



School Committee

MINUTES OF THE CHELSEA SCHOOL COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING

March 17, 2026

APPROVED 3-26-26

Members Present: Mayra Balderas, Katherine Cabral, Claryangeliz Covas Caraballo, Lucia Henriquez, Ana Hernandez, Dr. Sarah Neville, Shawn O'Regan and JAKE Small.

Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Almudena G. Abeyta, Chief of Staff & Equity Dr. Aaron Jennings, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Tamara Blake-Canty, Assistant Superintendent Michelle Martinello, Chief Academic Officer Adam Deleidi, Innovation, Access, & Opportunity Officer Malik Howshan, Communications Director Michael Sullivan, Chief Finance & Operations Officer Billie Jo Turner, Human Resources Director Christine Lee, and School Committee Clerk Veronica Dyer-Medina.

The Chelsea School Committee held a public hearing on March 17, 2026, at Chelsea High School-299 Everett Avenue, Chelsea. The Public Hearing was held to hear public comments on the following two items:

1. School Choice for the 2026-2027 School Year
2. FY 2026-2027 Budget

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Roll Call for Attendance:

Mr. Small	Present
Ms. Covas Caraballo	Present
Ms. Henriquez	Present
Mr. O'Regan	Present
Ms. Balderas	Present
Dr. Neville	Present
Ms. Cabral	Present
Ms. Hernandez	Present

Mr. Gomez-Pereira	Absent
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Having 9 school committee members present, the meeting proceeded.

Chair Hernandez shared the following opening remarks: *“On behalf of the School Committee, I want to thank everyone for being here tonight. We know that many members of our community care deeply about our schools, our students, and the people who serve them. Your presence reflects that commitment, and we appreciate the Engagement. As many of you know, this meeting was rescheduled from last week due to the size of the crowd and the difficulty in maintaining a space where the meeting could proceed in a safe and orderly manner. Tonight, we have reconvened to continue this important work, and we ask for everyone’s cooperation so that we can conduct the meeting in a way that is respectful, professional, and productive. We also want to acknowledge that this is a very difficult moment for our district. The proposed budget includes reductions that affect members of our school community, including educators who work with our students every day. These are not easy conversations, and we recognize that emotions are high. The people in this room care deeply about Chelsea’s students and schools, and that passion is understandable. At the same time, the School Committee has a responsibility to conduct the district’s business in a way that allows all voices to be heard while ensuring the meeting can move forward. We ask that everyone treat one another with respect — including speakers, staff, and members of the public. We will follow the rules for public comment and ask that remarks remain focused and respectful.”*

Chair Hernandez then turned it over to Dr. Abeyta who shared the personal reasons for her absence at the last school committee meeting and shared her opening remarks: *“In the six and a half years that I have served this district, I have never missed a school committee meeting. Being present for this work has always been very important to me. Last Thursday, however, I was unable to attend due to a family emergency. Some comments were later shared suggesting that my absence meant I was avoiding the meeting or unwilling to face difficult conversations taking place. I want to gently clarify that this was not the case. My father, who has been battling cancer for the past year, is very sick. And last week, my family had to make some incredibly difficult decisions, and I needed to be with him. As many of you understand, when a love when it's facing serious illness, every moment together matters. Like many of you, I hold many roles in my life. In addition to serving this district, I am a wife, a mother, and a daughter. I appreciate the understanding that families sometimes require our attention during difficult moments. I also want to acknowledge that this is an incredibly difficult time for our district. The budget shortfall we are facing means that valued colleagues, people who care deeply about our students are losing their jobs. That is painful and emotions across our community are understandably high. As we continue tonight's meeting, I hope we can approach the conversations with respect for one another. We may not always agree, and that is okay, but we can work through these challenges with professionalism and care. And for the adults in this room, it is important to remember that our students are watching us. They learn from how we speak to one another and how we handle difficult moments.”*

At this time Chair Hernandez requested that Dr. Abeyta explain School Choice and her recommendation to not accept students from other districts in Chelsea Public Schools. Chair Hernandez then opened up public

comments for this item. In addition she explained the guidelines for public comment. Each person received 2 minutes and would be called up by the number they were assigned.

- Viaki Gonzalez spoke about School Choice. She asked that the district not allow students from other districts in order to reserve supports for Chelsea students.
- Anita Mercado spoke on School Choice. She advocated for allowing students who move and build relationships with support staff to remain in Chelsea because they may not find the same supports in other districts.

Dr. Neville shared that she learned a little bit about school choice this year, and learned that it was designed in such a way that to actually prevent districts from using it as a way to bring in revenue. So you only get \$5,000 per student if you do it. So it wouldn't really help us very much necessarily with our budget. She also stated she understands there's a lot of students who move out of Chelsea and they might even want to stay. She asked Dr. Abeyta what she recommended. Dr. Abeyta stated she would recommend a No vote. Ms Covas Caraballo added that while it is hard to see students go when they move, there are other factors that play into keeping students like transportation costs, student to teacher ratios, etc.

At this time Chair Hernandez seeing no other requests for comments on this topic, closed public comment for this item. She then turned the meeting over to Dr. Abeyta to present on the budget for FY26-27.

Presentations: Dr. Abeyta along with her cabinet team presented the budget for fiscal year 2026-2027. Their [slideshow presentation](#) included the following topics:

- How the strategic plan is aligned to the budget
- Budget Development timeline
- Loss of 350 student enrollment
- Budget shortfall factors
- Cost drivers and inflation
- Balancing the budget with a shortfall
- Review of class sizes and staffing
- Summary of Cuts by school & department

After the presentation, Dr. Abeyta welcomed questions from committee members.

Vice-chair Cabral asked about Title I cuts and if they are also affecting funding as well. Dr. Abeyta explained that it does affect the funding and the district is seeing a 10% reduction and they have worked through the funds to make shifts so they would not have to reduce the staff funded by Title 1. Mr. Small then asked a few questions. He asked how the increase in school based staff and district staff have impacted the student experience. Dr. Abeyta provided some examples of how increased paras in the classroom have been important for students to have more adults in the classroom-especially with a focus on special education classrooms. She then discussed a priority at the district level to increase access and opportunities for students with the help of the extended learning programs like: BCC, Girls on the Run, partnerships with Museum of Science, FKO, etc. She

in addition spoke about the need for a communications person to push out news during critical times and good times to families. She stated they are vital and important positions. She then discussed the professional development provided by the Chief of Staff Dr. Jennings who provides partnerships for the district. Ms. Covas Caraballo then asked about the district's status and the level of care and existing student to teacher ratios. Dr. Abeyta answered that we have a lower student enrollment and actually overstaffed at this time. She explained that in Massachusetts some districts did mid-year cuts, but Chelsea did not. At this time we have less students and are projected to have less students next year. She added that she does not believe we have a choice unless the district received more funding from the governor or the city. Mr. Small then asked if Dr. Abeyta could explain how she balanced the budget last year without school based cuts. Dr. Abeyta had Mr. Deleidi go over the cuts that were made at the district level during last year's \$1.3 million shortfall. He he also explained the money that was coming in after covid, and how that has dried up and that those funds were invested in the classroom and positions were created and added. He ended saying he was concerned for next year with a projected 220 less students. Mr. Deleidi additionally went over the calculations of how we are funded by different learners and the funds we are losing from not having as many new comer students as we typically have.

Chair Hernandez then opened public comment to hear comments on the FY26-27 budget. [Attached](#) are notes from members of the audience who spoke for public comment. Transcription of this portion of public comment was assisted by [REV.com](#) for portions of the audio.

After 77 speakers presented their comments to the school committee, Chair Hernandez officially closed public comment on this topic and requested to adjourn the public hearing.

Adjournment: At this time Ms. Cabral motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Balderas seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:16pm.

Recorded by



Veronica Dyer-Medina
School Committee Clerk

Recording of the meeting can be found [here](#), courtesy of the Chelsea Community Cable YouTube channel.

Public Comment on Budget FY26-27

Josselin

Hello everybody. My name is Josselin. I'm a senior at Chelsea High School. Good evening, school committee members and school personnel. Over the past years, I've built a real relationship with my teachers. They're not just people who stand in front of a classroom. They're people who check in on you, who push you when you're struggling and who figure out where you want to be like in the future. For some of them, they're the reason why I'm even considering the education field myself. And I've also experienced what happens when support isn't there. In my freshman year, I was in an honors class that was overcrowded and was led by a substitute teacher for the entire semester. We never had a permanent teacher, and honestly, we didn't learn what we're supposed to. That stayed with me because it showed how much students lose when classrooms don't have stability.

So when I hear about potential cuts, I don't just think about numbers. I think about students sitting in classrooms like that again, feeling overlooked, falling behind, and questioning their abilities, not because they are incapable, but because they don't have the support needed. I understand that there are real financial challenges, and I know these decisions aren't easy, but I ask that you really consider what choices look like in the classroom on a regular school day for when we walk in. Because for us, this isn't about the budget. It's about the kind of environment we held as EHS. And I truly believe that everyone in this room cares about that as well. To move forward as a strong community, we need to come together as students, families, city leaders, and to focus on clear and honest communication. I came here not just to show how serious the situation is, but also to emphasize something even more important, the strength we have when we come together as a community, because at the end of the day, the unity, along with the support we receive in our classrooms, is truly what shapes our future.

Thank you. And for Dr. I wish you luck with your father in your mental health journey. Thank you.

Valerie:

Good evening, Chelsea School Committee. My name is Valerie Jovell and I am a student at Chelsea High School. I'm here today to speak about the proposal to cut student faced positions and how this will negatively affect students like me. School counselors have supported many students, including myself, through challenges big and small. I have a strong relationship with my counselor, Ms. Lawrence, and even with counselors who are not assigned to me. One of them is Ms. Mejia. Even though she is not my counselor, she has helped me grow not only as a student, but as a person. When I was at my lowest in my sport, she lifted me up and motivated me to keep going. Because of her support, I am still playing soccer and even continuing my passion. I even thought of her as my Ms. Honey from Matilda, someone who always believes in her students.

This does not only affect staff and students at Chelsea High School, but even staff and young students in all Chelsea public schools. How many students will lose their mishoneys if you fire all of these educators? How are our little siblings and cousins supposed to learn when their teachers are at risk of not teaching at their school? How can they feel safe when they are worried about losing adults they care about? Many of these young students have a close relationship with their teachers and having to start over and gain that confidence and vulnerability will affect them a lot and not in a good way. Cutting teachers will also lead to larger class sizes and less individual attentions for students. Teachers are the people who educate and support us every single day. If difficult financial decisions must be made, the district should

first look at administrative and district level positions rather than cutting the people who work directly with students.

Our school exists for students. Please protect and support our counselors and teachers and other students face positions because when you cut them, you are not just cutting positions. You are cutting the support and opportunities that students need to succeed. Thank you.

Juliana

Good evening. My name is Juliana and I am a junior at Chelsea High School. I'm speaking on behalf of the possibility of losing counselors and other important staff at our school. For students, not only do staff play a huge role in our lives, but also counselors. They help us reach our academic success as Chelsea High students. This year, I grew closer to my counselor. She believes in my goals and my future, and she tells me she sees my potential and my capabilities. Hearing someone say that and mean it stays with you, and it did for me. And it boost me to try my hardest and I'm at my lowest. She also happens to be my class advisor, which means she supports my class council and helps guide us as leaders in the school. So I appreciate Ms. Lawrence. Starting off fresh with someone new could be difficult specifically for me, but for other at-risk students who rely on them for support.

We are not the only district going through the situation, and I want to see help within the school committee, and I want to take more involvement instead of absence. Understanding the situation that we are in as a community within Chelsea Public Schools and Budgeting, I want to know if finding a way of a proposed budget or seeking positive alternatives for success within this hard time as possible. I'm someone who would like to take the path of hope, then take the path that Lisa accepting things as they are. In the end, I would like to see us come together as a community we are, which is Chelsea. Thank you for your time and for listening. I hope we can find a positive solution.

Cristian V.

Good afternoon. My name is Christian V. I'm a junior at Chelsea High School and I'm here today to discuss the decision to cut teachers, specifically school counselors, because it's not just a budget decision. It's a decision that would directly affect the future of students like me. I've been lucky enough to develop a relationship with my counselor. Since my freshman year, she has supported me with the classes I've taken, encouraged me to push myself academically and guided me towards great opportunities that without her I wouldn't have even known existed. Because of her, I can confidently say that I have an idea of what I want to do in the future and also understand the steps I need to take to get there. I want to emphasize the importance of having the support of school counselors. They're some of the only adults in our building that every student has access to all four years of their high school experience.

They guide students towards career and college opportunities, helping them succeed academically and support them through mental health struggles. By removing school counselors, you are taking away guidance from freshmens and sophomores who need help planning their futures and support from juniors and seniors who heavily rely on counselors for college applications, career planning, and important decisions about their next steps. So I ask you to consider that although cutting school counselors and other teachers may save you money today, that everlasting cost will be far greater. It could cost students to support systems or opportunities and even their safety. Our counselors should not be seen as just staff part of a budget. They are mentors, guides, and sometimes the one person a student knows they can turn to. Regarding the undeniable safety hazard from last Thursday, let's also talk about having classes with around 40 students in it and expecting one teacher to carry the responsibility of keeping them safe.

This is a huge safety hazard and instead of firing teachers, we need to be hiring more. Respectfully, I also find it absurd and ridiculous that a 17 year old and people younger have to stand up and fight for their education. It's insane that we have to point out to adults the issues that matter. I want to let you know that you have consistently underestimated the youth in Chelsea and want to suggest you never make that mistake again.

Nallely

Good evening, everyone. My name is Nallely, and I'm a student at Chelsea High School. I'm here to remind the committee of what their core values are. So Chelsea Public School says that its mission is to welcome and educate all students and to create a safe and caring and respectful environment. It also centers its values around creating relationships, support, and truly knowing its students by its name, strength, and stories. And I'm here because I don't feel like those values are being appreciated right now or they're being like you're seeing it. The decision to remove staff, teachers, counselors, and social workers might look insignificant on paper for some of you, but for students, this can impact those who rely on these services on a day-to-day basis. My counselor, Karina Lawrence, is someone I deeply trust. She's someone I go to when I feel overwhelmed or I need guidance from an adult that is not my parents. She knows me not just as a student, but as who I am, as a person, which is hard to find in a lot of adults nowadays that are not your family members. And I feel like it's very important that we keep these relationships between students and the staff members in the schools because this is how you make relationships. You want students to know how to talk to other people, not just solely people their age. And sometimes when you can talk to adults, you feel like you're respected. And right now, I don't feel like the values are being respected because I feel like the adults aren't seeing the students. They're seeing the student's point of view. We can't only see the point of view of you guys. We have to see the point of view of the students and the families that are being affected because these support systems are what students really rely on a day-to-day basis.

And I'm saying that from experience as someone who struggles a lot with being overwhelmed and anxious sometimes, I just need someone to talk to. And if we're taking away counselors, then I don't feel like that's fair.

Yareli Sanchez

Okay. Hello? Yeah. Hello. My name is Yareli Sanchez, a parent of a special education student attending CBLA. I'm just here because I want to share my experience so that you see how this decision impacts students like my son. Prior to last week, my son was attending the right middle school in an inclusive classroom. Not just in the school, but in previous grades, he has had some amazing, wonderful teachers, from Ms. Marcum to Ms. Aldridge, Ms. McGray. Our decision to leave in person school was largely influenced by the size of his classroom. There are already not enough front facing special education teachers to make sure that students like my son who are on the quieter side and need to build trust before anything else get the attention that they deserve. Even his social worker was only in the building two days out of the week. The only thing or people that got my son through the week was visits to the library, his Monday Dungeons and Dragons Club, and his Friday hour club with Ms. Hortle.

So while difficult decisions needs to be made, and while chores subjects are informed, please consider that for students like my son, the arts, music, and library positions are what kept him motivated to go to school and inspire his critical thinking, specifically in his favorite subject, his story. With the decision to cut positions, including the middle school CBLA, my son and I are left not knowing where he will be next

year, where he will finish his eighth grade journey. So while my heart goes out to you, please consider how this decisions affect special education children. Thank you.

Vanessa Mendoza Mercado

Good evening. My name is Vanessa Mendoza Mercado. I am a multilingual educator, a CPS grad, the vice president of the Chelsea Teachers Union, and the parent of a future CPS student. I welcome my son Ben this past December. I'm here tonight because of our shared beliefs. We love this community, we believe in our schools, and we care about our students and families. In my 10 years working in this district, I have worked with roughly 2000 students. That is the impact one educator can have in our district. As this budget stands, we face a reduction of over 75 staff members, people who come to work every day ready to make a difference in a child's life. Last week, we witnessed the impact of our school staff. Hundreds of students, families, and community members came to the defense of our schools in support of our educators, our paraprofessionals, and clerks.

