

FY27 Budget FAQs

March 13, 2026

Steps to Success

What is the nature of the relationship between PSB and Steps to Success, Inc.? Does PSB pay Steps staff?

PSB partners with Steps to Success, Inc., a nonprofit organization that provides in school and extended learning supports and opportunities - afterschool, vacation, summer programming, college and career access and success programming - for Brookline resident students who are economically disadvantaged.

The Director of Steps to Success is a PSB employee and is a member of Unit B. The Steps to Success advisors are also PSB employees and are members of Unit C. These individuals work directly with PSB students and families during the school day.

By contrast, The Steps to Success Executive Director is employed by Steps to Success, Inc., not by PSB. They provide programming outside of the school day and school year to economically disadvantaged students.

METCO

How can the METCO grant be more efficiently allocated and integrated to support the district?

The purpose of the METCO grant is to provide supplemental support and services to METCO students. The grant funds academic, social + emotional, and other supports for these students as well as transportation, program supplies, and administrative expenses associated with METCO programming.

How many METCO students currently receive:

- **Special Education services?** 104 students
- **1-1 paras?** 1 student
- **Specialized programming?** 4 students

FY27 Budget FAQs

How does PSB determine classroom capacity for new METCO students?

METCO collaborates with the Registration and Enrollment department to determine where there are available seats within the District's kindergarten sections. The number of METCO students graduating in a given year determines how many seats the program seeks to fill. In FY26, 20 METCO students will graduate, so the program will aim to fill up to 20 kindergarten seats, depending on availability.

What will the METCO Transportation Supplemental grant be used for? What costs will it offset?

Though we applied, we were not awarded the METCO Transportation supplemental grant.

+1 Blocks

What are “+1” blocks and how did they come to be?

At Brookline High School, educators in Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Language typically teach four classes and have a fifth teaching assignment, often referred to as a “+1.” Regardless of the term used, these are fifth instructional assignments. In accordance with the CBA, English teachers teach four classes without an additional +1, reflecting the time required for conferencing with students and responding to written work. Full-time teachers in Career and Technology Education, Performing Arts, Special Education, Visual Arts, and Wellness teach five classes.

This structure was introduced in 2002 alongside the launch of the Tutorial Program, an academic support structure embedded within the school day and initially supported by the 21st Century Fund (now known as the BHS Innovation Fund).

These primary goals guided this work and continue to guide it:

- Provide a general education academic support structure during the school day to help students access support before special education services might be needed.
- Allow core academic teachers to teach four classes in their discipline, creating an additional period for them to work more closely with students and provide timely, high-quality feedback, while also supporting the recruitment and retention of strong educators.

FY27 Budget FAQs

What is a Tutorial block and how many FTE are assigned there?

Tutorial is a scheduled support block that provides students with consistent access to academic assistance during the school day. Students may use this time to meet with teachers, receive targeted support, or complete work outside of class. The general ratio we have for Tutorials is one teacher to six students. Some sections are larger than this ratio, and others are smaller. Currently Tutorial is the only mechanism in place at BHS for Tier 2 academic support that is open to and equitable access to curriculum to all students.

Tutorial currently operates with multiple sections across grade levels:

Grade Level	Number of Sections
9th Grade Tutorial	4
Upper Grade Tutorial	6
Program Tutorial (EL, METCO, STS)	4
Social Emotional Learning Tutorial	6

Approximately 10.6 FTE are currently assigned to the Tutorial +1 block. Student participation varies from day to day because students attend Tutorials based on their individual schedules and needs as they may arise. Each section is staffed by multiple educators who provide supervision and academic support. . This structure allows students to seek support from teachers across subject areas and ensures appropriate supervision during the block. Also, some teachers are split across tutorial sections (e.g. two class meetings a week in one block and the other two class meetings in a different block).

What other programs do +1 assignments support?

While the majority of +1 assignments support Tutorial, the program has been enhanced over time to support additional student programs, academic services and social and emotional oriented programming embedded within the school day.

