School Committee

October Sub-Committee Minutes Approved November 5, 2026

Policies and Procedures meeting, October 8, 2026

In attendance: Dr. Sarah Neville, Kati Cabral, Jonny Gomez-Pereira

Also in attendance: Dr. Almi G. Abeyta, Adam Deleidi, Michelle Martinello, Alex Cross, Veronica Dyer-Medina, Kelleyanne Curley, Kathryn Anderson, Vanesa Mendoza-Mercado

The meeting was called to order at 5:32

Member Neville passed the meeting to Superintendent Abeyta.

The committee reviewed the head lice policy, which was updated to match CDC recommendation: Children will no longer be sent home for nits (eggs), they will be combed out by the school nurse and the child will be sent back to class. One case of lice now does not require notifying the whole class. Children do not need to stay home until they are lice free. The policy also reiterates that lice is not a sign of poor hygiene. This policy is in line with common practices for other districts in the Greater Boston area and is meant to reflect best practices and help children stay in the classroom so they don't miss learning.

Mr. Gomez-Pereira motioned to move the policy to the whole committee and Ms. Cabral seconded.

Mr. Gomez-Pereira motioned to adjourn and Ms. Cabral seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 5:41.

Recorded by Dr. Sarah Neville

A meeting of the Human Resource Sub Committee was held on Monday October 26th

Present for the meeting were: Superintendent Dr. Almi Abeyta, Christine Lee, Mayra Balderas, Jake Small, Claryangeliz Covas Caraballo, Shawn O'Regan, Kathryn Anderson, Katrina Klavon, Andrea Wivchar, Thomas Gordanier, Vanesa Mendoza-Mercado. Also present were Lucia Henriquez, Katherine Cabral and Jonathan Pereira.

Meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm

A motion by Mayra Balderas and seconded by Jake Small to move into Executive Session.

A motion by Claryangeliz Covas Caraballo and second by Mayra Balderas to exit Executive Session was made.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Claryangeliz Covas Caraballo and seconded by Mayra Balderas.

Meeting adjourned at 6:22pm

BUDGET & FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE — October 22, 2026

Time: 5:32–5:39 p.m.
Location: Zoom / virtual meeting
Chair: Claryangeliz Covas Caraballo

Attendance (to be reconciled with official roster and Zoom attendance):
School Committee: Claryangeliz Covas Caraballo, Shawn O'Regan, Jake Small, Ana Garcia-Hernandez, Mayra Balderas, Kati Cabral, Lucia Henriquez.
Administration/staff: Superintendent Dr. Almi Abeyta; Billie Jo Turner; Clerk Veronica Dyer-Medina (attendance to verify).
Additional participants reflected in Zoom screenshots: Kathryn Anderson, Vanessa Mendoza-Mercado, Kelleyanne Curley. Attendance at the time of the screenshots does not establish presence for the entire meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER
   With a quorum present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. and turned the presentation over to Superintendent Dr. Almi Abeyta, who introduced Billie Jo Turner.
2. CURRENT FISCAL YEAR / FIRST-QUARTER FINANCIAL UPDATE
   Ms. Turner reported budget pressures associated with the expiration of grant-supported salary funding, increased health insurance costs, a newly signed utility contract reflecting a 40% increase, an additional $500,000 in unemployment costs following a previously budgeted $200,000 amount, an increase exceeding $1 million in out-of-district tuition/placements in September, and other inflationary expenses.

The Business Office described monthly staffing and salary reconciliations with principals, reviews of contracts and vendor bills, monitoring of substitute usage, copy center expenditure reporting, and other expenditure controls. DESE October 1 student reporting and year-end reporting were underway, alongside financial statement, Title I, and special education grant audits. Ms. Turner anticipated providing the final year-end report in the next month's packet.

The Chair invited questions regarding the current-year update. No questions were raised.

1. NEXT FISCAL YEAR BUDGET PREPARATION
   Ms. Turner described a review of current-year personnel, services, supplies, and expenses to inform the next budget cycle. Three formats for presenting the budget were described as intended to improve transparency and accessibility.
2. GRANTS, GIFTS AND DONATIONS
   The subcommittee proceeded to the grants, gifts, and donations presented in

the meeting materials. Mayra Balderas moved to forward the presented items to the full School Committee; Shawn O'Regan seconded. [Confirm vote outcome against the official record.] Specific items and amounts should be reconciled with the enclosed presentation materials.

3. BUDGET TRANSFERS
   The Chair asked whether the budget transfers appearing on the agenda and in the original enclosures would be reviewed. Ms. Turner indicated they would not be taken up at this meeting. No action was taken on those transfers.
4. ADJOURNMENT
   Mayra Balderas moved to adjourn; Shawn O'Regan seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:39 PM Subcommittee would convene using a separate Zoom link.