Years of building relationships have led us to this moment. By cutting over 10% of our staff, we are also destroying the partnerships that we have worked so hard to form. We may not agree on every single issue, but I can stand here tonight and say that we all want what's best for our students. You all have the ability to do what's right, to keep the staff members that work directly with our students and families. When the dust settles and the budget is finalized, we may have a balanced budget, but not a balanced community. We have already lost so much this year for reasons out of our control, but we can control the stability our schools provide. For our students who are here today and the students we can hope will return to us, we cannot willingly contribute to more loss in our community. Please do what is right.

Prioritize the people directly in front of our students and make proportional cuts. We're not asking that you cut all of central office, but take a look at the district as a whole and make fair cuts. Thank you.

Mary Zick Turner

Hi, I'm Mary. I'm one of the social workers at the high school and I've been here for six years. I'm here today because I'm incredibly concerned that this proposal includes cutting a multilingual social work position at the high school. It may seem that one position wouldn't have a huge impact on our students. However, I feel it would be quite the opposite. When I look at my colleagues whose jobs are at risk, I see people who are consistent supports to their students. They're here every day, running clubs, teaching emotional regulation, engaging students in school who otherwise might not attend. Eliminating this position stretches thinner teams that are already working against the clock to provide our students the care and attention that they deserve to ensure their safety. For our department, a caseload of students is much more than a number, but since numbers are a more tangible way to look at a situation, let's look at the numbers.

When the most recent social work position at CHS was added in the 21- ' 22 school year, there were 1,498 students enrolled as per DESI records. DESI records show that for this school year, our enrollment was 1,532 and actually larger number of students. It is very concerning that this position is on the table to be cut when there are more students than in 2021 when the position was added.

Needs have definitely not gone down since 2021. If we want to look more at the numbers, DESI records show that for 86.5% of the student population at CHS, English is not their first language. This is poor timing to be letting go of bilingual staff who serve multi-language learners. If our numbers and percentages remain similar to 2021 when this position was added, how do you justify cutting it while making no cuts or adjustments to administrative positions? Where does that show our priorities lie? In

2026, when there is so much fear in this community over immigration status, families being separated, a youth mental health crisis, high rates of isolation, loneliness, and a lack of connection to others.

Our students who are more support, not less. Students in these positions that support their wellness job even one.

Eileen

Good evening, school committee members. My name is Eileen and I'm a senior at Chelsea High School. I'm here to comment on my personal experience and the decisions being made in this district. These are just numbers on a spreadsheet. They shape our classrooms, our futures, and whether we feel seen and supported. And right now, those choices are hurting us. Chelsea Public Schools talks a lot about names, strength and story. We hear that our district is proud of who we are, immigrant families, first generation students, young people who carry our family homes back. We hear that our stories matter, but if our stories matter, then why are the people support us? The teachers, the counselors, the professionals, the people that are in this room right now, the first ones being cut. Student facing faculty aren't abstract real. They're real people who change our lives. For me, that person is my counselor, Karina Lawrence.

She came into my life when I was still learning how to speak up for myself during my freshman year. She listened when I was overwhelmed, helped me understand my accommodations to my 504, my rights and my power. Because of Karina, my school counselor, someone knew my name, my strength, and my story.

With these budget cuts, students like me might never have that chance. I'm sitting here today because an adult in this district believed in me, and I know I'm not the only student who can say that about a counselor, a teacher, or a staff member who changed their life. When you cut the student facing faculty, you cut the possibility of moments like that. You cut the adults who help us grow, who helped us lead, who helped us become who we're meant to be. If Chelsea Public Schools wants to be a district known for strength, it must protect the people who strengthen us. If it wants to be a district known for story, it has to listen to the stories we are living, not just the ones that look good on paper. Every student deserves someone who sees them, hears their lipstick. Please don't take that away from students who come after me.

Our stories matter, our futures matter, and your decisions matter. My name is Eileen Herrera Erasman. This my name, my strength, and my story.

Jayvi

Good evening school committee members. My name is Jayvi. I'm a senior at Chelsea High School. And considering most of the people here are probably going to speak about the impact of teachers, I'd like to help put the impact of counselors and social workers. With your current proposed budget cuts, you will be firing social workers and counselors, leaving the remaining staff to have even larger caseloads and leaving more rooms for kids to slip through the cracks. The recommended amount of students on a counselor's caseload in Massachusetts is a maximum of 250 It leads to one counselor. The same ratio goes for school social workers. The current average amount of students on a counselor's caseload at Chelsea High School is about 210, and the average of a social worker's caseload is 400 students. By letting go of counselors and social workers, the remaining staff will be left with even larger caseloads and be unable to service more students.

Now, to why I'm here. I'm what the school system calls a vulnerable youth. I have autism spectrum disorder, treatment resistant depression, and a variety of other mental health issues. And on November 14th, 2025, I had a plan to take my own money. One of the reasons I'm standing in front of you today is because of my school counselor, Carina Lawrence, who is being let go due to these budget cuts and my

social worker. They helped make sure I got treatment and non-medication, and they're why I am finally enjoying being alive since I was a child. I am not afraid to admit that Ms. Lawrence and Ms. Zick are part of the reason I am alive today, and if I never had them, I would likely be dead. And with larger caseloads for school, social workers, and counselors, they'll be overworked and overwhelmed and unable to connect with students due to this.

And I can guarantee you that I am not the only kid like this in Chelsea, nor am I the only one who has been saved on my school support staff. But by cutting schoolworkers, social worker and counselor positions, you are letting go of the people that notice these things and bond with students that you are supposed to serve. Maybe next time a counsel will be so overworked with their even larger caseload, they won't notice the warning signs. I ask that you please take to listen to consideration. Thank you for your time.

Andrea

Good afternoon. It's good to see you all again. My name is Andrea and I'm with junior at Chelsea High. Last year I sit in the same room speaking about student safety, advocating for those who do not feel safe in our schools. Today I stand here again, but this time I'm advocating for the people who make our schools feel safe. Our teachers, our counselors, and ultimately the future of our education. These proposed cuts do not just affect staff. They directly affect students. They affect every student walking into Chelsea Public Schools. This shoe is legally personal to me over the past three years. I've built meaningful relationship with teachers, counselors, and who have shaped me who I am today. One of those people is Ms. Mejia. Ms. Mejia has been more than a coach or a counselor. She has been a mentor during some of the most challenging moments in my high school experience.

She was the person I turned for advice for support and for motivation. She helped me go stronger both mentally and physically. Whether it was dying from last room soccer or dying from the laughter.

The laughter through a tough day because she refused to let me give up and she showed up for me. And my story is not unique. Students across Chelsea rely on relationships like these. These connections are what motivates us to come to school to push ourselves and to believe in our futures. So I need to ask, why are the people who support us, the ones being cut? For the past two years, I have stood here asking for you guys to listen to students, not just hear us, but activities that truly benefit us. Because from where we stand, these positions do not just reflect what's best for students. They reflect on what's easiest for administration. With all due respect, I may know your titles, but you have not impacted my life the way my teachers and counselors have. I trust them because they show up for us every single day.

If cuts truly need to be made, then they should not have come at the expenses of the people who directly support students. Look and set at the administrator and district level position roles that are removed from our daily experiences and do not have the same direct impact on our growth. Students should not be the ones paying for the price of these decisions. Our future should not be put at risk because those in power are willing to take risks themselves. If you truly believe these changes are for better, then prove it. By making decisions that prioritize students and not positions. Make sure that reflects the reality of classrooms and not just the structure of an organization. Thank you for your time.

Xavier

Good afternoon. My name is Xavier. I am a junior student athlete here at Chelsea High School. I'm not really good at public speaking, but I felt it was important to speak today because of how these decisions affect students in our community and me. For the past 11 years, I've been a student in Chelsea Public Schools. During that time, I've grown into the person I am today, not only because my wonderful mom,

but because of the teachers and educators who supported me along the way. These are people who believed in me, pushed me to do better and helped guide me even when I didn't always know what was best for myself. As a student, we spend around six hours a day, 180 days a year in school. That means teachers are some of the most important influences in our lives. They build real relationships with us and help shape who we become.

When I was younger in my early education, teachers meant so much to me because they took the time to understand me and care about my growth. Even now in high school, I have teachers who mentor and inspire me every day. But in my three years at Chelsea High School, I've already seen my teachers leave. Most of my freshman year teachers are gone. I have teachers today that I look up to, and it would be heartbreaking to come back one day and find out that the mentors who helped shape me were let go. I understand the budgets can be difficult, but cutting teachers that should not be the solution. I've seen freshmens and sophomores struggle with things like writing essays, multiplying and dividing. Larger class sizes and fewer teachers only make these problems worse. Teachers are people who shape our future. They are mentors, role models, and the reason many students succeed.:

Today I'm speaking not just for myself, but for the students who aren't here and for the teachers who support us every day. So please, please, please reconsider these cuts and protect the people who are shaping our future. Thank you.

Nadia de Villeda

Hello. My name is Nadia. I am a parent. I have a six year old who attends the Kelly School, and I have been very intentional on making sure that my son speaks only Spanish at home. Growing up to an immigrant mom, I had to assimilate and I refused to let my son do that. So naturally, my son is an English language learner. When he entered the Kelly School, his iReady scores were horrible. He was in needs improvement for both English reading and his math skills. As of his recent scores, he's gone from needs improvement to approaching grade one. In his English, he went up 45 points and in his math, he went up 37 points. That's the direct benefit of his MLL teachers. That is the direct benefit of Senor Gonzalez and Ms. Mendoza, who, by the way, took the crying baby that was in the back so I could speak here.

I want to emphasize that I understand cuts need to be made, but I think that transparency is important. As a parent, this whole process has been frustrating, not knowing who is on the staff of admin, who's in the cabinet, and not having an org chart. It should not take me as a parent contacting different committee members, looking at different budget books to try to figure out who is on this staffing. We need more transparency. We need to be held more accountable for our decisions. And I ask that you guys, as a committee, strike this budget down and ask for another budget in which we protect front facing teachers. I want to speak to you guys directly and remind you guys, it is a privilege that you guys are sitting there. You are voted by your community. It is your duty to listen to us and not go to what is the normal.

I keep hearing in the 17 years in the history, this is not normal. These are unprecedented times, and I asked you to go against degrade. I asked you to do what is unexpected of you and consider the voices of the people that voted you in that privileged position you're in. And for the residents, I ask you to remember who's here, and the next time you have to vote, remember who staff here is in ...

Brittany

My name is Brittany Fitzgibbon, and I'm a history teacher at Chelsea High School. I've been teaching here for 11 years, and I plan on being here until I retire because I love this community. Our students will attest to the highly visible work of educators. Our students know we build their curriculum, create their work,

run their clubs, talk to their families, and support them in their success. But there's a lot of invisible and urgent work educators do that this budget ignores and endangers. I know of several educators who have volunteered for school safety teams, physically putting themselves between our kids and danger before and after school. I have yet to see a member of central office do that at the high school. I have spoken to several educators who are members of Luci, actively putting themselves at risk to protect our students and their families. I don't know a single member of central office that can say the same.

When a former CHS student contacted me in crisis, in an incredibly unsafe situation, I called a CHS social worker who spent the next few hours helping out that student likely saving their life. I did not call anyone from the central office. I practice active shooter drills with my kids and accept the responsibility of having to decide if we run high or fight knowing full well at community debt. No one from central office practices those drills with us crouched in the corner pretending to hyper guns. It seems to me that this budget, which is meant to protect our student's future, should probably prioritize the educators who every day prioritize the emotional and physical safety of our students. Students deserve a budget that serves students, educators protect students. Central office protects themselves.

Stacy Hescocock

Hi, my name is Stacy Hescocock and I am the teacher at the Early Learning Center and have been there for 24 years. Everyone in this district worked hard for our students, and I love working in a school committee full of colleagues who share the values and supporting and empowering our children. However, it cannot be denied that Chelsea public staff have been the front lines of the pandemic, immigration crackdowns, budget cuts, staff shortages, and the money other dynamic challenges our community face. We are the school-based staff. We are the ones in the classroom helping our students navigate these challenges and the world day in and day out. We come in every day with a smile on our face. Why? Because that's what our Chelsea students deserve. We are not here to complain about how hard our jobs are. Rather, we're here to illustrate why we are essential staff for Chelsea's students and our community.

Therefore, the burden should not be felt by ... It should be felt by all of us, the teachers and central staff.

Meaghan Merejildo

Good evening. My name is Megan Merejildo. I am an MLE, a multilingual educator at the Brown Middle School. I've been there for 10 years. Both of my children have been able to attend the ELC through the employee pre-kinder program, and they've both grown into tremendous learners through the hard work of the teachers there.

Since the district is proposing seven cuts in each middle school, all of our students will be affected. At BMS, the proposal is to reduce our staff from eight multilingual educators to only six, as well as eliminating the slice position and a SPED position. As a result of these cuts, roles and responsibilities will change and create an unstable and inconsistent environment for some of our most vulnerable populations. This would affect all students since least cuts increase already high caseloads. For each student, these positions build meaningful relationships with them and their families. With our teacher team, we create scaffolds and support so students can access grade level curriculum. With more students for each staff member, needs will be left unmet, families will be left uninformed, and our students will be pushed further into an opportunity gap of the district's own making. Educators know every one of our students' names strength food stories.

To educators, our district values are more than a phrase or a T-shirt. Why is 27 central office positions of more value to the students in Chelsea than any one of the 76 educators who truly know the students and their families? The answer is they aren't. We as a district cannot prioritize the roles of central of the

staff over family and student facing positions and say that we welcome all students to a high quality education and a system that is devoted to equity, diversity, and social justice. Educators and building staff matter most to the students of Chelsea, not 27 titles with academic buzzwords. I urge the district and school committee to reconsider their priorities in this budget cycle and make the hard decisions within their own four walls before cutting MLE and SPED positions that face our students and families. Thank you for listening.

Ismael

Hello, my name's Ismail, senior at Chelsea High School, and I'd like to start by offering my deepest condolences to Dr. Abeta. I keep you and your father in my prayers. The purpose of my speech will be to provide insight as to how the Chelsea Public School's administration has failed us. And by us, I mean students, I mean teachers, social workers, and school counselors. In order to maintain the budget, you have decided to fire more than 70 staff members across Chelsea Public Schools, and this is your solution ... Sorry, making me edit. This is your solution and your decision for what the budget cuts will be, all to afford a cell phone policy that isn't being enforced, and a new schedule next year, which requires teachers to take up an extra class and still get paid the same amount. If you plan to fire counselors, you plan to increase the caseload of other counselors.

As a result, you'll make it much harder for students to get the support and love they need. Throughout my four years at Chelsea High School, the one person I knew I could go to for support and love and most of all understanding was my counselor, and now you plan to let her go. You are making it harder for children to have someone they can go to. You have failed to create a safe learning environment, and now you plan to remove the people we students cling to for support every day. I encourage you to ask yourselves as to what is the priority, the education or the administration. The paychecks of these 18 teachers in our school and 70 total across Chelsea Public Schools is holding you back. You should consider reevaluating where the budget cuts will be centered because all members in the administration are having their contract renewed next year.

Most of these teachers who are letting go are receiving a low income wage, and this is because your only rationale for removing them is that they don't have status at the schools they work at. Assuming each administration member makes three times more than that of a low income teacher, you are valuing the work of each member to that of three teachers, and these people do not see a single student every single day. Mary Bourque, the previous superintendent, successfully handled an entire educational system that had 600 more children and half the number of people in our cabinet. Thank you.

Princess

Good afternoon school committee. My name is Princess, and I am attending today's meeting on behalf of the community members affected by this cut. This isn't just about jobs being lost. It's about the students losing their support systems. The very people who guide us, encourage us, and advocate for us every single day. I'm currently a sophomore at Chelsea High School, and I want to remind you that this isn't just one teacher. This is at least 70 teachers cut from the district. Many students don't know everyone in the main office or administration, and not only all of those roles directly impact students in the same way teachers do. The relationships we build in classrooms is what shapes our experiences and success. Through my school years, I struggled with the law silently and I came to school and put a smile on. Elizabeth Steinberg, Sarah Ruddy, Damon Bailey, Lauren Cataldo, Vanessa Riuta, Claire Flores, Chelsea Aldridge, and Michelle Martinello.

These are names of faculty members that have personally made a difference in my life and made it easy to put a smile on my face without knowing it. I can't imagine teachers getting ripped away from the

students that love and care for them. There are many more names that I can list that have impacted me and some of my friends. I agree with that. We should cut faculty members, but we should be taking away the people who don't make an impact on the students. The city of Chelsea isn't providing and investing in better outcomes, and this is the exact reason. A lot of our community complains about the graduation rate when the students aren't the problem. It's the district. Please find ways that wouldn't affect only teachers and students, but the admin and everyone, this is unfair and unjust. Instead of trying to only work with the city and city manager, we should take it to state to make sure they fund for what's needed. With that, all I'm asking is to think before acting, which is something we are taught as kids. And as youth, it's disappointing that we have to re-teach adults that people care. Thank you for your time this evening, and I hope tonight can show you that we all came out.