In addition to academic Tutorial assignments, examples include:

- Fostering Excellence in Mathematics (formerly the Calculus Project)
- Social Emotional Learning Tutorial (SELT)
- Queer Student Program (QSP)
- Additional instructional support in beginning World Language courses

FY27 Budget FAQs

- Academic support centers and science labs

In general, +1 assignments are used for responsibilities that involve direct service to students. In rare cases, +1 assignments have also been used to support curriculum development.

What is the current distribution of +1 assignments?

+1 assignments are distributed across the master schedule to support Tutorial and other student programs during the school day. The data below represent teaching block assignments across the schedule, not the number of educators present during a single block.

Program/Assignment	Blocks
Tutorial	53
Second teacher in beginning World Language courses	9
Additional lab periods for AP science courses	8
Fostering Excellence in Mathematics (FEx) Support	5
Math Center	3
World Language Center	1
World Language Lab	1
Teachers Mentoring Teachers	2
*Queer Student Program (QSP)	2
	84 Blocks (16.8 FTE)

* For FY26 both QSP assignments are funded through the BHS Innovation Fund. For FY27 one of the QSP assignments will continue to be funded by the BHS Innovation fund and one will be a traditional +1 assignment.

What is the difference between a +1 assignment and a stipend role?

Stipends, by contrast, are used to compensate for responsibilities that occur outside the school day or outside the master schedule. In some cases, such as Fostering Excellence in Mathematics (FEx) Programming. There is a +1 assignment that supports students as part of a contractual teaching assignment during the school day and there are stipend assignments for

FY27 Budget FAQs

support that is provided outside the contractual school day. Stipends are listed in Appendix B of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

How would adjustments to +1 assignments be implemented?

Questions from committee members referenced potential adjustments to +1 assignments in the proposed and override budget scenarios. The +1 assignments are embedded in the high school schedule and are primarily used to provide academic support to students through Tutorial and related programs during the school day. Because they are part of the teaching schedule, changes to these assignments would require adjustments to the master schedule and could affect both student access to support and the distribution of teaching responsibilities. While both scenarios involve reductions to the number of +1 assignments. Any potential changes would need to be considered in that broader operational context and considerations for how to best mitigate or distribute the loss of support for students.

Office space in PSB buildings:

PSB is allowing multiple independent non-profits (that are not “partner organizations”) to occupy space and work rent-free in our buildings. This requires analysis and discussion. At minimum, we need to know:

1) How was the decision made to grant these organizations rent-free space in PSB buildings?

The entities listed below have historically been provided space in school owned buildings without being assessed a fee. This has been a practice initiated before the current administration. It is not unusual for such entities to be provided with such space given the contributions they make to the welfare and support of students and staff these organizations provide. Since this practice has preceded current administration and has been in place for as long as collective memory can provide we would need direction from the School Committee to do otherwise if it so chose.

2) What organizations use rent-free space in PSB buildings? How much space do they occupy? What is the value of the spaces they use?

The partner organizations that use rent-free space in PSB buildings that the current administration is aware of include:

Organization	Amount of Space Occupied
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FY27 Budget FAQs

Steps to Success	3 offices, 1,311 sq ft
Innovation Fund	2 offices, 600 sq ft
Brookline Education Foundation (BEF)	1 office, 480 sq ft

There are other groups, such as the Brookline Community Band and Brookline Music School, that reserve PSB space rent-free.

PSBs terminated the Clark Road lease in 2025. The annual rate PSB paid for this space was \$35/sq ft.

LAHB

If the LAHB program opens to OOD students, those students would be primarily in general ed classrooms because LAHB is not a substantially separate program. Are there issues to reconcile in terms of class sizes and cost-per-pupil with respect to moving forward with LAHB as a tuition-in program?

LAHB is no different from many of the other specialized programs with respect to inclusion in general ed class sizes. Moreover, space available for tuition-in opportunities will be limited in number so do not anticipate any significant impact to future class size.