

EASTHAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EASTHAMPTON MUNICIPAL BUILDING

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

In Person/Hybrid

50 Payson Avenue, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Monday, March 9, 2026

3:30 PM

Present

Megan W. Harvey, Laura Scott, Bonnie Atkins, Superintendent Michelle Balch, Director of Business Services Julia Saari-Franks, Mayor Salem Derby

Call to Order

Subcommittee Chair Megan Harvey called the meeting to order at 3:39 pm.

Public Comment

None

FY'27 Budget
Update

Julia Saari-Franks, the Director of Business Services, reviewed the final version of the proposed FY'27 budget, starting with the Proposed Operating Budget General Fund Appropriations. (See attached document.) The committee reviewed actual spending in FY'25, the budget as approved for FY'26, and the proposed budget for FY'27. The specific increase in dollar amount and the percentage increase for FY'27 was discussed by category. The overall proposed FY'27 operating budget based on district needs includes a 9.54% increase from the FY'26 operating budget. The increase is largely driven by large increases in out of district tuition, tuition to vocational programs, and transportation within the district and to bring students to out of district placements.

The committee then reviewed FY'27 Proposed Non-General Fund Spending. (See attached document). This includes all spending for FY'27 that does not come out of the general fund, including school choice funds, circuit breaker funds, chapter 71 revolving funds, Title I funds, and SPED 240, tuition revolving, athletic revolving, and food service revolving funds. Proposed non-general fund spending totals to ~ \$3.4 million for FY'27. The committee noted two items to keep an eye on: 1) Title I funding has decreased in MA because enrollment has decreased in MA, and 2) We are unsure how/if rapid changes in oil prices will impact transportation costs for FY'27 (note that this applies to the general fund as well).

The committee reviewed Revolving Accounts – FY'25 Activity. (See attached document.) This document provides an overview of activity in the revolving

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funds from FY'25, as that's the most recent fully complete year of data, to address questions from the mayor about how non-general funds enter and exit the district. It also highlights how non-general funds have been used to offset spending from the general fund – a necessary practice but unsustainable when offsets exceed incoming funds year over year. In FY'25, for example, the balance in revolving funds was ~\$2.0 million at the start of the year and ~ \$1.1 million at the end of the year.

Finally, the committee reviewed Capital Improvements Plans for FY'26 – FY'31, which includes updated video surveillance in the high school, updating telephones at the high school to be E911 compliant, and updating the Storage Access Network, which is housed at the high school. (See attached document.) The committee and Mayor Derby discussed efficiency in some of these capital updates with city updates.

Laura Scott motioned to approve the proposed FY'27 budget as presented. Bonnie Atkins seconded the motion. Roll call vote (Laura Scott – yes; Bonnie Atkins – yes; Megan Harvey – yes). Vote passes 3-0-0.

FY'26 Update	Julia Saari-Franks provided the committee with an update on the current fiscal year. There will likely be a deficit in the end of the year budget due to unexpectedly high out of district tuition costs. Our current estimate of the deficit is ~\$700k. As previously discussed, there are some savings from the vocational tuition budget line, which will be used to offset the deficit. Expect more updates on this deficit in the coming months.
Other Business	None
Next Meeting Dates	No Finance Subcommittee meetings are scheduled at this time Tuesday, March 24 2026 6:00 PM –School Committee Regular Session / Public Hearing on FY'27 Budget – In-person/hybrid
Adjourn	Laura Scott made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Bonnie Atkins. Motion passes unanimously. Meeting is adjourned at 4:25 pm.

Secretary