Yuliana

Good afternoon school committee. My name is Yuliana and I'm a student at CHS. Coming up here today, I'm not only advocating for myself, but also for future generations like my little siblings and teachers who have made an impact on my life. The teachers who teach our youth on a daily are at threat of being cut from their jobs. Teachers are more than educators. They're a support system. They ask you what's going on when they see you're acting different than usual, and they affirm you that you're capable of more than you could ever imagine. It would break my heart to see teachers, I and many others have built a personal bond with lose their jobs. I can name multiple teachers who have shaped who I am today, like Mr. Fidel, Ms. Mondonio, Ms. Ms. Fields, and others who I hold close to my heart. I also see a pattern of special needs teachers and teachers who teach kids from different countries being cut, and this shows that the city isn't putting much importance to kids who need those additional resources.

When people see our numbers of enrollments dropping, they just take the data without asking why it is that way. It's unfair that we get our funds cut because there are less kids attending our school, but it's not by choice. It's because these kids are being adopted by ICE. These kids are already marginalized in society and seeing it be the same case in schools is truly disheartening. I understand that the issue stems from somewhere deeper than the city. It comes from systemic issues which overlook minorities like us. There's no other words to describe this, but unjust and sickening. I propose we should take this to a state level and advocate for more funding in gateway cities like ours who are going through the same, to not only put a temporary bandaid on this crisis, but to fix it permanently and ensure that schools won't have to go through this again.

I hope you keep this in mind as we vote for this budget. Thank you.

Vilma Rojas Lopez

Good evening. My name is Vilma Rojas Lopez and I'm a parent. Tonight I'm asking for two things. The first thing is that the school budget will be evaluated to include more district level positions and less in school positions, and that the school committee, along with the city manager and state reps look into investing more into the schools so that this situation does not keep happening to Chelsea. I was born and raised in Chelsea and am a proud product of Chelsea Public Schools. I met my husband in high school and this year we celebrate 20 years together. We have three children, age six, four, and 21 months old to attend the Early Learning Center and the three year old also hopefully will go in there next year. I'll be honest, there was a time when I was not proud to say that I was from Chelsea. When I went to school for college and they asked me where I was from and I would say I was from Chelsea, I would get a lot of dirty looks and I at one point thought that I was from the Chelsea dump.

When people would ask me and it was really embarrassing. Now that I'm older and now that I work in this city and I think we have matured some, I can say that I'm proud to be from Chelsea. I have decided to raise my family here to stay here. It is a purposeful choice that I have made. And so when I have been present for these meetings, one of the things that has been frustrating is that there has not been a lot of transparency when we have declared that there has been transparency. Throughout these budget discussions, we've repeatedly heard the numbers tied to the student facing cuts, but we had never seen any of the slides that discussed the district level positions that were going to be cut. If from day one we had seen those numbers, a lot of the arguments and a lot of the discussions that took place would not have happened and we could have focused on what really mattered, which is the children.

Chelsea is the city of multilingual families and English learners. Our students need bilingual educators, interpreters, parent liaisons, social workers, and paraprofessionals. These are not luxuries, they're necessities. If administrative roles are essential, and if we really need chiefs of this and directors of that and coordinators of this, then those are conversations that need to be had openly. But we have to ask ourselves, are we prioritizing what matters most for our students? Finally, this is a call to our city officials.

Katherine B.

Good evening. My name is Katherine and I am a 10th grader at Chelsea High School. I stayed here today because our school is facing a very unfair and upsetting situation. Many supportive and dedicated teachers are being laid off because of budget cuts. These decisions affect students deeply because the educators who guide and support us every day are the ones we are losing. I believe this is unjust because the teachers who have the greatest impact on students' lives are being removed. These are the people who encourage us, listen to us and help us grow both academically and personally. One person who has made a huge difference in my life is Naomi Mejia. She is my counselor, my mentor, my coach, and honestly like a second mother to me. I met her in eighth grade and since then, she has helped shape me into the student and athlete I am.

She is one of the most caring and trustworthy adults I know in this school. Ms. Mejia supports not only the students aside to her, but many other students who turn to her for guidance. Losing someone like her would have a major impact on my life and many other students who would agree in this room. This issue is bigger than just one teacher. Many of the teachers being laid off have built strong bonds with their students and are trusted adults in our lives. If you truly care about students, I ask you to protect these connections and reconsider these decisions. Thank you.

Dayanni

Hello, everyone. My name is Dayanni. I am a junior and I take some Academy Charter High School. I am well aware that I do not go to CHS, but I'm also aware of the unfair budget cuts and dismissal of around 70 different staff members. This is not acceptable. When you remove educators, you're not only cutting positions, you're cutting mentorship, guidance, safe spaces for students who rely on them the most. You're sending a message that their education is negotiable, that their futures are optional, and this is a message we cannot accept. These teachers are preparing these students for their future. You guys aren't. I want to remind you that these students are the future of Chelsea and we'll send it to your position to make decisions that can uplift the community rather than tearing it down. So I ask you, who are you really serving with these cuts?

Because it's not the students, it's not the families, and it's not the future of this community. Thank you.

Alivia

Hi, my name is Alivia. I'm a student in Chelsea High School. As a student with an individuality education plan, such as an IEP, I have a curriculum tailored to my specific learning needs, and I would not be able to navigate my education challenges without the dedicated guidance of the special education staff.

Proposing cuts to any special education department in this district is detrimental to students like me. I'm specifically writing to express my deep concerns regarding the news that my counselor, Ms. Lawrence.

As a junior, I've spent three years building a strong relationship with her. She has been instrumentally studying with me for success and guiding me towards my college goals. The decision to remove her due to budget cuts is devastating for the senior class and junior class and the broader community. Removing a trusted mentor to such a critical juncture jeopardizes our stability and college planning. For many of us, the connections we have built with Ms. Lawrence is essential to our growth. I urge you to reconsider this decision and acknowledge the profound bets. This financial choice has on students who rely on this support.

Michael

Hello, my name is Michael. I'm a junior at Chelsea High School. I'm here to discuss the fact that our budget's basically just going to kill education. You're just essentially pulling into a genocide of the Hispanic population that is ongoing because of the ICE raids throughout the cities of Chelsea and the rest of the state of Massachusetts. And if you want to feel that genocide, go right ahead and approve this budget plan, because that's basically what it does. And if you don't, then how about you save the fact that our state is currently one in AP exam test takers, number one in access to early literacy, access to pre-K and access to the number one state and the quality of education.

You want to deny this though, you want to tell the population that you are going to be better. But if you want to improve this budget, you might as well have started the doomsday clock on our education and it's about to go off. We've had people who've had the pry in front of you guys, and I've seen the sympathy, but if the sympathy can go further and deny this budget bill, it would be greatly appreciated by the city of Chelsea. And furthermore, the mental health crises that are about to skyrocket because of the fact that we're good hiding counselors, the doomsday clock is started on people committing suicide. It's going to only increase if you approve this budget plan.

Viaki Gonzalez

Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight about the proposed teacher budget cuts and what it means to our students. I want to start by saying that longevity alone should not measure the value of a teacher or whether she simply stays or goes. It should be the teachers who have been in the building for eight plus years that doesn't automatically make them the better person for our students. What matters most is the impact educators are making in classrooms right now, how they support learning, growth, and wellbeing for our children. At the same time, we cannot talk about staffing decisions without recognizing the incredible work being done by our learning support department. These professionals are not just student academically, but they are helping survive, help them survive some of the hardest things they're going through in their lives right now. Every day, they work with students who are struggling emotionally, who are dealing with trauma, anxiety, depression, who are feeling isolated.

Their work has saved, literally saved lives. I know because Ms. Lawrence helped me save my son. The crisis that the families are going through is incredible. And I know this is not easy for you guys, and many of you are also Chelsea parents, and you have to put your personal opinion aside, and I get that this isn't easy,

But we're attacking the SPED department and we're attacking the kids' counselors, and my son would have ... You guys would have been paying respects to me if it wasn't for these people. You You guys know me as a parent. You know me as a teacher. You know me as a coach. You know me in many ways. I've never shown up to any of your meetings because I trust. But right now I don't. And it's not personal for you, but it is very personal for me. Chelsea High helped me save my son. These social workers and these guidance counselors and the SPED department helped me save my son. Autism isn't something that people understand for high functioning kids. And as a high functioning child, emotionally and socially, you can excel. My son takes AP classes and honors classes and he is great for your statistics, but emotionally he's in crisis.

And without Ms. Lawrence, one more suicide this year because Chelsea Hyde had suicide this year that they did not speak loudly about. We would have been two. If it wasn't for Ms. Lawrence, we would have been two. If it wasn't for the SPED department, every year meeting with me to help make sure my son feels what we call normal. Thank you to the SPED department. Thank you to you.

Ciarra Duffy

Good evening, members of the committee. My name is Ciara Duffy and I'm a lifelong Chelsea resident. I'm an alum of the Kelly Caminos program. And today I work with our students as a technology teacher at the Berkowitz, which means I have the pleasure of serving all of our students. I'm here because I'm concerned about the many cuts to student facing positions, particularly the decision to reduce digital literacy classes for grades one through four. Technology is already part of our students' daily lives. In our elementary schools, I see how excited our students are to use technology to create, problem solve, and express their ideas. Digital literacy teaches them how to do that safely, responsibly, and thoughtfully. Digital literacy is not about technology, it's about student safety. Technology is constantly evolving and our students already have access to it now. They need guidance now. And frankly, half a teacher is not enough.

Teaching these skills early helps prevent future issues like cyber bullying, misinformation, and unsafe online behavior. Digital literacy is also an equity issue. For many students, school is the only place where they can learn how to safely navigate the digital world. With current cuts, we are seeing larger class sizes and fewer staff available to provide individualized support across the board. I understand budgets require difficult choices, but I encourage the district to look for solutions that prioritize keeping student facing instruction in our classrooms while examining reductions at the district level. This is not a plea for my job. This is advocacy for our students' education. For some of our most vulnerable, youngest students. Our students deserve to begin learning in this essential life skill early. They deserve to have the support of all their teachers. Thank you for your time and your commitment to creating schools that Chelsea students deserve.

Naxla

Hello. Good evening. My name is Naxla. On Thursday, you guys mentioned how you want collaboration from us, but it seems like you guys are tying your hands behind your backs. You think the teachers are only here because their jobs on the line, but the teachers of Chelsea are already sacrificing so much in order for the people of Chelsea to someone get a decent education. I understand we'll have the same resources as everyone else, and that with that comes a lot of restrictions and funding, but you're really

going to sit here and say you didn't expect this many people to care about this matter when this Towns Foundation is immigrants. People who put their lives on the line for their kids to get an education and future that they couldn't achieve. Fulfilling next year's curriculum is already going to be a challenge as it is.

And y'all are making it harder for us to succeed. If you so cared about your students like you say you do, you wouldn't be screwed with our futures like this where your future doctors, nurses, police, voters, et cetera, and you're just accepting the fact that our resources are going to be taken away. I hope all of you are aware that this is not only going to affect us or our teachers, it's going to affect everybody. What you're doing is not fair.

Robert

Good afternoon. My name is Robert and I'm currently a junior at Chelsea High. Through my time in the Chelsea School District, what I've seen is that the teachers and staff have guided students through every part of school. My middle school teachers help me find education as a career that I want to pursue. My high school teachers have reinforced that at my different career. Teachers, social workers, and counselors make so many sacrifices to be able to teach in this district and to know that their livelihoods are at risk breaks my heart. I think back to my freshman year history teacher, Mr. Brosnan, how he would make the commute to Chelsea every day all the way from Salem, how he took the time to get here and how he chose to teach the students at CHS and that same year he was gone. No one in this district is a percentage, number, or a statistic.

They're all people who make a difference in every student's life and support them to stick and thin. I implore you to rethink the positions you're cutting and think about the wider effect on the lives of every student and everyone else in the Chelsea School District. Thank you.

Monica

Good evening everyone. My name is Monica. I am a student athlete at Chelsea High. I want to take a moment to talk about the impact my school counselor has made on my life. Ms. Mejia does so much more than just helps students pick classes. She's a person whose students can turn to when we feel stressed, overwhelmed, or unsure about our future.

Because of her support, I started believing that education could still be a part of my future. Because of her advocating for me, I got my second chance. She believed that I could be a full-time college student my senior year of high school. I thought she was crazy because what do you mean full-time? But because of her pushing me to be the best I can, I got all A's my first semester and that boosted my GPA high enough for me to get into school. Because of her, I will be able to continue my academic and athletic career at a four-year college. Laying off a counselor that students truly trust to go to about anything. A coach that makes her players believe in their potential even when they don't believe in themselves. Removing a mentor like her doesn't just remove a position from the school. It removes someone who changes lives.

I'm standing here today because she believed in me when I needed it most. And I know there are other students who will need her to believe in them just like she believed in me. All teachers and counselors are valued by the best students. They listen without judgment, guide without pushing, and care without conditions. Because of them, students learn that it's okay to ask for help, that healing is possible, and that our stories matter. Thank you.

Luisa

Good evening, members of the school council. My name is Luisa, and I am the student of Chelsea High School. I'm here today because the recent cuts to our school budget have relieved the numbers. The number of high school counselors and regularly social worker. I want to explain why these positions matter so much to students like me. For many of us, support staff are the reason we are able to come to school and focus on learning. School is not just classes and grades. Many students are balancing family responsibilities, stress at home and challenges that people don'tally see. Counselors and social workers are trained to help us manage those things so we can actually succeed in the classroom. Counselors notice our progress. They see our effort even when others only see our mistakes. In my own experience, my counselor has often reminded me reminding me that my effort matters.

She understands what I've been through and sometimes just hearing someone say, "I see you trying makes a difference between giving up and persevering." Counselors also help our families. They reach out to our parents, guide them through our school systems and help connect students with resources. Their office are often the first place students go to when we don't know what to do. Whether it's about school, college, or something happening at home, we can walk in and ask, "Where do I start?" And we rarely meet without even playing. Even with their caseloads smaller on paper, they're always busy because students always need them. And the truth is that the problems young people face today are not getting smaller. They are getting bigger and more complex. Support staff and teachers are the ones who we interact with every day. These are people we know and trust. We already shown them our abilities and learning styles.

We know we shouldn't have to start over. Cutting counselors and social workers does not remove students' needs. Only remove the support that helps us meet them. If we want students to succeed academically, we need the people who help us feel supported enough to show up and try. I hope you will reconsider these cuts and invest in the staff and go up students to teach just not in school, but in life. Thank you for your time.

Jomari

Good evening, everyone. My name is Jomari, and I'm a student at Chelsea High School. I'm here tonight because I'm worried about what could happen if teachers and counselors get cut. This isn't just about the money. It's about the people who make a difference in our lives every day. They show up for us even when it's hard and care more about just the grades. They notice when we're struggling, help us plan for the future and actually care about us. They are not replaceable and their impact cannot be changed by budget. Some teachers do more than teach. They stay after class, encourage us when we feel like giving up and push us to do our best even when we don't believe we can. Counselors help with the big things like planning for college or dealing with stress, and they are the people we turn to when we have nowhere else to go.

If counselors are cut who will guide us, listen to us and support us when we need the most. I used to be shy and I didn't know how to speak up or ask for help. But because of my teachers and counselors, I learned how to stand up, share my thoughts, and believe my voice matters. They've helped me find my voice, and I know that they do the same for many other students.

Losing teachers and counselors wouldn't just affect me. It would affect hundreds of students who walk into that building every day, hoping someone believes in them and supports them. These are the people who will help us grow, not just academically, but as people. Please remember, behind every decision, our real students whose lives and futures are being shaped right now. Teachers and counselors are not just staff. They're the ones who help us believe in ourselves and reach our potential. Please don't take that away from us. Thank you.

Zach Ryan

Good evening. My name is Zachary Ryan and the parents of two children want to be able to see one of Kelly. I'm proud to be a member of this community and a resident of Chelsea. I would like to reiterate what ... I'm sorry. I'd like to reiterate what people have said before me, specifically parents. You need to be clear with what you're doing. People have asked multiple times for information and we haven't gotten. We have not received that information. Without that clarity, we don't know what's going on. We see observation of the numbers. So you didn't tell us, you told the 70 teachers at prior meetings, but didn't tell us about the district. This time you gave us district numbers, but when you're talking about the teachers, you're not giving us numbers.

You need to tell us the whole story from start to end to the committee members. I would like to remind you, you're doing first above all else is to the students. It's not to get along with the administration. It is to work with them, to come to decision of a budget that will work. But your duty is to the students in this district, all the districts. I want you to remember that. I would like to say that additionally, we all know. The people in this community more so than I think other places in the state do. We get that, but they've been fighting. The people here are fighting. I'm really proud that all these kids are here. The parents are here. Speaking from a point of privilege, I've started to show up this year. I'm going to continue to show up. Every meeting I will be there.