ENCLOSURES FOR THE OFFICIAL PACKET
Please attach the meeting's financial presentation materials and related enclosures as used during the meeting and shared with committee members, including the current-year update, next-year budget presentation information, and grants/gifts/donations documentation, as applicable. The original agenda and enclosures should preserve the listing of budget transfers, with the minutes reflecting that they were not taken up.

Best,
Claryangeliz Covas Caraballo
Budget & Finance Subcommittee Chair
Chelsea School Committee, District 5



MEMORANDUM

To: Superintendent, School Committee, and Leadership Team
From: Billie Jo Turner, CFOO
Date: October 16, 2026
Sub: Presentation Architecture for FY27 Budget Analysis & Comparative Frameworks

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As we enter a period of mandatory and rigorous fiscal consolidation, our presentation strategy must transform complex operational challenges into transparent, actionable models. To do this effectively, we will evaluate district finances using three distinct versions of the budget. Crucially, our current baseline framework (Location/Department) is being updated from historical known actual expenditures to an average salary model. This adjustment removes individual personnel salary variances (such as longevity pay or advanced degrees) from site budgets, allowing leadership to analyze local spending and implement budget reductions on a true apples-to-apples basis.

Presentation 1: The Site/Location View (Location & Department with Average Salaries)
This represents our existing budget structure but is significantly enhanced for this cycle. By applying standardized average salaries across all school locations and departments rather than specific employee line-item costs, we insulate site administrators from structural salary anomalies. ***Per Attachment A***, we now see apples to apples with staffing and expenses for each school. A summary of spending by school now reflects the following:

- ELC costs about $10 million
- Four elementary schools cost approximately $5.5 million each (averaged)
- Three middle schools range from $6 to $8 million due to size and program differences
- The HS costs over $15 million
- The COA is $1.5 million
- The CVLA is $1 million

By using average salaries, we can now compare school spending by dividing the total FTE cost by number of students (used PICs most recent numbers) to get a per pupil spending for each school per the snippet below.

ELC	Berkowitz	Hooks	Kelly	Sokolowski	Browne	Clark	WSTA	CHS	COA	CVLA
$10,387,050.00	$5,637,966.00	$5,791,475.00	$5,230,745.00	$5,717,899.00	$7,154,352.00	$8,227,288.00	$6,176,402.00	$15,400,402.00	$1,565,402.00	$1,070,402.00
$15,365.46	$13,328.52	$14,551.44	$11,129.24	$14,153.22	$16,599.42	$13,059.19	$14,397.21	$11,031.81	$12,423.83	$26,760.05

• School Building Campuses: Isolates per-pupil and operational spending assigned to specific elementary, middle, and high school sites.
• Centralized Support Departments: Captures administrative arms that service the entire district, such as Special Education Administration, Human Resources, and English Language Learners (ELL).
• Core Operations & Hubs: Reconciles centralized physical plants, district facilities, and transportation logistics hubs.

Presentation 2: The Compliance View (DESE Function Series Budget)
See Attachment B

This model translates our site structures directly into state reporting compliance standards. It categorizes spending into the major DESE accounting series, which is essential for protecting mandated operational programs from arbitrary cuts. These include the following (from DESEs ChartAccounts):

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gt1m_JI_lnwei9Cp4jE8Tk-5Jl4P-EoHzZO4aOrEpW0/edit?usp=sharing

1. District Administration 1XXX series
    a. 1100 School Committee
    b. 1200 Superintendent
    c. 1400 Finance & HR
2. Instructional Costs 2XXX series
    a. 23XX Teachers and Paras
    b. 24XX Supplies
    c. 25XX Library
    d. 27XX Guidance and Social Work
    e. 28XX Psych
3. Pupil Services 3XXX series -Encompasses Student Transportation, Food Service operations, Athletics, and extracurricular Student Activities
    a. Transportation
    b. Food Service
    c. Athletics
    d. Student Activities
    e. Etc

4. Facilities 4XXX series -Contains all custodial services, building maintenance, utility structures, and plant operations
5. Benefits 5XXX series - Captures employee health insurance, retirement contributions, life insurance, and mandated employer assessments
6. Tuition 9XXX series - Tracks out-of-district special education tuitions and charter school assessments

Presentation 3: The Public & Operational Input View (The "People's Budget")

This framework strips away complex accounting codes and municipal boundaries, translating the entire budget into plain language for community stakeholders and the public. It clarifies exactly what resources the district purchases to operate. ***See Attachment C***

1. People: The consolidated cost of staff salaries and benefits across all job categories. This will tie to an FTE Summary.
2. Supplies: Consumable materials directly utilized inside the classroom and office space
3. Expenses: network infrastructure, software licensing systems, and instructional hardware, utility expenses, fuel, postage, copying
4. Services: Contracted external services and professional development

The table below summaries how each of these three versions will offer a strategic utility for cost cutting in addition to additional transparency.

