

Newburyport School Committee
Finance Sub-Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 16, 2026
8:30 AM
Central Office Conference Room

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 8:37 AM.

Present: Juliet Walker, John Ricci

Absent: Andy Boger

Guests: Sean Gallagher, Ethan Manning, Lauren Eramo

2. Approval of Minutes

- [April 2, 2026](#)

Motion to approve by Mr. Ricci, seconded by Ms. Walker. Approved 2–0.

3. Budget Transfers

There were no transfers.

4. [FY26 Q3 Budget Report](#)

Mr. Manning presented the FY26 third quarter budget report. As of March 31, 2026, total expenditures are trending approximately 1.1% above FY25 levels.

The Committee discussed the financial impact of out-of-district special education placements, including the role of the Operational Services Division (OSD) rate-setting process and the significant budget pressure associated with mandated placements, particularly those requiring 24/7 residential services.

The Committee also reviewed current balances in the District's special revenue funds. Mr. Manning explained that expenditures are typically charged to the General Fund earlier in the fiscal year, with increased reliance on revolving funds as the year progresses. As a result, revolving fund balances are expected to decline significantly between now and June 30.

Mr. Manning also highlighted updates to the District's website, including enhancements to the Finance section. In addition to the budget page, the site now includes a Financial Reports page and an "Understanding School Funding" page to improve transparency and public understanding of school finance in Newburyport.

5. [FY27 Preliminary Cherry Sheet](#)

The Committee reviewed the FY27 preliminary Cherry Sheet in response to questions raised during a recent City budget retreat.

The \$451,556 increase in School Choice reflects a \$442,219 increase in receiving tuition and a \$9,337 decrease in sending tuition. Receiving tuition is an offset receipt, meaning the funds go directly to the school district, while most other state aid, with the exception of a similar offset for public libraries, flows through the City's general fund.

Chapter 70 aid is currently projected to increase by \$75 per pupil (+\$148,875) under the Governor's FY27 budget proposal and by \$160 per pupil (+\$317,600) under the House Ways and Means proposal. This represents an increase of \$211,125 above the Governor's initial proposal.

Ms. Walker will follow up with the City Council President to confirm that the Committee's questions have been addressed.

6. FY27 School Budget

The Committee discussed the status of the FY27 budget, including staffing trends over the past five years.

The budget presented to the School Committee on April 8, 2026, reduced the required City appropriation increase to 4.33%. The Administration noted that reductions made to reach this level have already affected staffing and programs. Further reductions would result in increasingly noticeable impacts on students.

The Committee also discussed the proposed use of reserve balances from School Choice, Circuit Breaker, and other revolving funds to support the FY27 budget. The Administration noted that the proposed budget relies significantly on one-time fund balances, limiting flexibility and creating potential challenges in future fiscal years.

The Administration will continue refining the budget in advance of the School Committee's scheduled vote on April 29, 2026. Should the Mayor

propose a lower school appropriation than the amount approved on April 29, the Administration will work with the School Committee to identify the necessary adjustments.

7. Other Business

No additional items were discussed.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Ricci, seconded by Ms. Walker. Approved 2–0.

Adjourned at 9:46 AM.

Upcoming meetings:

→ Thursday, May 21 at 8:30 AM, Central Office