The students here continue to show up to the parents. I hope you show up. I hope every meeting is in this auditorium because this has to be the new normal. Because yes, the cuts are happening. They don't have to be this drastic on the teachers. The administration, you said we lose students, we have to lose adults. Guess what? The adults work in the administration.

They need to be cut at a commensurate level. Thank you for listening.

Vivana Gomez

Good evening. My name is Viviana Gomez. I have worked in education for 25 years, and for the last seven years, I have probably working as a paraprofessional in ELC. Chelsea is not just where I work is my home. I live here and I also ... I'm sorry. And I also want honor in this community. This is the city where my children were born and raised and where I grew up as a person. Chelsea is a strong community because it's people provide a professional and essentially in our classroom. We support students, academics, emotionally, and socially. All our students need extra care, patient, and attention. And we are here for them every single day. Because cuts like this don't just affect the staff. They affect the quality of education our students receive. My salary is also essential for my family, but belong them. This work is my passion.

I truly believe in the future of our children and in the importance of supporting them. It will means a lot if you reconcile those kinds and prioritize the people who are working every day to support church students. Please remember that when you support a professional and educators, you are supporting the children of Jersey and the future of this community. Thank you.

Anita Mercado

Good evening. Dr. Abeya, first of all, I'm thinking of you and your father with much love. My name is Anita Mercado. I'm a social worker at Telsea High School and I'm a resident of this community. This district is pushing on 76 student facing positions. One of them is ELL social worker in this building and two school counselors in this building. These cuts are definitely going to affect the wellbeing and safety of our students, and it's going to put an impossible burden on those of us who have to build that gap. Our students suffer from anxiety, depression, trauma. Too many of them have attempted suicide. We've

already lost one to suicide. So many students think about dying every day. When they need help, they don't go to a spreadsheet. They don't look for admin. They come to us. The school counselors and social workers that are in this building every day supporting them.

Making these cuts removes a lifeline that many students cannot and will not be able to survive without. For hundreds of our students who have little or no health insurance, we are the only people that are providing mental health services in their lives. They will not get anything else after they leave this building. Jocelyn Flores, the ELL social worker that is being pushed out,

She has repeatedly stepped out. She's been covering maternity and medical leaves without pay, without extra pay. She manages a high risk caseload and she supports students far beyond her roster. Now, past leadership has prioritized student facing positions with less budget, less administration. You guys are saying you're focused on supporting students, yes. And creating safe environments where every student can succeed. Okay. So I asked you, how? How are you going to expect student success when you are prioritizing administrators or for those of us who directly provide safety and support to thousands of students every single day? Students are not line items on a budget. Your cuts are sending a dangerous message that our support is optional. I'm almost done. You are taking away the very care and stability they need to succeed. Budgets reflect priorities. Our students are watching what you choose to prioritize and protect.

I am asking you. Nope. I am pleading you to please choose them. Thank you.

Jeff

Good evening, Chelsea School committee members. My name is Jeff and I am a junior at CHS. Our community has been targeted by threats of political ambition from the high administration, but one seeks its ambition to destroy our education here in Chelsea. A budget that would cut 70 plus teachers across the district. Most of those numbers coming from the high school. If we seek to better finance our city's budget, why not look at the inequality between administrators and actual staff that teach our students? Why not address the constant promotions that these useless administrative jobs get while teachers get underfunded and cut? It is shameful to see our own policymakers who thrive on saying we are here for you while doing the opposite of what we want. We foster relationships with our teachers because they are family. We do not foster relationships with people who do not directly teach us the education we deserve.

Teachers across my school already face the issues of maintaining large classroom sizes. Mind you, they are supposed to be less than what we actually have. Cutting teachers across the district while we already face a student surplus and teacher shortage among classrooms will ultimately ruin our education and destabilize proper education for our students. The reason we elected you into office is because we believe you deserve the positive ambitions, ambitions of the people, but it seems to ignore the sentiments of the students and unacknowledged families who deserve to know. It's shameful and you should absolutely reconsider your proposal on the budget immediately. Thank you.

Yohana

Hello there. My story is instructed by every single influence and role model I've had the fortune of knowing. For example, my counselor, Mansfield, My social worker, Ms. B, who uplifted me when I thought I couldn't make it past 16, my math teacher who never judged my confusion when I felt stupid, my chem teacher who helped me discover my passion for STEM. This school strives to know students by their name, strength, and story. So I'm here discussing why it's even a question whether we should unjustly ruin the livelihoods of dozens of trusted mentors that have made our school great. Teachers are

the backbone of education and have been historically underpaid, overworked, exploited, and stripping jobs away from teachers who have chosen to pursue education for the sake of helping kids, knowing the risks associated is just cruel. The teachers at this school have led hundreds of kids to graduation, have led kids to grow interest and feels unknown, helped kids understand themselves and know what they want to do with their life, leading these kids to gather opportunities stemmed from this knowledge and agenda from teachers.

I failed to comprehend why instead of teaching financial alternatives, like cutting positions in administration, making over 250,000 a person, spending 50,000 on honor couches, spending hundreds of thousands to add more periods with even less teachers, yet we turn our backs on the teachers that have done nothing but act as role models. I believe we as a community need to stand up for those that have been guiding us to do our best and I plead for basic human compassion over this gross negligence. Thank you.

Name unknown-student

I want to talk about two person most important for me because they change my life. It's Ms. Flores and Ms. Mercado. Both are social workers who help me to involve in the Charles High School. With the support from Ms. Flores, she helped me to, when I was feeling so stressed and frustrated when I was applying for college, because that was a lot of job for me. Both of them helped me to evolve in my life and control my life and my time. I want to say this is in Spanish. I wonder, do you want to take away the support engagements from the students of the Chelsea? What kind of city you want Chelsea to be? A city does more support when students need. They need it most or one that's invest in the people who keep students safe, support and thrill success.

Thank you.

Marcella Moreno

My name is Marcella Moreno, a school counselor at CHS for 13 years and a resident of Chelsea for 10. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight about something that is not only vital to our schools, but to the wellbeing of our entire community, the importance of maintaining school social work positions at the high school level, especially the position of my colleague Jocelyn Flores, whose passion and dedication to serving our community is unmatched. Chelsea High School serves around 1500 students right now. If our team is reduced to four social workers, that would mean roughly 370 students for every one social worker. Even if not every student requires intensive support, that number is deeply concerning when you consider the needs of our community. Nearly half of our students are multilingual learners and many families face significant barriers, including accessing mental healthcare outside of school. Long wait list, insurance limitations, transportation challenges, and the lack of providers who speak a family's native language often make outside support difficult to access.

For many students, school is the only place they receive consistent mental health care. With five social workers, the caseload would be closer to 295 students per social worker. That different represents dozens of more students who may be dealing with anxiety, trauma, family stress, crisis situations, and facing immigration uncertainties. If those positions are eliminated, students' needs will not disappear. There will simply be fewer adults available to support them. In a community like Chelsea, these supports are not extra. They are essential for cultivating a safe learning environment where students can reach their potential. I beg that you please reconsider this budget and do the right thing.

Heather Ryan

Good evening. My name is Heather Ryan. I am the proud parent of a child in Kelly School grade two and ELC pre-K. And thank you very much for this opportunity to speak. Forgive me for speaking quickly. I appreciate that you have come today with additional granularity related to the breakdown and distribution of these budget cuts. And I don't think anyone here would disagree that clearly we are at a budget deficit and that salaries compose the majority of the costs and thus people are going to be those that we have to consider losing. But this is clearly a highly complex issue that deserves a proportionally detailed and nuanced response from the district. And I continue to be disappointed in how the distribution of these cuts are being justified to us as a community.

I don't quite understand how cuts across the board to our special education thus are related to the actual students that we are losing. Are we losing students who have SPED needs and thus that's why we're losing more SPEDS teachers? And if that's the case, then how do we then justify additional district level administration to oversee fewer SPED teachers who are now left remaining? I think we should expect nothing less from you than a granular data driven approach to these cuts and a vigorous unrelenting advocacy at City Hall for additional city funds to preserve as many of these student facing staff as possible for as long as possible and a long-term plan that's going to take into consideration how this year's cuts will then join with next year's cuts to affect actual student outcomes. What are our outcomes here that we are measuring and how do each of these cuts directly relate to that?

And so since clearly this is a public comment period and not a response, Dr. Abeyta, thank you so much for all that you have done. I would really appreciate knowing exactly what student outcomes we are looking at that drive those decisions. And for our dedicated committee, please remember your mandate to enter a charter and do not vote yes, unless you are truly satisfied that this district has connected each of those losses to specific student driven outcomes and has met the moment at city halls to ensure that we have mitigated as many of them as possible. Thank you.

Litzzy

Good evening everybody. My name is Litzzy and I'm currently a junior here at CHS. I want to start off with the fact that we're back here again today and that should really tell you soon. When the same people keep coming back, it's because the problem hasn't been solved and because what's happening is serious. These cuts are absolutely unacceptable. Students come to school looking for education, for opportunities, and for support, and right now that support is being taken away from us. Chelsea Public Schools are facing a major deficit, and because of that, more than 70 students facing positions are being cut. Those are not just numbers, those are real people. Teachers, counselors, staff, people who students trust and rely on every single day. When you remove those people, you're not just cutting a budget, you're cutting support systems. You're cutting relationships, you're cutting the people who help students stay on track.

And in a city like Chelsea, that matters even more. Many of our students are English language learners. Many come from families that already face challenges. School is not just a place we go. It's a place where we find stability, guidance, and someone who believes in us. So why are we settling for the bare minimum? Right now, the city is only contributing about 4% above the required budget minimum for education, but our students are not minimum. Our needs are not minimum. Our future should not be treated like groups. If these cuts go through, class sizes will grow, teachers will be overworked and students will fall through the pracs and we're the ones who will feel that. I'm asking you to listen, not just hear us, but really listen because we keep showing up for a reason. Please prioritize education and invest in us because Chelsea students deserve more than the bare minimum.

Thank you.

Jillian

Good evening. I'm Jillian. I'm a junior guy. Chelsea Public Schools has said from day one that you are invested in our education and success. Yet this school system spent all of the funding on a \$6 million cafeteria that we don't need. Younger couches that don't actually help students learn and touchscreen Chromebooks that should only be used with accommodations,

But are given randomly. And new jobs at central office that pay six figures, even though they don't help the students succeed in school, but we do either way. Now you're going to fire 70 teachers within this district when teachers are the first step, the frontliners to our education. Teachers don't only teach, but they support each and every student. They help students like me through mental breakdowns, stress with school and violence within our community. Once I got my report card back and I didn't get a grade that I liked, I didn't go to central office when I needed support during a panic attack. It was Sarah Ruddy. It was Brittany Fitzgibbon, my teachers since freshman year and this year, who helped me get through the tough moment and to remind me that I am strong and I can continue to keep pushing because I know I can achieve great things.

This is not an uncommon story for students at THS. If you fire 70 teachers, you get rid of our future. Thank you for listening.

Nathan

Hi, my name is Nathan. I'm a junior in Chelsea High School and I feel that these cuts will do more harm than good because not only counselors are being cut, which can leave students who are trying to figure stuff out, such as the SETs, programs like Upward Bound and Harvard tutoring and college advice. But teachers who are the base of education are in jeopardy because of these things that are out of our control, such as the ICE raids, creating fear in Hispanic communities, causing low enrollment in schools. That's why I'm wondering if there are any other measures the board can do maybe to limit the budget cut, such as maybe cutting areas that don't work with the student body or since next year, there will be seven periods. Less teachers and more classes will cause more problems than teachers have more students to worry about and counselors having more students to review, causing a delay of applications such as college applications.

This could also be something to change that could limit the instability for teachers' jobs. And counselor jobs, and especially the students who are affected more by these changes. What if we as a community raise money, creating fundraisers or renting spaces such as a gym or possibly business funding like corporations? Though I know you may have thought of these solutions already, you have to understand that we, the students are scared that our education is danger and so is our future.

Katie

Good evening. My name is Katie and I'm a senior at CHS. Prior to the making of this poster, my plan was to draw a tally mark for each individual student at Chelsea High School who's going to be affected by these budget cuts. That number is 1,532, but then I realized it is not only Chelsea High students who are going to be affected. Students at the Edgar F. Hope Elementary School, Frank M. Sokolowski Elementary School, George F. Kelly Elementary School, William A. Bergwitz Elementary School, Brown Middle School, Wright Science and Technology Academy, Clark Avenue Middle School, Chelsea Virtual Learning Academy, and Chelsea Opportunity Academy as well. To include all students in the district, I had to draw 5,749 individual tally marks. If I were to have my largest class, which is 30 students, help me draw all 5,749 tally marks, each student would have to draw 190 tally marks.

If you move forward with these cuts, you will hurt 5,749 students and their families. How is it that in six years, admin positions in the central office have doubled? Retired individuals are still getting paid with money that could be beneficial to the youth of Chelsea. It will literally hurt too many students for me to show you. Protect my little brother's education. Do not cut the positions of people who support, educate, and protect students every day. There are other options. Thank you.

Kimberly

Good afternoon. My name is Kimberly and I'm a Chelsea resident in the Youth at La Collaborativa, and I am here to advocate for both the teachers and the students regarding the current situation. Everyone in this room is here because we strongly disagree with their proposed budget cuts, especially considering that approximately 70 teachers are leaving. Teachers are an essential part of every school. They help the students grow, learn, and prepare for the future. As we, the students, are the future. Recently, many teachers have already left and now they are continuing to leave. This will have a significant impact not only of the teachers, but also on the students. Class sizes will become much larger, but can also create a stressful learning environment for both students if a single teacher responsible for managing an overcrowded classroom. Students need teacher who care about them, support them, and guide them in the right direction.

This is why we are here today to show that teachers are not alone. We are here today to support them and to show how much they truly matter to our schools and our community. When teachers stay, schools become stronger and better places for every student, so please consider these cuts. Thank you.

Rachel Whitney

Good evening. My name is Rachel Whitney and I've been a school counselor at the high school for seven years. As of March 11th, the counselors at the high school this year have logged 5,671 interactions in Aspen, directly supporting students and their families. These include academic guidance, social emotional support, college and career advising, family support meetings, and crisis intervention. So far this year, we've hosted four financial aid events, one eighth grade registration day, and five on the spot events to help students with college applications. Through the on the spot events alone, we had 236 college acceptances. We also have recruited and supported four MASPA clinics during school days, two college and career fairs, a scholarship day, and participated in two college fairs to expand opportunities for students. Cutting two positions would mean fewer interactions like these, less personalized support and fewer opportunities to step in before small challenges become major obstacles.

The American School Counseling Association recommends a maximum caseload of 250 students per counselor. This is a broad recommendation for all education levels. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, there are 35 states who currently report school counselor ratios split by level, and the range reported for high school counselors is 195 to 224. If two counseling positions are cut, our caseloads would be over 255, which would put us well above the national reported high school average. Our students and families rely on counselors to navigate academic, social, emotional challenges, and planning for life beyond high school. Maintaining these positions ensures that every student continues to have adults who know them, advocate for them, and provide consistent guidance. This is not just about numbers, it's about the real impact counselors have on the lives of students and families in our community. I'm urging you to please maintain these counseling positions and continue investing in the supports that help Chelsea students succeed.

Our students deserve nothing less. They are not just numbers. Thank you.

Veronica (via interpreter)

Hi, good evening. My name is Veronica. I am more for one student for Chelsea High. She's here because she wants to express her since the graduate school what Chelsea Public School has done. First, she wants to express the fact that her daughter is in 12th grade and how Chelsea Public Schools has helped her. She wants to express her greatness to her counselor. That helps her a lot because she used to have a lot of problems with her daughter back in the days when she was going to other schools, so she wants to have a lot of gratitude towards her because how she helped her daughter. She wants you to consider the cuts that you are proposing because these kids need the services. And it's also the cuts that you are considering for the middle schools because all those kids are going to come to the high school, so you need to consider that for the other children.:

Another thing that she's heard about, you want to implement a as a new learning tool here at the school. I just want to remind you that a computer is not going to replace a social worker. I also want to remind you a computer is not a person. These children benefit from having social workers and a school counselor because they're the ones who are going to listen to them because a computer can't give them hugs, can't give them reassurance like the social worker and guidance class. I also want to give my gratitude and also thank the committee for giving us the space to communicate this like a parent, also the residents, as well as the teachers. Yeah. We want to thank you for that opportunity because we need to know that we are supported.

Josselin (via interpreter)

Hi, my name is Joseline. I am senior. This is her last year, and she has benefited from having her social worker in her guidance class. She can't fathom that they're going to be let home and she's very heartbroken that this is going to happen. She says she's in 11th grade. She got a lot of support from her guidance counselor as well as the social worker. She now is going to go to college after this, because of them, she's going to succeed and she has a future because of their services. She wants the committee to understand that this is like when you have a child and a child is taken away from the parent, how they feel. You're going to take away services that a lot of the community needs, especially people who are vulnerable. This is something that you should reconsider and please take into account the necessities of other people as well as the students here.