Presentation Model	Primary Analytical Focus	Strategic Utility for Cost-Cutting
1. Location & Dept (Average Salaries)	Site-by-site operational footprint with normalized personnel costs.	Enables apples-to-apples comparison to delegate budget cuts fairly without punishing schools with senior staff.
2. DESE Function Series	State reporting compliance and mandate structures (3000, 4000, 5000, 9000).	Protects legally mandated services and identifies structural overhead variances.
3. The People's Budget	Input categories (People, Supplies, Expenses, Goods) in plain language.	Provides total community transparency regarding major cost categories (e.g., salary vs. non-salary ratios).



MEMORANDUM

To: Superintendent, School Committee, and Leadership Team
From: Billie Jo Turner, CFOO
Date: October 20, 2026
Sub: Finance & Operations Quarterly Update

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a comprehensive update on the district's fiscal status following the close of Quarter One (Q1) for the 2026–2027 school year. With transparency and timely information as our key goals and priorities of CPS budgeting, we are sharing our concerns throughout the year rather than at year end. While our academic frameworks are successfully underway, structural changes in grant eligibility and unanticipated non-salary obligations have introduced severe cost pressures to our General Fund. Some were anticipated while others were unexpected. This memo details major findings over Quarter 1 including a major state revenue update already presented to you alongside these immediate expenditure challenges to inform upcoming strategic decisions.

Revenue Updated:

Chapter 70 Adjustment

The district has successfully finalized and processed an updated **Chapter 70 state aid revenue total of $477,218,000** with the City. This “pothole” funds increase allowed the Superintendent to reinstate tutors. This decision was made PRIOR to learning that the grants were cut.

Grant Shortfalls/Revenue Reduction

During Q1, our financial team identified staffing and funding issues tied to a **substantial drying up of federal Title I allocations**. To protect classroom stability, maintain required student support services, and

completely avoid immediate or disruptive employee layoffs, we proactively **transferred several Title I personnel directly onto the district's General Fund**. While this intervention successfully protected our workforce and minimized operational disruption, it has permanently increased our local salary obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year. Going forward, we will implement a policy to prevent mid-year transfers of staffing from grants to the general fund.

Expenses Updated:

In addition to the reduction in revenue, the General Fund was heavily impacted by increasing costs and other budget busters/cost drivers at the start of this fiscal cycle:

- **Astronomical Cost Escalations:** Across the board, we are continuing to experience severe, compounding price hikes in non-discretionary operations—specifically within specialized student transportation, contracted trade services, utility baselines, and out-of-district specialized tuition.
- **Out of District Tuition** - Our budget currently is 25% Special Education costs. The needs of students continue to grow despite the shrinking dollars. In Chelsea, we also have space issues that must be considered when trying to bring programs in house.
- **Unemployment Claims Surge:** The district was hit with an unexpected, retroactive increase of over $500,000 in unemployment liabilities.
- **Use of copy center, subs and nursing subs** has skyrocketed and spending controls must be implemented immediately
- Negotiated a **one year heating contract - 40% increase**

Immediate Financial Next Steps:

To balance these competing dynamics and maintain a stable financial position heading into Quarter Two, the Business Office is executing the following measures:

1. **Line-Item Freeze:** Initiating an immediate freeze on all non-essential, discretionary expenditures at the District Level to safeguard personnel lines
2. **Review of all vendor proposals to ensure market rating/Prioritizing**
3. Preparing **all inclusive summaries of spending for the Superintendent to prioritize** 4. Conducting an **ongoing in house financial efficiency audit** reviewing vendor spending including scope updates and audits of billing, personnel reconciliations, special ed reviews to ensure maintenance of effort while also reducing costs through exceptions to align with enrollment changes, transportation reviews, tech subscription reviews, facilities and operations projects, etc.

Summary of Q1 Budget Adjustments

Financial Component	Status / Impact Fiscal Effect Action Taken on General Fund

Chapter 70 State Aid	Absorbed personnel into the General Fund to prevent layoffs.
Title I Grant Exhaustion	Unbudgeted deficit absorbed by Q1 reserves.
Unemployment Insurance	Tightening discretionary purchase controls.
Operational Volatility Processed & updated with city	
Federal grant dried up	
Unforeseen spike in claims	
High inflation across trades/transit **+$477,218,000 (Total Base)**	
Significant Deficit -$1 m	
-$500,000+ Expenditure	
Significant Structural Increase Reconciled into active municipal accounts.	