Enrollment projections for 2026-2027 including general enrollment and special needs categories.
  - d. The 2026-2027 Budget Allocation Worksheet that contains formulas to allocate staff based on student enrollment and student need.
  - e. Staffing Worksheets – containing a list of the current staff with questions to guide the budget planning process for staffing in 2026-27.
  - f. Review student performance data; as well as district, school, program, and discipline goals to direct your priorities.
2. Non-salary allocations - The Allocation Model will calculate a designated amount of funds to be used at the campus level based on the number of students at that campus. Please be sure that funds are being budgeted under the appropriate expense code. A list is included for your benefit, however, if you are uncertain of where an expense should be budgeted, please contact the Business Office for further guidance.
  - Elementary: \$30 per student
  - Secondary \$35 per student

Call a meeting of the School Governance Council (SGC) and provide the group an overview of the budget process and ask for their input on their priorities for the coming year. Involve all staff who have a stake in the budget and give them an opportunity to request needed items. Be sure that all staff understand the timetable for budgeting and how far into the future the budgeting process requires one to think.

3. Prepare your budget request and budget justifications and your responses to the Staffing Worksheets. Requests for new expenditures or expenditures above the prior year expenditures must be justified using the form mentioned above. If proposed expenditures are eligible for grant funding or a source of funding outside of the general fund, please indicate that in the justification.
4. Modify the budget request based on the meeting with District leadership and submit within three days of your District leadership meeting.
5. Your final adopted budget will be returned to you. At this point, the principal or department head is responsible for managing their budgets and ensuring that expenditures remain within the budgeted dollars in each account code. Transfers between account codes can be made with appropriate approvals.

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## CHART OF SCHOOL OPERATING ACCOUNTS

Below is a list of the account codes that can be used for coding expenditures relating to the campus operating accounts. Most of the codes are relevant to both General Fund and Grant related expenditures. For those that can only be used for one or the other, the explanation contains a note to that effect.

<b>Object</b>	<b>Description</b>
51106	REGULAR STRAIGHT OVERTIME
51108	REGULAR 1.5 OVERTIME PAY
51116	HOLIDAY 2X OVERTIME PAY
51122	SHIFT 2 - 1.5X OVERTIME
51124	SHIFT 2 - 2X OVERTIME
51140	LONGEVITY PAY
51400	GENERAL STIPENDS
52360	MEDICARE
52385	SOCIAL SECURITY
52399	UNIFORM ALLOWANCE
52504	MERF PENSION EMPLOYER CONT
52917	HEALTH INSURANCE CITY SHARE
52919	BOE HSA HEALTH CITY SHARE
52920	HEALTH BENEFITS BUYOUT
53050	PROPERTY RENTAL/LEASE
53605	MEMBERSHIP/REGISTRATION FEES
53610	TRAINING SERVICES
53705	ADVERTISING SERVICES
53720	TELEPHONE SERVICES
53750	TRAVEL EXPENSES
53905	EMP TUITION AND/OR TRAVEL REIM
54545	CLEANING SUPPLIES
54550	COMPUTER SOFTWARE
54555	COMPUTER SUPPLIES
54570	ELECTRONIC SUPPLIES
54575	EDUCATIONAL TESTING SUPPLIES
54580	SCHOOL SUPPLIES
54595	MEETING/WORKSHOP/CATERING FOOD
54640	HARDWARE/TOOLS
54645	LABORATORY SUPPLIES
54660	LIBRARY SUPPLIES
54675	OFFICE SUPPLIES
54705	SUBSCRIPTIONS
54720	PAPER AND PLASTIC SUPPLIES
54725	POSTAGE
54730	PRINTING SUPPLIES
54745	UNIFORMS
54760	TEXTBOOKS
55010	ARTS & CRAFT EQUIPMENT

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<b>Object</b>	<b>Description</b>
55050	CLEANING EQUIPMENT
55055	COMPUTER EQUIPMENT
55075	SCHOOL EQUIPMENT
55140	MUSIC EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES
55145	EQUIPMENT RENTAL/LEASE
55195	SPORTING EQUIPMENT
55505	SCHOOL FURNITURE
55525	LIBRARY FURNITURE
56055	COMPUTER SERVICES
56075	EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
56105	BANKING SERVICES
56160	MARKETING SERVICES
56165	MANAGEMENT SERVICES
56180	OTHER SERVICES
56200	PRINTING/GRAPHIC SERVICES
56240	TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
59010	MAILING SERVICES
59015	PRINTING SERVICES

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# FORMS

# Budget Justification Form

## Budget Justification Form

The following elements must be considered and documented for budget planning purposes. Please complete this form for any budget requests for:

- Expenditures in a budget category that exceed the previous year's actual expenditures
- New expenditures being requested for the coming year
- Requests for additional personnel

Please complete all fields and provide additional explanation or documentation as necessary.

Department or Campus Name	
Principal or Department Head Name and Title	
Date Submitted	

### REQUEST

Request Description	Funding Source and Accounting Code	Anticipated Cost

**ADVANCES DISTRICT GOALS:** Please list the applicable district goal or goals that this request for additional funds will advance and provide a brief explanation of how this investment will advance that goal.

**ADVANCES CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN GOALS OR OBJECTIVES (Campuses Only):** Please list the Campus Improvement Plan goal or objective and provide a brief explanation of how this investment will advance that goal or objective.

**ALLOWABLE:** A cost must be allowable under the federal, state, or local cost principles and/or grant provisions. The cost must be reasonable, necessary and allocable. How does cost meet the applicable grant provisions, federal, state, and local guidelines? Is the program, activity or strategy to be funded described in the campus or district improvement plan?

**NECESSARY:** A cost is necessary if needed to achieve an important program objective. Cost should not be considered "nice to have". How is the expenditure necessary to carry out the intended purpose of the program?

# Capital Plan Request Form

**BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
FY 2027 - 2031 CAPITAL PLAN REQUEST**

SCHOOL NAME:

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL:

PROJECT NAME:  ESTIMATED COST:

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT & JUSTIFICATION (1-4 SENTENCES)

PROJECT NAME:  ESTIMATED COST:

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT & JUSTIFICATION (1-4 SENTENCES)

PROJECT NAME:  ESTIMATED COST:

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT & JUSTIFICATION (1-4 SENTENCES)