She speaks on behalf of the other kids that are here that couldn't be here because either the parent or them had to work. She talks on behalf of Ms. Mejia and Ms. Flores that because of them, she knew English and she knows how to speak English and she can defend herself. It's something that the community needs and that please reconsider letting them go and we consider this in the proposal for the budget cuts. That's it.

Jocelyn Flores

I am a very proud bilingual social worker at Chelsea High School and have been since 2021. I've also lived in Chelsea since 2018. This is my community and one I deeply, deeply care about. I recently learned my position is being cut. When roles like this disappear, students lose a trusted adult, families lose someone a call when life feels overwhelming, and schools lose support that keeps students connected to learning. Social workers in Chelsea are also first responders after community tragedies or violence. We help students process trauma, support staff, and connect families to resources. I've had the privilege of working with multilingual learners and newcomer students, young people navigating a new language, a new school system, often a new country, and in many cases, fear of immigration enforcement. This fear has a direct devastating impact on mental health, increasing anxiety, depression, and isolation. Mental health support in schools isn't optional. It's often the only support our families can access due to insurance, transportation, and language barriers. In Suffolk County, there's roughly one mental health

provider for every 99 residents. This year, district-wide mental health screening showed that Chelsea students experience roughly twice the national average for clinical anxiety and depression. Screening alone is simply not enough without intentional intervention. Cutting positions like mine would overload staff and reduce the individualized support students depend on to succeed. Even as our enrollment numbers decline, the need for authentic, human connection and mental health support is exponentially rising, not shrinking.

Systemic inequities should never mean fewer resources for the students to remain in the community we care for. Maintaining social work and student facing positions is essential. It's how Chelsea Public Schools lives out its mission of relationships, equity, and support, and ensures that every student has the care and guidance to thrive.

Arwa

Hello. My name is Arwa and I am a freshman here in CHS. I, unlike many students here, don't have much of a strong relationship between many of the adults here, but given the situation we're in, I can conclude that the solution provided by you guys is pretty much pointless. Reducing the amount of educators and adults in the building isn't going to solve anything, but instead make things worse. Based off of what you're saying, your goal is to reduce the amount of people you pay to save money, but removing the people who keep this building together isn't going to solve anything, but instead reduce the amount of students who come the next years. I fear for my future as each day passes, knowing that the people who have been here for me will not be here anymore. The connections that have grown and learned and flourished through trial and error will be ripped apart by sledgehammer.

And I must say that I'm not here to side against other people or argue with others, but I do wish to open your eyes unless you guys see that this issue requires cooperation. This issue isn't a concern for teachers or city hall alone. This is an issue that will affect all of us, teachers, counselors, and don't even get me started on the students themselves. We need to understand that things are sadly inevitable, but it doesn't mean we can't find solutions. Removing or laying off teachers will need to be done, but like around 70 of them is quite a push, especially regarding the fact that these educators assist with multilingual students, special needs in the future of students themselves. We need to focus on a solution rather than a target. We need to understand that we are all in this together, no doubt it. Thank you for your time.

Estella

Good evening. My name is Estella, and I'm a freshman here in Chelsea High. Teachers are the backbone in every society. They teach math, science, history, English, and many other subjects. They help students help passions here in the medical field, STEM, arts, and many others. Many teachers and direct staff members are the reason why some students want to keep learning to keep coming to school every day. Teachers show up every day before and after school, helping, teaching and advocating for students who can't. This is no longer a conversation about firing 70 teachers. This is a conversation that affects me and every single student here in this district.

This is and will affect everybody here in education. My speech isn't here to yell at the man and change it up like of an eye. My speech is about how 70 teachers will leave a lasting mark and how students will continue to be learning. Ms. Rodrigo, Mr. Bailey, Ms. Aldridge are teachers who personally impacted me and helped me understand that it's okay to not always feel the best in the moments that are hard for me. And I want people to continue having those feelings of having adults that they can go to. And stop looking at us with money green eyes like we're charts on a graph. Please look at us like we're humans because we are one.

Sarah (also submitted a written testimony because time ran out)

Thank you. Too short for me. Sorry. Good evening. I just want to say thank you so much for continuing to listen and give everybody speech the attention that it deserves. It's been a long night. I think we can all agree. My name is Sarah Ross. I'm an MLE teacher at the Kelly School. I'm also a parent in the district. Even though we're out of district, my daughter attends the early learning center. I pay \$1,200 a month approximately so that she can attend school there because I care that much about the educators here and education she's receiving there. It's really important to me, so thank you. We all know Chelsea has a huge ELL population and the Kelly school has ... I'm sorry.

Kelly School has the highest concentration of English language learners in the district and we know that tailored support, small groups, immediate feedback are things that help English language learners grow. These proposed cuts will drastically reduce that support. Even brief check-ins can help students with their understanding, but that takes time and that takes staff and when we're cutting staff, we're reducing those outcomes. English language learners already have significantly higher dropout rates than their peers. The data can show that cutting approximately 14 MLE positions across the district will create the exact conditions that contribute to these outcomes. We want our students to succeed and we know that they do too. So we want to keep positions that help students access the learning and help them with their futures. I urge the committee to consider the impact on our most vulnerable students. I also wanted to say that teachers, Emily, parents, all students and staff, student facing staff are held accountable every day.

I just spent hours and hours putting in artifacts in vector. I don't know if anyone else did. I just wanted to say, we have to show every day we have to document how our work, what we're doing directly impacts all of our students. And I think that the community members are asking that the district puts forth that transparency as well. If we're keeping 25 plus district administrative positions, they're being protected.

Isaiah

Good evening. My name is Isaiah and I'm a senior at Chelsea High School. I wish I could say I was meeting you all under better circumstances, but I'm here to talk about the budget and finance crisis that we have been faced with today. Administration staff have increased by at least 15 since 2020, and yet I haven't met a single administration member until today. You all receive a salary beyond that of our school staff whom you are cutting 70 plus staff district wide, and yet we as students are left having to face the repercussions with our school staff getting fired. Our school staff all play a bigger role into our future of our youth as a whole. It's imperative to emphasize the importance of the wonderful school staff who have already spent so much time teaching students who are hardheaded. It may just be a day of the work for you guys, but for a school staff that are always there managing the students, it's much more than a job.

These teachers and counselors have saved lives and have given students a better future. I know if I haven't met some of my teachers, then I wouldn't have been able to be the person I am today, especially as someone who's had trouble connecting to my family and knowing this, that I have this extra guidance from my wonderful teachers and counselors around me lifts my spirits. These staff reduce from these budget cuts will take a huge toll on our community as a whole. With the amount of resources that could be potentially cut, not only are you cutting out our education, but our future as well. Why we look into Firewall helps create our future instead of looking for more equitable alternatives. Thank you.

Janatha

Good evening everyone. My name is Janatha and I am a parent. I currently have a daughter at Chelsea High School. I'm here because I feel it is my obligation to advocate not only for my family, but also for the students and the future within my city. As a parent, I strongly believe that cutting teacher and school counselor positions would gravely hurt our students and have it, and it will have a great impact in the school community. It will lead to poor school performance, fewer supports for students, and less opportunities for their future. The success of our students doesn't happen on its own. It happens because of specific staff sessions are hard working teachers and extremely dedicated school counselors. Teachers do more than Dutch teacher lesson. They guide students and help them grow as individuals. Our school counselors are equally important. They play a critical role in helping students stay on track, support students emotionally and socially.

Help student manage challenges and guide them in planning for college and future careers. As the first college graduate of my family, I know what it is to have a support and a strong guidance counselor. I can personally say I have seen the impact that Chelsea High School counselor, Ms. Naomi Mejia and Ms. Lawrence have had on my daughter and her peers. With teachers and school counselors ... Excuse me. Without teachers and school counselors, many students may not reach their full potential. I strongly urge the committee to reconsider these cuts and invest in the people who make our school strong and who are the front line. Please remember how these decisions will seriously affect our students and impact their future. I asked each student in this room to continue to voice your opinion matters. Chelsea Strong, thank you for your time.

Dimas Villanueva

Good evening, committee members. My name is Dima Villanueva. I am a resident of Chelsea my entire life and I'm a proud product of the Chelsea Public School system as well. I'm an educator here. I work in special education here at Chelsea High School. I became an educator because during my time here, there were educators that had a massive influence on my life that helped me turn into the person that I am today. And I was so shaken by the fact that they took the time to help me and shaped me and I wanted to do the same. I wanted to become a positive influence to the kids in my community and pay it forward to the community that I grew up in. This should be a success story and it should be something that we feel pride in, yet it does not feel like it at all.

I try to feel pride about this, but this is not the emotion I feel in this moment. I feel dread, I feel pain, and most of all committee members, I feel shame because in the past two years, I have watched as this district treats their student facing employees as expectable, as if we are numbers that can be reduced. This simply cannot continue to happen. We have families, we have children. We are soon to be parents. We have sick family members to take care of, and this does not stop after cuts are done. You may hear this and hear hostility and anger. And frankly, you'd be right You are playing with the jobs and livelihoods of us and our families. So before I say anything that goes over the line, I'm going to end with this. Chelsea says that they are a district that prides itself by knowing every student's name, strength, and story.

But how many of you can confidently say that you know the name, strength, and story of more than maybe 10 students? Because I can tell you that I know the name, strength and story of more than 30 students. And I promise you that almost every teacher, para, counselor, social worker in this room can say the same. So if you really want to continue to build every student's name, strength and story, your team is right here in this room and with your staff across the district. You must continue to preserve student facing positions as much as you can, or Chelsea will continue to lose its name, strength, and story. Thank you.

Jennifer Hassell

Good evening everyone. Thank you for allowing me a minute to speak. I'm a parent and a lifelong resident of Chelsea. My youngest is currently a junior at Chelsea High School. Throughout her time as a student in the Chelsea Public School Systems, she has had some amazing teachers and mentors. Thank you for your ongoing dedication to the students of our community. I want to express how proud I am of every student that spoke today. There is no easy solution here, but I plead that you please try to do your best to save as many of the social work and guidance roles as you can. Our kids need their support. For some of our youth, this is the only support they receive. Mental health is a huge factor for most students. It's also a huge factor for most adults. Keep this in mind as we help prepare our youth to be the best possible adults they can be. The decisions made tonight or as we go through this process will impact them for years to come. Thank you and may God bless us all as we navigate through these challenging times. I have faith that we can figure this out. It's the Chelsea Way.

Jonathan

My name is Jonathan. Thank you for being here today. I know it's a pretty long night. I am a social scientist and an educator here at La Colaborativa in Chelsea. I hold a bachelor's in business, a master's in public policy and a graduate certificate in urban analytics. So why I tell you this is even with that background, I've struggled to follow what's being presented by this committee in these meetings. So I can only imagine how our neighbors feel, especially in the future when you guys drive your youth to illiteracy because of these budget cuts. So I'll keep it short. I know there are many voices here tonight, but I want to remind this, our community that we, the people, pay the taxes so that we can be meaningfully represented. And representation means more than attendance. We've heard this very committee praise this presentation as thorough and detailed, and yet that data is difficult for an everyday person to interpret. If the people of Chelsea cannot understand what's being shared, how are we supposed to make informed decisions? Right? How are we supposed to hold anyone accountable? And I'll go off to say that. Accessibility, it's not a courtesy. It's a democratic obligation. But beyond that, something that has been completely absent from your discussions and presentation is the youth. Everything this committee has presented has addressed what the administration is managing. Budgets, logistics, systems. Not once have I heard how any of this affects Chelsea's youth right now or what future it's building for them, other than what comes out of the mouth of the people who are directly being affected. We are human beings. We are not line items. So I want to remind this community, this committee, and speak directly to Chelsea that you were put in these seats to represent us. Not to look at struggling students with a struggling and oppressed community and say that's just how it is.

Your job at our expectation is that you talk to this community and say, let's work together to figure this out because education is just a pledge. The time is

Elizabeth Portnoy

Okay. My name is Elizabeth Portnoy, Chelsea resident, former and proud Chelsea Schools employee and current mental health clinician at the MGH Student Health Center at Chelsea High School. I'd like to first acknowledge the daunting task in front of you, cutting positions in a district that always needs more, not less. At Chelsea Schools, we have licensed clinicians in addition to school counselors. They are our social workers. In our district, they see students for top tier issues. Think substance use, abuse and neglect, sexual assault, self-harm, suicidality, homicidality, mood disorders, depression, anxiety, PTSD, acute stress, facing deportation, imminent loss of housing, the list goes on. The older kids get, the more prevalent these issues are. Prevention and early intervention are paramount, yes. But the high school is a

league all their own. The high school social worker being cut is a licensed clinician with a background in DCF, hospitals, social work pedagogy, and she's a native Spanish speaker.

We cannot afford to lose a social worker with her clinical and cross-cultural skills. Enrollment is down, but I implore you to consider how our dip in numbers reflects the hostile climate in which immigrants and children of immigrants are living. Numbers may be lower, but stress, anxiety, and trauma are skyrocketing. Children and teens self-harm. They contemplate suicide. Some of them complete suicide. YRVS data shows that 20% of youth seriously contemplate suicide with 9.5% attempting suicide. How can we eliminate someone in the department qualified and designated to assess students for safety and other mental health acuties? Ms. Flores's kids don't fall through the cracks. She works too hard and she cares too much. She finds time for students in need on her busiest days, and I beg you to reconsider this cut. Please look at alternatives, although I know how hard it is. If you knew the students' stories, you'd know that at one point they needed help.

If you knew their strength, you'd know it took a village. And if you knew their names, you would be Ms. Flores, Ms. Mejia, or Ms. Lawrence.

Xavier

Hello, my name is Xavier and I am an 11th grader here at Chelsea High School. And I would like to personally also thank you for the time that we have, even though it is such a short time to be speaking with you guys directly. But I would like to say that the budget is a real problem in this school and it shows how all the grades and schools in this district have staff that are being cut. And this is shown by MLE teachers and reading supporters and writing supporters being cut. And this will definitely hurt our future because we have students here that are new to English. We have students here that are new to reading, new to writing, that might not know how to do simple tasks because we are cutting the teachers that support them with these things. I haven't been here for that long.

I just got here because I am a military family and I have thought that Chelsea would have been the best place for me to stay, considering I have family, friends, and support here. My teachers have helped me, Ms. Duffy has helped me, Ms. Salima has helped me, Ms. Buddy has helped me, Ms. Jasper has helped me with chemistry. All these people have helped me with all the things I worried about. My counselor, Ms. Mehira, has helped me and you try to cut them. You try to do all this stuff when we have phone policies that people don't even follow. We have yonder couches that people use to break and we don't even follow these rules that you guys have decided to put up, yet you decide to cut our counselors and cut our teachers and cut our MLE teachers and cut our early language teachers, our SPED teachers that are doing so much that are helping students, not with your school, but personal life.

And I would just like to say that this is just a disgrace to our future that all are in. I have family that are in fourth grade. I have family that are like sophomores below me. I have friends, family here. I don't even consider teachers as friends. I don't even consider my friends as friends. I consider them as family. And I don't know why you would decide to cut these families. But I remember writing, I remember being here last week talking about how if you fire our teachers- Excuse me.

Well, if you fire our teachers, you fight our future. That's all I'm going to say.

Gina Restiano

My name is Gina Restiano. Good evening, everybody. It's nice to see all of you, even though it's under not so great circumstances. Budget decisions always reflect priorities and the question for all of us tonight is what and who are we choosing to prioritize? I believe we are all reading the same book entitled Name, Strength and Story, but I want to make sure we are all on the same page. As a PE teacher

at the high school, this budget cut kind of feels like a soccer game where we are actively taking players off the field while keeping the same number of coaches on the sidelines. Coaches are important. Leadership matters, but the game itself is played by the people on the field. If you start removing too many players, eventually you don't have a team. You have people talking, planning, and analyzing the game, but not enough people to play it.

And our school's teachers and support staffs are the players on the field. They are the ones teaching the lesson, supporting the student who is struggling and building relationships that make learning possible. In the last six years, admin level positions have more than doubled. I don't claim to be a math teacher, but here's the equation. Enrollment dropped by 350 students, so subtract 70 student plus basic positions, but zero administrators. I'm not saying you should cut the entire cabinet, but we should at least try to make it equitable. What good is all the extended enrichment programs if we don't have enough people to help the students from 8:00 to 2:30? I will never be able to understand what it means to be a person of color. However, I've been in Chelsea long enough to know this. Many of our students carry burdens far heavier than backpacks. In a community where many families live with uncertainty and fear, school is more than a place to learn.

It's a place of stability, safety, and trust. You're not just cutting jobs, you're cutting support systems. At a time when the world already feels uncertain, increasing class sizes and reducing access to counselors and staff sends a clear message, less support when they need it most. A team needs both coaches and players, but the game cannot happen without the players. Our students need more players on the field to help them succeed. Not more coaches on the sideline watching, supervising, and taking pictures. Thank you.

