

Newburyport School Committee
Finance Sub-Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 9, 2026
8:30 AM
Central Office Conference Room

- Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 8:35 AM.

Present: Andy Boger, John Ricci, Juliet Walker

Guests: Sean Gallagher, Ethan Manning

- Approval of Minutes

- [February 26, 2026](#)

Motion to approve by Ms. Walker, seconded by Mr. Ricci. Approved 3–0.

- Budget Transfers

There were no transfers.

- Athletics Fees

Staff presented data on participation levels and revenue estimates based on current fees and several potential adjustments, including re-tiering ski and indoor track, increasing Tier 2 and Tier 3 fees by \$25, and charging a nominal fee for middle school sports.

Staff is working on additional data on cost per player and fee waivers, which will be provided once available.

The Committee discussed a range of related issues, including participation levels, transportation costs, coaching rates, program structure, sponsorships, and fundraising.

Ms. Walker proposed that the School Committee discuss the following options:

- A. Tier Adjustments (indoor track and skiing)
- B. Tier Adjustments and Middle School Fee (\$50/sport)
- C. Tier Adjustments and Increase to Tier 2 and Tier 3 by \$25 each

Mr. Manning stated that user fees previously covered more than 50% of athletics costs but now cover about 23%, with major cost drivers including coaches, facility rentals, officials, and transportation. The Committee discussed a possible target of covering 25% of athletics costs through user fees.

The administration will provide additional information to the School Committee for its March 11, 2026 meeting for possible action at its March 25, 2026 regular meeting, prior to the budget public hearing on April 8, 2026.

- School Choice

The Committee continued its discussion of School Choice from the prior meeting. Mr. Gallagher said the administration will work with principals to determine potential available seats for the next school year and provide that information in a Superintendent's Update.

The Committee discussed average cost versus marginal cost, possible additions to the School Choice FAQ, and the role School Choice funding plays in addressing unanticipated costs. Mr. Gallagher noted that, without this funding, the City may wish to consider an education stabilization fund to help manage unexpected expenses.

- Forms

- Fundraising
- Overnight Trips

Mr. Ricci discussed the structure and approval process for overnight trips, including potential liability and conflict-of-interest concerns. Ms. Walker said the Finance Sub-Committee should have a broader conversation about existing policies and do additional fact-finding.

Currently, trips receive an initial conceptual approval and a final approval once details are in place. Ms. Walker suggested continuing this discussion after the FY27 budget process is complete.

- Joint Fincom Meeting

- Thursday 3/19 at 4pm at Nock Library

The Committee discussed having staff provide a short budget update, with most of the meeting focused on discussion among committee members. Mr. Boger suggested including information on unanticipated FY26 special education costs.

- Other Business

- FY27 Budget Update - Reviewed current budget timeline.
- Committee meeting schedule - Upcoming meetings will be:
 - Thursday, March 19 at 8:30 AM
 - Thursday, April 2 at 8:30 AM
 - Thursday, April 16 at 8:30 AM
 - Thursday, May 21 at 8:30 AM

- Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Walker, seconded by Mr. Ricci. Approved 3–0.

Adjourned at 10:10 AM.