

Newburyport School Committee
Finance Sub-Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 19, 2026
8:30 AM
Central Office Conference Room

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 8:35 AM.

Present: Andy Boger, John Ricci, Juliet Walker

Guests: Sean Gallagher, Ethan Manning

2. Approval of Minutes

- o [March 9, 2026](#)

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

3. Budget Transfers

There were no transfers.

4. Athletics Fees

Discussion of athletics fees. Staff presented information on waivers granted during the fall and winter seasons. The Athletics Department is working on pulling together cost information by sport, which will be provided once available.

The Committee discussed whether there should be limits on participation, recognizing that this may require more teams to hold tryouts and cut potential players.

The Committee also discussed the concept of a 75%/25% split between the operating budget and user fees, with user fees not to exceed 25% of the overall cost of the athletics program. The importance of controlling costs in order to keep fees from rising each year was also discussed.

The Finance Sub-Committee will continue this discussion once the cost information by sport is available.

5. School Choice

Discussion of School Choice. The Committee reviewed current School Choice enrollment by grade, as well as sending and receiving information by town. School Choice currently represents 9% of total enrollment. Mr. Gallagher said

that the administration may recommend opening seats in grades 6 and 9, and possibly grade 10 for next year.

The Sub-Committee reviewed a video prepared by staff explaining what School Choice is and how it works for Newburyport. The topic of opening seats for the next school year will be introduced to the full School Committee at its March 25 meeting, with a possible vote on April 8.

6. Joint Fincom Meeting
 - Thursday 3/19 at 4pm at Nock Library

Discussion of the Joint FinCom Meeting and materials to be shared with the group, including budget status, historical information on the City appropriation, and materials from the North Shore Superintendents Roundtable.

7. Other Business
 - FY27 Budget Update

The Committee reviewed the status of FY27 budget development. Staff shared materials reviewed with faculty the prior day regarding potential enrollment-based reductions at the elementary level. The current version of the budget relies on a 5.2% increase to the City appropriation. Staff will be prepared to present options to reduce that to a 4.75% increase if needed. Mr. Gallagher stressed that further reductions would have a greater impact on student learning and on the programs and supports the district has worked hard to put in place over the past several years.

8. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 2 at 8:30 AM

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

Adjourned at 10:01 AM.