Victoria

Good evening. My name is Victoria. I work directly with Chelsea youth and I'm here today to stand with them. This process has been deeply frustrating, not just for the adults in this room, but especially for the young people who are directly impacted by your decisions. You have violated open meeting laws, told police our youth, and are planning to undercut their success. Not a single slide you presented touches on the direct effects to students. Chelsea is less affluent because it's less educated, and it's less educated because it's less affluent. That reality is shaped by chronic disinvestment, health disparities, poor housing outcomes, labor exploitation, environmental injustice, and more. It's a cycle, and instead of breaking that cycle, you are reinforcing it. Chelsea schools are already underfunded and overwhelmed. Instead of building the next generation of well-rounded professionals, we risk continuing to funnel students into low wage devalued labor.

Now you're planning to cut over six dozen people within the Chelsea education system who are trying to prevent this. These are not excess roles. They are lifelines. Our youth are not just our future. They are our present. They have been failed, ignored, neglected, and disrespected by nearly every system that claims to serve them. If it were just up to them, they'd have every reason to succeed, but it isn't. They're vulnerable to the whims of decision makers they are not yet old enough to elect. These kids are hardworking. They're breaking generational cycles, bringing pride and wealth to their families. These kids are kind. They maintain their humor despite the hardship they continue to undergo. They are smarter than you realize and they show up. They are your future writers, business owners, artists, scientists, athletes, educators, doctors, and activists. Do not underestimate them. We've seen what happens when you do. Our youth are resilient, but don't mistake their professionalism for passivity. They will hold you accountable. So we're asking you to do the same. Show your values through your budget. Do not wait until the consequences of these cuts hit hard when Chelsea's already struggling. While these essential roles are being cut, there's no reason for the superintendent's team of nine to be making over a million

dollars, especially when these are not student facing roles and especially when the results are this consistently bordered. Reallocate resources, prioritize students, and break the cycle. Chelsea is watching and they deserve better. Thank you.

Nina Davidson

Good evening. My name is Nina Davidson. I am the lead school counselor at Chelsea High. I'm in my 10th year. I'm also a Chelsea resident. The caseload of students that I proudly serve are multilingual learners. I'd like to start with a simple question. How much time does a student actually have with their school counselor in a year? School counselors are the only high school staff who are required to see all students on our caseloads and follow them through all four years. The American School Counselor Association recommends that school counselors spend 80% of their time providing direct service to students. Even if that recommendation is fully implemented over 185 school days with a caseload of 188 students, our current average at CHS. Each student could receive no more than four hours and 43 minutes of counselor support for the entire year. That breaks down to seven and a half minutes per week per student.

Research consistently shows that when students have greater access to school counselors, graduation rates and college enrollment increase. Research also tells us that students of color, students from low income families and multilingual learners benefit the most from access to school counselors. If two positions in the counselor department are cut and caseloads increase to more than 250 students, that time drops to less than six minutes per week per student, or about three hours, 33 minutes for the entire year. Behind these theoretical minutes are real students in our schools. A ninth grade student who has retained working to recover credits and get back on track to graduate. A 10th grade student returning after a hospitalization, trying to catch up on missed work and relying on the counselor they trust. An 11th grade student balancing school and work after their parent was detained and deported, trying to help support their family.

A senior navigating the college process, completing financial aid, choosing schools, selecting a major, and applying for scholarships. These are not hypothetical students. These are the realities our students face every day and how we as counselors support them. Our students deserve the time and guidance that school counselors provide. Cutting counselors needs cutting access to that support. So tonight's decision really comes down to one question. Is under six minutes a week enough time to support our students' futures? Thank you.

Denise Goldstein

Hi, my name is Dave Goldstein. I am an Emily teacher at the ELC and I have been working in Chelsea under various positions for 25 years. I came to Chelsea to gain experience, but I stayed because I gained something much more valuable, a hardworking, multicultural and vibrant community, right for bilingualism and biliteracy. And that community has shaped who I am today. They have taught me as much as I've taught them. Today, I advocate for that community because of my experiences in it. I know what the current cuts mean because I've lived it. Our already high caseloads will get higher, which means we have to give a little less time to students who have already had so much taken away from them in order to meet all student needs. These students will be in classrooms with higher class sizes and be expected to learn the same content all while learning a new language and culture and with less supports in place.

It is for them that I am asking us to bear this burden of budget cuts as a community. I'm asking for a balance between cuts and student facing positions and central office administrative positions for the sake of our students and their success. As educators, those of us who remain will do what we always do and we've always done in these situations, we will take on the extra work, the higher caseloads or the

student to teacher ratios, and we will do our best for the community that we love. We are asking the school committee to do the best as well for our youngest and most vulnerable members of our community when choosing which positions to cut. Thank you.

Jacqueline Mendoza

Hello. My name is Jackie Mendoza. I'm a fifth grade multilingual educator at the WSTA and a former Chelsea Public School student. I've been teaching for three years at my position and I participated in the Chelsea Public School System as an older sister, a student intern, and a paraprofessional since I was 17 years old. These position cuts will impact our most marginalized populations in Chelsea, multilingual learners, students on IEP, and duly identified students. As a multilingual educator, I work with the special education teachers, reading specialists, math specialists, and paraprofessionals that better support our students in the classroom. Their absence and our students' daily lives will be detrimental because it is them who closes the achievement gap by teaching them the foundation of reading or math, the foundations of the English language to express themselves both academically and socially, or by being a supportive and safe second adult figure.

The only ones who could do this magic are the ones in the classroom, nowhere else. If there is only one teacher in the room, you cannot ask them to take the job of three respective professionals in a classroom of 25 plus children. If you think it is, then I would like you to come down personally to experience a day in our lives and tell us how it can be done. I will always be a Chelsea kid and I'm proud of where I come from. My generation of students, we've been affected by this achievement gap and sadly it looks like we'll continue this into the new generation due to these stress cuts. We are resilient and strong, but our fear to a fair, good, quality, and equitable education should be a right and a priority, not the bare minimum, just to meet budget requirements. Thank you.

John Rugeiro

Hello. Thank you for being here today, burning the midnight oil. I know it's been a long night. I have a unique position. I'm sorry. I'm John Rugeiro. I'm the science teacher over at WSDA. I'm in the position that I have worked with a lot of people at the district level and I know that you bleed for these kids and you have passion for these kids. And I know that these are tough decisions, but at the same time, we have made such progress in 10 years. Based on an unstable political climate that is going on right now that may change in two and a half years, you will do 10 to 15 years worth of damage. The WSDA model is something that I'm proud of, and that is when I first came here. It was the wild, wild west, and now I think our school is extremely strong.

Under the guidance of Michelle Martinello and the stability of staff and hiring teachers that were highly qualified and talented, we built a school that was based in stability, leadership, and student voice. I've never felt a situation where it was us versus you, and I think that should continue. The second part is there is so much education in this room that it's hard for me to believe that we cannot come to a solution on something like this. I know you're not in an easy position. The outrage that you are feeling from the community, I call you to go to the city leaders and pour that outrage from you onto them. Thank you.

Michael Elias

Michael Elias, Brown Middle School, since 2016. The community is filled with apprehension and grief, and that grief will soon be rage and despair. Revenue cycles ebb and flow, but the headwinds we face today have been written on the wall for quite some time. The people who welcome all students will not be present to educate them because the money was spent poorly in past budgets. When we were

flushed with cash, why did we not use the money to build classroom level, school level, instructional capacity, and reduce reliance on high spending? In my 10 years in CPS, we've squandered the human capital of hundreds of educators by not adequately supporting their development. Millions of dollars lost to a revolving door. The presentation mentioned nothing about investing in human capital, educators or students. Why do we buy office buildings instead of basing coordinators and directors in schools, allowing and requiring them to spend time knowing the name, strength, and story of students and learning their needs and the needs of the educators they serve, asking the educators questions, "What do you need from us?" We can't avoid it.

The cuts are happening and students will lose out. But while we cut people at the point of service where each dollar is most directly serving students, we're digging a deeper hole. To date, we've received zero explanation and zero evidence of how this budget proposed maximizes student safety, security, or provides the tools and challenges tailored to student needs.

Mr. Small, I appreciated the essence of your questions, but the answer cannot come at this time from the people you asked it of, because the quantitative, watered down, and satellite level data that we use cannot possibly explain the nuances of what students need, what drives success, and what teachers need to support their students. They don't know what's happening with students because they haven't liked the answers they've received, and when they are asked to come and be there to see what is happening, we get 15 minute visits and a short report. How can coordinators, directors, and assistant superintendents make teachers and paraprofessional sports effective? I'll offer an answer and a path that we should have started down years ago. The answer is not farming out the words to consultants. It is not quarterly 15 minute observations. It is not placing students in front of screen, out of the box standards, aligned, culturally responsive, accessible curriculum does not exist. Moving forward, bring them into our schools, respect our expertise. And allow people to maintain their status to build collective evidence. If this budget passes, we will not keep expertise in our classrooms. Everybody has had

Kim Sammons

Hi, my name is Kim Salmons. I'm a school nurse here at Chelsea High School. I'm going to give you a few little numbers and then a personal perspective. This school year alone, the school health office has had 76 separate times when a school nurse has called and collaborated with a social worker. That equals three plus days per week, which equals 64% of the days school has been in session. And that's just one example of the numbers. We are a very small department and we are calling a social worker three plus days a week because we have to, because it's a mental health issue. And it's easy to count the amount of interventions that go on every day. What is not easy to quantify is the number of crises that are averted because of the work that all of the support staff puts in with the students.

The work is preventive. It adverts crisis, it heals, it supports, it guides. Without a strong base of support staff and teachers, intervention with students will, out of a lack of resources, become reactive rather than preventive. In many cases, it will be too late. We know when it's too late.

And this is objectively true. I have sat with Jocelyn Flores in many circumstances where it would have gone in a very, very different direction had she not been there. On a personal level, I can say without a doubt that Jocelyn Flores would climb over the back of a security guard to scale a fence to get to the aid of a student in need. Jocelyn never shies away from the challenging situation. She leans in. She leans in a hundred percent of the time. Losing Jocelyn would be a devastating loss to students, to the department, to the school, and to the greater community.

Dieunie

Hi, my name is Dieunie and I like to say thank you for allowing me to speak here. Please stay awake as I speak with you as a sign of perspective. Due to the limited time that I have and the lack of attention of your attention, I'll go straight to the point. Does it have to take many accidents, suicides, attempts, and deaths for us, for you to finally listen to us and acknowledge that there's something wrong or as what you guys usually do just throws in a pit and make it your solely purpose of that pit to be. I'll come back to you later. Oh, pardon me. Warning. What I'm about to say might frighten you as I display such skills that I've profound to learn and inherit from teachers such as with my stats. Ms. Grant is with my literature. Dumb the pan with my college help that I'm thankful that I'm able to climb up with the amounts of administrations I get from other colleges. As you display the statistics of the ratio of students and staffs, it doesn't really show what you guys stand for, what you want to see in that classroom. Obviously, I've never seen you in a classroom to see. There's 30 plus students while there's one teacher in that class. Last time I checked the safety, that's a safety hazard. And you guys want to remove teachers out of that. Mind you, there's Ms. Ruddy that I have in my junior year where I had at least 34 or 30 at once students and there was not enough chairs to accommodate us. Imagine there was, God forbid, like an intruder. What do you expect me to do? I'm trying to protect myself and the teacher's trying to protect all three of us. That's not just right. That's one. Freshman orientation. As a senior, I like to give up to my community. What do you expect me to tell these seniors, my brother that's expect to come here? And I set this foundation for him, so he's to come here, to come in a bigger mix that you sit upon here. I don't know what to say in that behalf.

Naomi Mejia

At Chelsea High School. My name is Naomi Mejia and I a proud Chelsea High to graduate from the class 2010. A soccer coach in this district in one of the two school counselor positions was now being gone at Chelsea High School. This issues the Even personal to me, not only as a staff member, but as someone who grew up in this community, and is a direct part of just the public schools. As a school counselor, I see how every day a caring consistent adult can change a student's life. For many students, a school counselor is the one study adult relationship they have throughout their high school career. We help them navigate academic personal challenges and the pathway to college or career. I know what it is when that's a poison there. I grew up in an immigrant family, low income family that didn't know to navigate the American education system. I never met my school counselor, and even after graduating, I had to figure out college and all the financial learning on my own. That experience shapes how I show up for my students every day. I try to be the adult I wish I had when I was a teenager. Cutting two school counselor position will make it much harder for the remaining counselor to truly support our students. Our student is there an adult who know their names, their strength, and their story. We have made too many strive forward to go backwards. Thank you.

Katie Lee

Hi, my name is Katie Lee and I've been a speech therapist at Chelsea High School for five years. This budget proposal would have a negative effect on every single student in our district, but I'm just going to speak to the impacts that I see for special education at the high school level because that's where I work. But I really strongly feel that these proposals are not in the best interest of any of our schools. My students have language-based learning disabilities and require certain accommodations and modifications so that they can learn. Cutting so many teachers means rising class sizes, which means even less time for teachers to implement essential learning supports. This will hurt all of our students, but it's a true disservice to our most vulnerable students and a violation of their rights to a free and appropriate public education. Cuts in the classroom will make more students struggle in school.

They will need more support, and when they need support, we tell them to turn to their social workers and counselors. It is frightening to me that you are also proposing cutting those supports when we know that those people literally save the lives of our students. Right now, I see a budget that does not prioritize student learning. I see a budget that will hurt students with disabilities. I see a budget that will make workloads for school counselors and social workers completely unmanageable, putting student safety at risk. Our students will suffer if this budget moves forward as proposed. Thank you for staying here to hear us out in the middle of the night. Now, I urge you all to please listen to us. Trust that the Chelsea public schools have educated our students well. They know what they need to succeed. Trust the educators that are spending every day working tirelessly. We know what is best for our schools and our students. We know that you can't make money appear out of thin air, but we also know that you're capable of making different choices that better prioritize the student facing positions that have the most consistent, direct impact on our students. I refuse to believe that this is the best that we can do for our students. Thank you.

Kellyann Curley

Good evening. My name is Kellyann Curley. I've been a multilingual educator at the ELC for 10 years, and I'm the intern VP of the Chelsea Teachers Union, while our amazing VP is out on parental leave with her family. I've been attending school committee meetings for the past few years, and I've noticed that family is a word I hear a lot in this space to describe cabinet, central office, and the school committee. I would like to name a few of the other families that I see. I see school families, coworkers supporting each other through a challenging job. I see classroom families, students helping each other put on a coat, tie a shoe, or hug a crying friend. And most importantly, I see the families of our students. All of these families are facing loss. Of course, it's going to be hard to cut or restructure positions as central office.

Positions held by people you consider family. It's not ideal. We are only asking that the cuts be proportional, that you model working through hard decisions during challenging times. With the surplus money from ESSER and the SOA, we are getting so close to giving students the support they deserve. I saw my own caseload decrease from 200 students to 100 just now. My caseload is still three times the recommended caseload for my position, but we were making progress as a district to support students, especially special education and multilingual learners.

If this many student facing staff are cut, it will directly affect the people of Chelsea. We have been told not to take this personally. We are asking you to do the same. Every school had to make cuts, even schools that did not have a drop in enrollment. We are asking that there be cuts at central office only to save positions that support students directly. It's truly not personal. All of our jobs will be different next year. It will be hard for everyone who works here. We should not make it hard for the students. Thank you.

Claudia Lawry

Good evening. My name is Claudia Lawry and I'm finishing my eighth year as a proud multilingual history teacher in the Bridge Academy at Chelsea High School. As many of you know, working with newcomers requires flexibility. When I started at CHS in fall 2018, our classrooms looked much as they do this year, pretty small. That year was my first and prior to this year, only year that CHS suffered serious budget cuts. My department was hit harder than other departments, just as we are anticipating for this upcoming year. They're laying off about 45% of my department, including our. And what happened after those layoffs? Obviously, newcomer enrollment surged nearly 80% of Chelsea High School. Thanks to the planning of our incredible former coordinator, we were ready, or at least as ready as we could ever be.

Our counselors worked weekends and nights to enroll 125 to 150 newcomers each year for five years. We welcomed, educated, and loved all of them. We were ready to be flexible, but the district wasn't. It took us just as long to restore those positions, and now we see them come again. And I want to be very clear here. I'm not suggesting that we are owed jobs just because we work hard to support immigrant families. This is simply a reminder that some things in this life are evergreen. Migration has existed since the dawn of the human race. Despite the efforts of this current administration, there will always be immigrants seeking hope and for heavy cheer. There may not be many of them here today, but more will be here sooner than you think. And quite frankly, the plans I have heard from district leadership to manage the falling class sizes in newcomer classrooms are not realistic, not flexible, and not future group to meet their needs. Our students have risked everything to come here. We will be ever ready to receive our immigrant families with the love, respect, and dignity that they deserve, and this budget doesn't know that. Thank you.

Thomas Gordanier

Hello, I'm Thomas Gordanier, and I'm an MLE teacher at Chelsea High School. Before I go further, I'd like to offer my sympathies to you, Dr. Abeyta. I lost my own father to cancer. I love teaching at Chelsea High School. My students drive me, my colleagues support me, and I feel the city's community represents some of the best that America is and could become. Every Chelsea educator I can name, pastor, president would have grew with me on all three of those things, the students, our colleagues, the community, and yet every year I've been at Chelsea High School without playoffs, almost a third of the staff has turned over. I have a big here about why that's bad for students, but we have heard more than I can say about that. I've never heard an educator say they're leaving Chelsea because of their students or their colleagues or the community. One reason I have heard repeatedly is a lack of faith in our leaders. When educators lose faith in their leaders, good people love working at Chelsea leave, and that's hurts our students. We know deep, painful cuts are unavoidable this year. What is avoidable is the damage that the district has done to our faith in them. By being 15 days late with a full budget presentation, shortening the window during which the school community can provide input, running rough shot over what our contract says about how staff will be informed of layoffs, and above all, by presenting a budget that ignores everything said by both staff and family and the so- called listening sessions, coming primarily from positions that touch directly on students' lives while leaving essentially untouched people who spend their times in meetings instead of classrooms. This loss of faith was avoidable, but is also repairable. Listen to us now, the educators, families, and above all the students of Chelsea. Thank you.

Denise Granis

Hi, everyone. My name is Denise Granis and I am the ELA leave teacher at the high school. Thank you for your time tonight. I know it's quite late and I appreciate your continued attention. I've been an educator, a teacher in the classroom for 31 years, and this is my second year at Chelsea High. And I really admire Chelsea's commitment to name strength and story as we've heard tonight because it's unique and it really shows that you value the individuals that students are. And I'm going to echo what so many people have already said tonight and ask that you continue that commitment by not cutting student facing positions. I know that we've heard really meaningful and emotional testimony from students about what happens when teachers and counselors and social workers leave, but I want you to also consider what happens to the educators that remain who have more kids under their purview with whom to establish personal relationships and how much this impacts the quality of those relationships and how much that matters.

My fourth period AP literature class has 32 students, and my fifth period class has a lot less, and I've written a lot more college essays for my period five kids because I know them. So my recommendation is that you continue to look for other ways to close the budget. Some suggestions have been given to you tonight, and I continue by saying instructional technologies, underutilized digital platforms, district and building admin, consulting companies. You should look to cut those first should add, in addition, in the face of all this impressive community support, I can't imagine that you can't go back to the city and ask for more money from the residents and the students of Chelsea. Because if you care about the kids and do want them known by their names, their strengths, and their stories, then you shouldn't cut the positions of the people who know them. Thank you.

Lucy Schenker

Good evening, school committee. My name is Lucy Schenker. This is my eighth year teaching at the Brown Middle School History. I'm proud that this is the only school I've ever taught at and that Chelsea is the only community I've ever taught within. Our job is not easy, and I can accept that. I can accept that your job, likewise, is not easy. I can accept that cuts must be made somewhere. I could even accept, and my principal Katie Cook is over there. I will even accept, as a matter of public record, a cut to my stipend as the history lead teacher at BMS. I cannot accept what I see as a capitulation to the barbarity of ICE abducting our children from our community. I cannot accept that 70 or more building level student facing positions must go for our budget. I cannot accept that we have enough money somewhere in the budget for five retired administrators to serve as consultants. We have a officer, a student success planning, a position that was created post 2020, but I would question how successful we expect our students to be when they are shepherded next year into classrooms with 30 or more of their peers. I'm a bleeding heart and I accept that. I accept that being a member of upper administration requires some level of clear-headed pragmatism. So pragmatically, if your role makes you accountable to the people of Chelsea and this community as your constituents, the budget as proposed is a dereliction of duty. How do we expect students to be successful when there are larger class sizes, higher student to teacher ratios, fewer slife and special ed educators, multilingual educators, all of which affect a large proportion of our students that we see every day. What you are doing sets a precedent. It gives our students, our children, an object lesson in power, namely that they don't have any, and that people that do not have their best interests at home.

Thank you.

Dee Shea

Good evening. My name is Dee Shea and I teach first grade inclusion at the Sokolowski. The proposed budget reductions are deeply concerning. I'm particularly troubled that no central office positions appear to have been considered for consolidation or reduction as part of this process. Dr. Abeyta, you alone make about three times my salary. That could be the second, third, and fourth grade positions proposed to be cut at SOKO. While we understand that decline in enrollment impacts funding, it's important to recognize that students are more than numbers on a roster. Enrollment figures do not fully capture the increasingly complex and diverse needs of the children we serve today. Not every child has an IEP, yet every child has unique learning needs. Not every student is formally identified as a language learner, yet all students, especially in early grades, such as first grade where I teach, are developing critical language and vocabulary skills at a rapid pace. Currently, educators are already working hard to meet the needs of 20 to 25 students in each classroom. Increasing class sizes due to staffing reductions will make it significantly more difficult to provide the level of support and instruction our students deserve. I heard tonight that we are overstaffed and that increased class sizes are not going to be a

substantial amount. I ask according to who, because whoever is determined those numbers is not in the classroom. Larger class sizes place additional mental and emotional demands on teachers stretching their capacity and impacting the quality of instruction. I invite you to please not come for a 15 minute walkthrough or a picture, but invite you to please sub in my classroom of six year olds for a few days and then let me know if you still think we're overstaffed or that a few extra kids don't make a substantial difference in how the day goes. As educators, our goal is not simply to meet expectations at a basic level. We strive to provide the best possible school experience for every student. While budget reductions may be tied to declining enrollment, the impact of these cuts will be felt most by the students who remain in our schools. For these reasons, I urge the committee to carefully consider how these reductions are distributed and prioritize decisions that education, ability to build strong relationships and safe environments grow for all students.

Darren Dempan

Good evening, members of the school committee family staff. My dear students was way past your bedtime. My name is Darren. I'm the AP chemistry teacher, and before I begin, I want to extend my deepest sympathy to you, Dr. Aveda, upon hearing the horror things. I'm the AB chemistry teacher and honors chemistry teacher here at CHS. When I first came for an interview, I walked into the AP chemistry class that was dark with horse students in it, and forgive my calculations because these were back of the envelope on the way here. I believe it is now in the top five to 10% in enrollment in AP chemistry over the course of this time. This is a monumental improvement across our school, and I want to direct that to an observation that was made by another teacher who I invited, a regional expert in chemistry to observe my students, to which he's told me bluntly, "Your students are normal teenagers." Yes, they gossip about trifling TikTok, 90-day fiance scandals, and whatever new thing I fail to understand in my age, but they are cheerful, brilliant, inquisitive. They're just like any young scientists, engineer, and professional. Education, science, and all aspects of what we do here as a long shared history of mentorship of building strong relationship between students and teachers that have allowed us to push the boundaries of human knowledge. This requires, of course, students and teachers, but how can we expect to maintain strong relationship between students and teachers to create the next generation of STEM professionals when there are fewer teachers? I understand that the budget is tight and I do not envy any of your positions, but I understand they need to be made, but my only question is, is it truly necessary to cut this many student facing positions? It's harder for our students to thrive when there are fewer of us creating those strong mentorship bonds with less time to nurture them individually. Thank you.

Kathryn Anderson

Good evening. My name is Kathryn Anderson. I've been a special education teacher at the Brown Middle School since 2013. I'm the president of the Chelsea Teachers Union. Thank you all for being here tonight and Dr. Abeyta my heart goes out to you. What we see here tonight and what we saw last week is incredible. Students, staff, and community members all coming together to say with a clear voice, prioritize student and family facing positions. We understand that so much of this budget cycle is out of our control. We did not make the racist immigration policies of federal government. We did not write a school funding formula underestimates inflation and provides no grace for districts experiencing loss, but we know that we can fight back against each of these things. We are working to make our schools safe and welcoming. We are fighting at the state level for more funding. Right now, we are asking that Chelsea public schools take responsibility where we can. Yes, we have fewer students, which means less funding, but that does not mean that the cuts need to land the heaviest on our students with disabilities, our language learners, our children striving to read. In one single year, we are on track to wipe out nearly

half the gains of the Student Opportunity Act. The budget as proposed brings us down to school staffing levels last seen in 2022 and 2023. October 1st student enrollment is down just about under 6%. A 6% reduction in staff is 50 positions. Instead, nearly 80 of our members were told their position is being reduced. In 2020, the district admin to student ratio was one to 521. Next year it'll be one to 250. Our class sizes and caseloads are finally starting to reflect the learning conditions our students deserve. Our district is building a diverse, caring and high quality workforce that better reflects and serves our students. Hundreds of staff members, students, and community members are coming out to make their voices heard and ask for a budget that is balanced, but that is not balanced primarily on the backs of our most vulnerable students. Yes, this is hard. The making the hard choices our community is asking for will build trust and move us toward the schools our students deserve. The superintendent's office and the school committee have agency, power, and responsibility. We are all watching how you use it. Please do right by us. Thank you.

Dear Members of the Chelsea School Committee,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the proposed budget cuts and, specifically, to ask you to preserve the position of school counselor Naomi Mejia. Naomi is my sister-in-law, and I have witnessed firsthand the dedication and compassion she brings to the students she serves every day.

I understand the district faces difficult financial decisions, but I am troubled by the proposal to cut 70 student-facing positions. At a time when mental health challenges among young people are rising across the country — and Chelsea is no exception — reducing access to school counselors sends exactly the wrong message to students and families who depend on these critical supports.

What makes this even harder to understand is that, over the past five years, the district has been increasing the number of administrative positions. I respectfully ask the committee to examine whether the balance between administrative growth and student-facing services truly reflects the district's priorities.

Naomi makes a real difference in the lives of Chelsea students. I urge you to find a path forward that preserves her role — and the roles of other staff who work directly with students every day. If cuts must be made, I hope the committee will look to areas that do not directly diminish the support students receive.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the Chelsea community.

Sincerely,
Michael Restiano

To whom this might concern;

My name is Jennifer Romero and I am a Chelsea High alumni, mom to a current Chelsea High student. My family and I believe it is fundamental to any of our children, your students, to be heard and for our voice and opinions to be taken into consideration when making any decision concerning the Chelsea Public Schools.

We are also a military family who currently is in service of our country, we all do so with courage, bravery, and lots of sacrifice. We've settle in many different states as our line of duty demands. Our son Xavier Acevedo has attended schools in those districts, with every move he push himself with resilience and courage proving himself academically and excelling in every class. We believe this was because of his dedication but ALSO because of the AMAZING teachers who sacrificed as much as we have to be part of our kids' future. To provide him with more stability as he approaches his high school graduation. As a family we decided it would be best for him to settle in our home: Chelsea.

As the Chelsea Public Schools face this budgetary challenge, in cutting staff positions due to the lack of funding, we want to feel assured that, you the school committee will make the right decision, and avoid cutting student facing positions as much as humanly possible. We've seen and experienced across this nation how teachers are the key to our kids success. The only reason Xavier is attending Chelsea High is because of how many opportunities and tools this school prove to the students COMPARE to the other schools in this country. Therefore we lean on our community and ask to help us be at ease when it comes to our child's academics and counseling remaining in place as it is. The stability of the resources and teacher are key in our son's future, something NOT TO BE shortened but to be EXPANDE.

Best,
Jennifer Romero

Hello School Committee, I hope you're doing well

My name is Fernanda Fernandez. I'm currently a junior in CHS. Today, I won't be able to go to the meeting, however I want to advocate for our teachers, and social workers, who are gonna be fired. First one of the social workers you will fire, Ms Flores, was my social worker. I want to say how much she helps in this school, specially she helped me a lot. During my freshman year, she was someone new at first for me, but she did a big effort to change that. She became someone I could trust to tell what I was going through. So always I needed to talk to someone, she was someone I could relive on. When I knew about the massive cuttings of workings you are doing, I felt like something inside me broke up, the person I now always say hi, see on the hallways, will be gone. I didn't even graduate, but I want to come back after my graduation to see her, to say hi, to talk to her, to say her thanks for how she helped me when I was so young that now I don't go to her office anymore because I learned from her how to be a better person everyday. Please don't fire these people, we need them at school to keep helping not only us but later generations.

Thanks, best regards

Fernanda Fernandez

Good evening. My name is Sarah Ross, I am a MLE at the Kelly School, where I've taught for four years, and a parent in this district.

I'm also a parent—my daughter attends the Early Learning Center. Although we live out of district, I choose to send her there and pay about \$1,200 a month because I deeply value the educators in this district and the education she is receiving.

Chelsea has the significantly high percentage of English learners in the state, and Kelly has the highest concentration in the district. We know language learners grow fastest with tailored support, small groups, and immediate feedback, but proposed cuts will drastically reduce that support.

Even a brief check-in can change a student's understanding, and without it, students fall behind. English learners already have significantly higher dropout rates than their peers, and cutting approximately 14 MLE positions will create the exact conditions that contribute to those outcomes.

These cuts will directly harm students' access to learning and their futures, and I urge the committee to consider the impact on our most vulnerable learners.

Teachers, MLEs, paraprofessionals, and all student-facing staff are held accountable every day, with clear systems measuring performance and student outcomes — schedules, standards-based metrics, and daily documentation show the direct impact of our work on students.

Yet we see that 25+ district administrator positions are being protected, even as enrollment declines and the budget faces a deficit, while 70+ student-facing positions are proposed for cuts. We are asking for the same transparency and accountability we are held to: what are these administrators' responsibilities, daily schedules, and measurable contributions to student outcomes? How do roles paying over \$150K a year, the equivalent of 2 teachers or 4+ paraprofessionals, justify their continued funding?

I spend countless hours providing detailed data and artifacts to show how my work improves student outcomes, and I know my colleagues do the same. We are asking for the same transparency from district leaders. Your jobs are important — please show us, and the families, why these positions deserve to be prioritized

We're asking because, as students have reminded us, these are not numbers on a page — these are people who directly affect their daily lives and futures. Please provide the data and clarification we need before making decisions that will have a profound impact on students' education.

...

Strategic Focus and Sustainability Budget 2027

*March 17, 2026
School Committee Meeting*



Agenda

- Mission & Strategy
- Budget Development Timeline
- Funding for Public Education
- Factors Influencing FY 2027
- Expenditure Forecast
- Steps to Balance the Budget
- Q & A



Mission

Chelsea Public Schools is a gateway school system that welcomes and educates ALL students and families



Strategy: Bridge to Success 2.0



BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

1

Enrollment - 10/1 Report to DESE

In the Fall, preliminary budget tasks occur including reporting enrollment to DESE which feeds into the state determined foundation (or minimum) budget amt that MUST be spent. The student count and demographics impacts the amt a district gets.

2

Expenses - Update existing costs for inflation

Consider effects of cost drivers such as programmatic changes, contract rate increases, collective bargaining, health insurance increases, etc.

3

Revenue - Governor's Budget Released in January

The 10/1 enrollment determines the amt that the state requires us to spend on our students. So 1) how many kids dictates how much must be spent to provide adequate education, 2) who will pay for this. This total min budget is then divided btw state and city funding - who pays?

4

Balance & Make Critical Decisions (based on feedback)

After determining the shortfall once the revenue and updated expenses are known, we must balance using the feedback from community. LISTEN AND DECIDE

5

Approve and Vote

We must get approval from SC to submit to City



Factors Influencing Budget FY 2027

Both a Reduction in Revenue with Rising Costs

- Enrollment declined by 350 students
- Expiration of ESSER funding
- Student Opportunity Act funding offset by enrollment reductions
 - MLL implications
- Rising salary expenditures
- Increasing charter school tuition obligations
- Escalating health insurance costs
- Higher transportation expenses
- Growing special education tuition costs

Enrollment Trends

CPS Enrollment Trends



Next year's budget (26-27) is based on October 2025 numbers

Projected Enrollment for SY 26-27

Enrollment Decline in Gateway City Districts

District	Student Change	Percent Change
Chelsea	-350	-6%
Framingham	-584	-6.1%
Lynn	-435	-2.4%
Everett	-339	-4.2%
Marlborough	-337	-6.3%
Holyoke	-184	-3.2%

- Massachusetts overall lost 15,442 students this year.
- Districts with large multilingual populations - including Chelsea, Everett, Framingham, Lynn and Brockton are seeing the largest enrollment drops.
- **We are not the only district facing a budget shortfall.**

Expenditure Breakdown (FY2027)

- Salaries / Labor (step increases + COLA)
- Employee Benefits (Placeholder Only)
- Facilities (non-labor)
- Info Technology (non-labor) (Must annually update devices)
- Professional Development
- Special Education (other than labor - significant need)
- Supplies / Books / Equip
- Transportation
- Utilities (Paid by Schools)



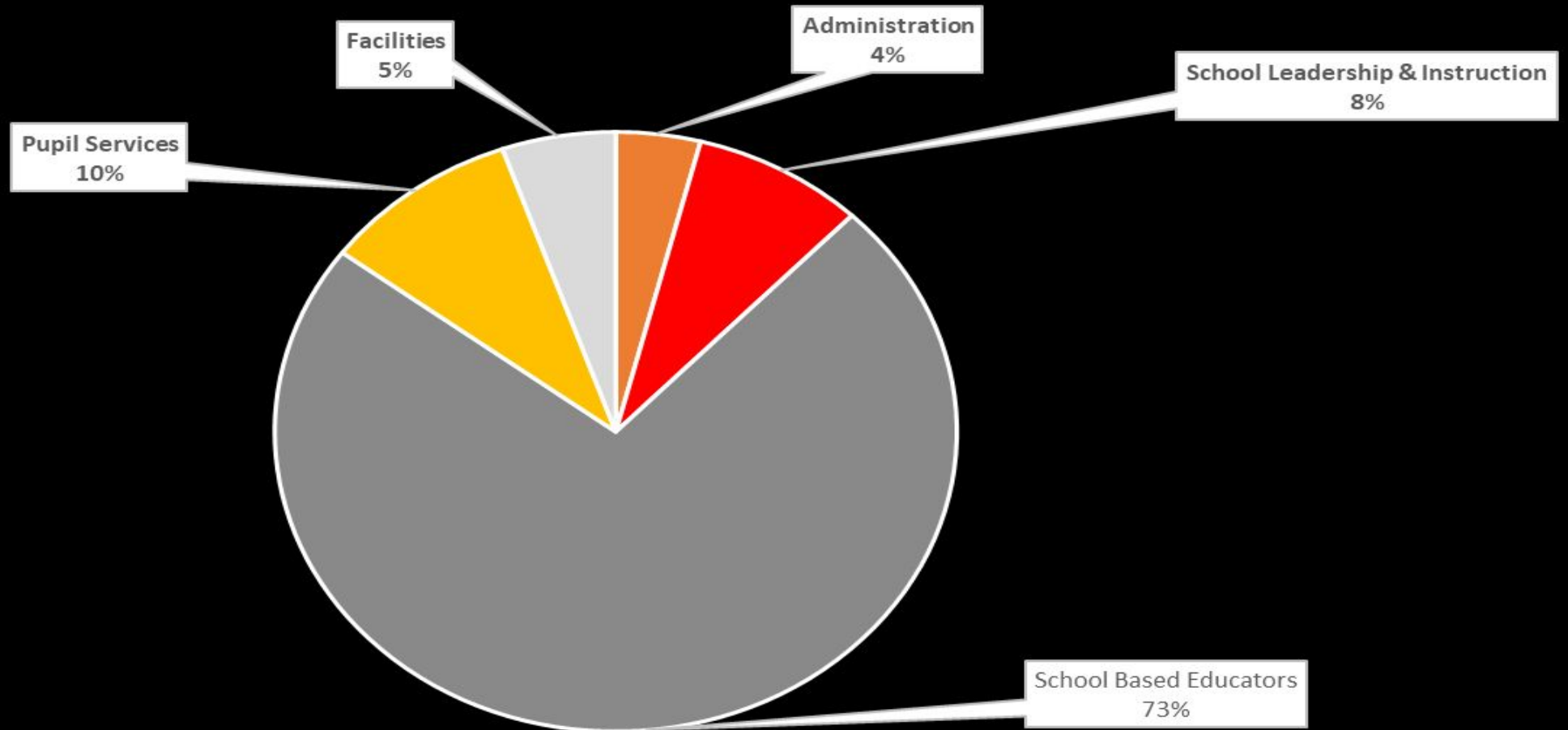
Baseline Expenditure Forecast

Item	Jan to Feb 2026 Preliminary	Feb to March 2026 Balancing	Deficit Increase	
Staff Costs: Steps, COLA	\$6,700,000	\$6,980,000	\$280,000	Recent raises: COA/Step & Lane Increases
Staff Costs" Healthcare, Pension, etc.	\$1,200,000	\$1,970,000	\$770,000	Rate for health increase not available yet so est only; need to increase for unemployment cost rise after cuts; less reduction in health coverage than anticipated
Special Ed Tuition Increase	\$2,500,000	\$2,800,000	\$300,000	# of students current year plus trend projection for next yr
Transportation	\$500,000	\$500,000		Rate increases included by change in stud need could cause more increases; DESE working on this issue
Utilities, insurance, subs	\$750,000	\$750,000		Contractual increases reflected for utilities and subs
Shortfall Before Revenue	\$11,650,000	\$13,000,000	\$1,350,000	Shortfall for Level Service Before Revenue Increase
Governor's Budget	-\$2,388,000	-\$2,388,000		Ch 70 Inc + Req Min Contribution Inc for City
Above Min. Contribution (City)	-\$2,000,000	-\$2,000,000		Superintendent/City Manager agreement
Shortfall After Revenue	-\$7,270,000	<u>-\$8,612,000</u>		Shortfall after Increase to Revenue

Staffing is 80% of Budget

Where are the people??

Salaries



What We Heard from Our Listening Sessions

Important to Keep/Protect

From Educators

Positions closest to children
Special Education staff
Mental Health Supports

From Parents

PreK
ParentSquare
Extended Learning
Family Liaisons (serves families)
Special Education Support
-(positions closest to children)
Mental Health Supports
-(positions closest to children)
Caminos Program
Positions closest to children

Areas We Can Do Potentially do Without

From Educators

Consultants for Professional Development (i.e. nationally recognized professionals)
Reduce District Administration
Contracted Services (i.e. Alongside App)

From Parents

Transportation (is it necessary?)
Consultants (but weren't specific)

*Please note: These are patterns that we heard.

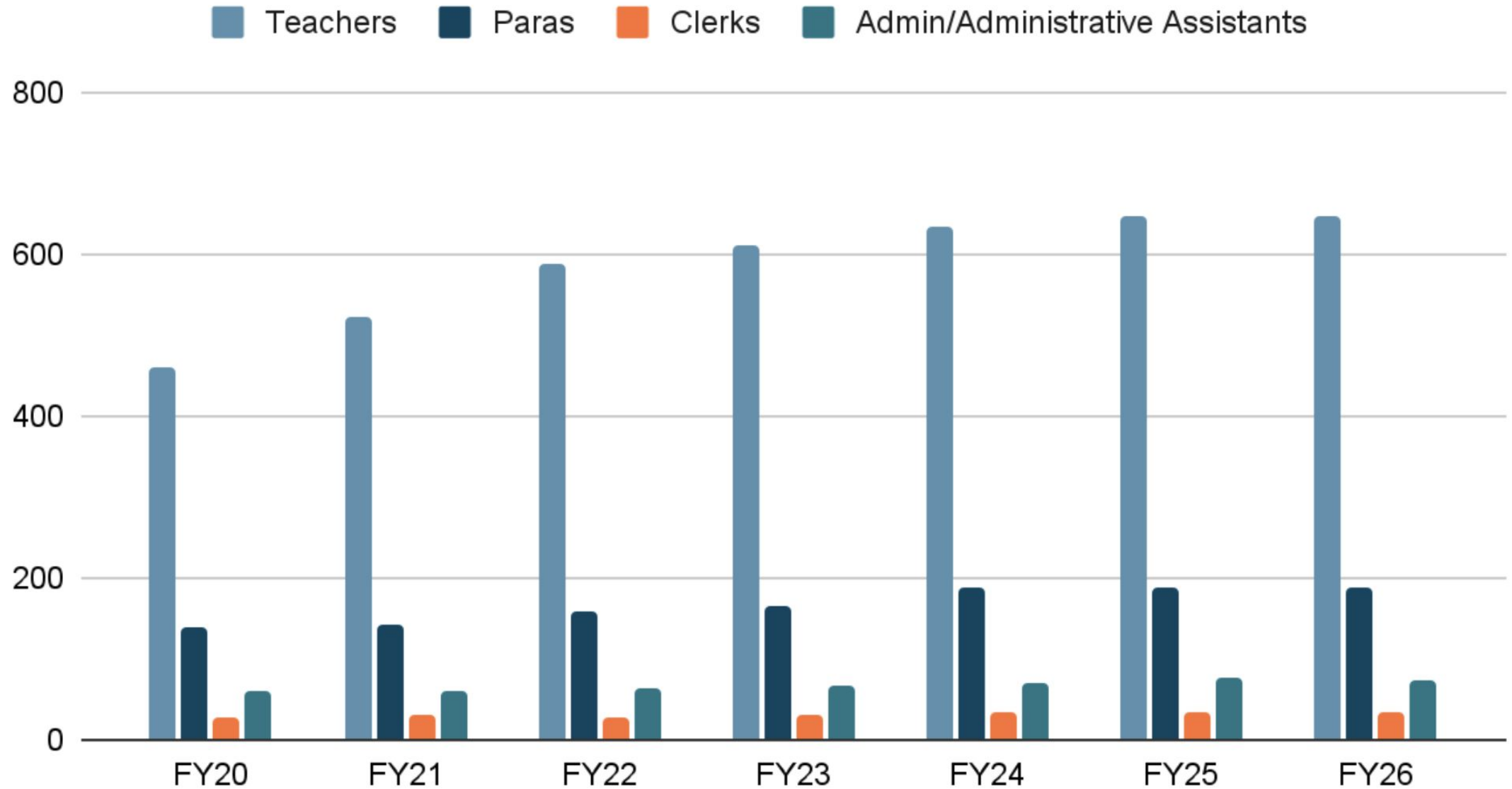
Increases in School Based Positions from 2021-2026

Positions	FY 2020 (6257 n=students)	FY2021 (5936)	FY2022 (6074)	FY2023 (6153)	FY2024 (6148)	FY2025 (6100)	FY2026 (5749)	Change
Teacher Unit	460.0	524.0	586.7	609.4	643.4	645.4	645.4	185.4+ (40.2%)
Paraprofessionals	138.0	142.0	158.0	165.0	187.0	187.0	187.0	49.0+ (35.5%)
Clerks (School Based)	20.5	21.0	21.0	21.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	3.5+ (17.1%)
Clerks (District-wide)	8.5	9.0	8.0	9.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	1.5+ (17.6%)
Total	627 (baseline)	675	773.70	804.40	864.40	864.40	864.40	239.4+ 38%+

Increase of District Positions from 2021-2026

Positions	FY 2020 (6257) n=students	FY2021 (5936)	FY2022 (6074)	FY2023 (6153)	FY2024 (6148)	FY2025 (6100)	FY2026 (5749)	Change (FY20-26)
Superintendent's Office Superintendent (1) /Assistant Superintendents(2) CAO (1) Exec Assistant (1) Communications (1) Chief of Staff/(1) SDP Coordinator	6	6	8	8	8	7	7	1
-MLE Department	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	2
-Wellness/Student Support (Admin only)	2	2	2	2	3	4	3	1
-Curriculum & Instruction & Assessment, Extended Learning, Early College, AVID	5	5	6	6	6	9	8	3
-Special Education & Admin Asst (Admin only)	4	4	5	6	6	6	6	2
-Human Resources	4	5	5	5	7	8	6	2
-Business Office (Includes CFO and staff)	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	0
-IT (Includes director & staff)	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0
-Buildings and Grounds (Includes all directors)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0
-Parent Information Center & MKV (Includes Director and Staff)	9	9	9	9	9	10	10	1
-School Health/Nurses (Director)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Total	60.5 baseline	60.5	64.5	66.5	69.5	76.5	72.5	12+ (20.2%)

Teachers, Paras, Clerks and Admin/Administrative Assistants



Revenue Sources
the Same Just Not
Enough

Inflationary Costs
Outpacing our
Increases

BALANCE



How We Will Balance the Budget?

Item	Amount
School Based	
School Staff	\$6,850,000.00
District Level	\$1,762,000.00
District Staff	
Professional Development	
Consultants & Contractors	
Extraordinary Maintenance	
Total	-\$8,612,000.00



District Level Reductions From Last Year (FY 2026) No School Based Reductions in 2026

Category	Details	Amount
Reduce Professional Development	DEEP Contract - Reduce	\$40,000
Reduce online services	Tutoring (FEV, Renaissance Learning)	\$146,500
Reduce staffing in HR	1 Recruitment and Retention Specialist	\$100,000
Reduce mediation specialists	2 mediation specialists - equity	\$150,000
Special Education Contract	Triangle contract	\$84,000
Special Education Staff at Webster	1 Clerk	\$50,000
Special Education Translators	2 translators (never filled)	\$100,000
Special Education - Braille	Not needed	\$100,000
Buildings and Grounds	Extraordinary Maintenance	\$300,000
Reduce extended learning	1 REACH Director (vacant)	\$88,000
Information Technology	Shift in carrier services - savings and reduce in refreshing of chromebooks	\$100,000
Reduce staffing in C&I	Literacy Director .5	\$50,000
	Total	\$1,308,500

Total Reductions at the District Level

Fiscal Year	Districtwide Reductions	School-Based Reductions
2026	\$1,308,500.00	\$0
2027	\$1,762,000.00	\$6,850,000
Total	\$3,070,500.00	\$6,850,000

**We did not make cuts at the schools last year. We balanced the budget by reducing at the district level.

***District level staff is 4% of the entire district's budget.

****School based educators are 73% of the district's budget.

District-Wide Reductions Suggested for FY2027 (non-staff)

District Cost	Category	Amount
District Stipends	Mentor/Lead Stipends	-\$100,000
District SPED Contracts	SPED Out of District Tuition	-\$200,000
District Contracted Services	Wellness /Equity (Blackprint/Engaging Schools)	-\$100,000
District Contracted Services/Stipends	Extended Time	-\$100,000
District Contracted Services	Human Resources	-\$ 50,000
District Extraordinary Maintenance	Buildings and Grounds	-\$362,000

District-Wide Reductions Suggested for FY2027 (Administrative Staff)

District Cost	Category	Amount
District Staff	1 Human Resource Specialist	-\$100,000
District Staff	1 Budget Administrator	-\$90,000
District Staff	1 Principal Clerk - Business Office	-\$60,000
District Staff	1 Technology Webmaster	-\$100,000
District Staff	1 Administrative/Director	-\$150,000
District Staff	1 Administrative/Director	-\$150,000
Admin COA	1 Assistant Principal	-\$100,000
Retired Staff	Retired Administrative Support	-\$100,000

ELC School Budget Reductions

Paraprofessionals (ACE)	-2.00
Paraprofessionals	-6.00
Coach	-1.00

Sokolowski Budget Reductions

Dig Lit Coach	-0.50
Tech Spec Tch	-0.50
Para (funded by sped budget)	-1.00
MLE	-1.00
Gr 3 Tch	-1.00
Librarian	-0.25
Tutor	-0.75
Gr 2 Teacher	-1.00
Gr 4 Teacher	-1.00

Kelly Budget Reductions

Digital Literacy Coach	-0.50
Technology Specialist	-0.50
Imagine Learning Platform	non FTE
Librarian	-0.25
Tutors	-0.50
MLE Teacher	-3.00
Paraprofessionals	-2.00

Berkowitz Budget Reductions

Reading Teacher	-1.00
Dig Lit Coach	-0.50
Para (funded by sped budget)	-1.00
Tech Spec Tch	-0.50
Gr 3 Tch	-1.00
Librarian	-0.25
Tutor	-1.00
Gr 2 Teacher	-1.00
Gr 4 Teacher	-1.00

Hooks School Budget Reductions

Digital Lit Coach	-0.50
Technology Specialist	-0.50
Grade 3 Teacher	-1.00
Para (funded by SPED budget)	-1.00
Librarian	-0.25
Tutors	-4.00
Grade 2 Teacher	-1.00
Grade 4 Teacher	-1.00
Reading Specialist	-1.00

Clark School Budget Reductions

Foundation Teacher	-3.00
UA Specialists: History	-1.00
Digital Content Lit Coach	-1.00
Paraprofessional	-2.00

WSTA Budget Reductions

Learning Center Teacher (Sped)	-1.00
Learning Center Para	-1.00
Library Paraprofessional	-1.00
Classroom Paraprofessional	-1.00
Special Ed Teachers (Liaisons)	-4.00
Add Interventionist	1.00
Instructional Coach	-0.50

Browne School Budget Reductions

SLIFE Tch	-1.00
MLE Teacher	-2.00
SPED Liaison	-1.00
History Teacher	-1.00
UA Teacher - College Readiness	-1.00
MLE Coach	0.50

Chelsea High School Budget Reductions

English Teachers	-2.00
Math Teachers	-2.00
Science Teachers	-2.00
MLE Teachers	-8.00
Counselors	-2.00
Social Workers	-1.00
History Teacher	-1.00

CVLA Budget Reductions

SPED Teacher	-1.00
MLE Teacher	-0.50
Sped teacher	-0.50
Para	-1.00

COA Budget Reductions

Assistant Principal (Admin)	1.0 FTE
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Remaining Budget Meetings



Thursday, March 19



6:30 p.m.



Virtual Meeting



Thursday, March 26



7:00 p.m.



TBD



