



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

MARTIN J. WALSH
MAYOR

June 17, 2019

TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Dear Councilors:

I retransmit herewith an appropriation order for the Boston Public Schools (BPS) for Fiscal Year 2020, in the amount of \$1.177 billion, submitted pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 224 of the Acts of 1936, as amended by Chapter 190 of the Acts of 1982, as further amended by Chapter 701 of the Acts of 1986, Chapter 613 of the Acts of 1987, and Chapter 108 of the Acts of 1991.

After over 30 City Council budget hearings and with the successful settlement of the Boston Teacher Union contract, the BPS FY20 appropriation will increase by \$38.7 million since my initial submission. This change from the recommended budget filed in April includes the additional funding required to meet our obligations and investments included in the Boston Teachers Union contract and a \$100,000 investment for menstrual product access for students.

Ensuring that our young people have access to the best educational opportunities available is our City's shared responsibility. From parents to teachers, community to government, our collective efforts can make progress to close opportunity gaps for all students.

Investing in that shared responsibility is the key to lifting up future generations of Bostonians, and this budget provides for that promise. This year's \$51 million or 4.5% increase in BPS prioritizes school-based investments in line with our goals of equity, flexibility, and stability. We are sustaining our research-backed core investments like extended learning time, and infusing new funds into targeted school-based initiatives determined by individual school communities. BPS has also launched a new transparency tool to track every dollar spent at BPS to ensure it is being done in an efficient and equitable manner.

Next year's BPS budget will also include new funding to invest in lower performing schools, grow vocational programs, support at-risk high school students, expand engagement services that help families navigate the system, and strengthen science instruction. We're also funding the important step of bringing the ISEE test, used for entrance into the district's three exam schools, into every student's school in 6th grade.

But success at BPS is also built on an early foundation. That's why, in addition to sustaining our BPS investments in universal pre-kindergarten (UPK), we are proposing a first-of-its kind, \$15 million investment in the new Quality Pre-K Fund. The Quality Pre-K Fund will support the creation of a city-wide, mixed delivery system with school-based programs and community-based centers that will put the City on a path to guarantee every four-year-old in Boston a high-quality pre-kindergarten experience.

With this commitment, on the first day of school in September 2019, up to 865 new four-year-olds will start in a quality pre-kindergarten program since this initiative began in FY14, more than halfway toward our goal of 1,500. We will expand this investment to nearly 995 four-year-olds the year after, and fully reach our goal within five years. That's tangible progress, which will create opportunity, close achievement gaps, and make a meaningful difference in the lives of Boston children and their families.

The education investments in the FY20 Recommended Budget represent nearly half of all new operating budget spending in FY20. With the BPS recommended budget, the UPK investments and charter school tuition growth, education funding will add over \$90 million to our City budget, accounting for over 51% of our total increase in City spending. In addition, public education spending remains 40% of our city budget; spending is up over \$340 million on an annual basis since FY14; and per-pupil spending at BPS will top \$20,000, a 25% increase over the past six years.

While we are proud to propose a budget that continues to prioritize funding in education, it comes at a time when net state aid to support our students continues to decline. We have experienced a precipitous decline in net state aid over the past decade, driven by stagnant state education funding and rising, uncapped costs. Despite some progress and continued dialogue with Legislators on Beacon Hill, next year alone we are slated to potentially lose \$12 million in funding. This is unsustainable and, more importantly, inequitable.

I am hopeful that as the Commonwealth considers once-in-a-generation changes to how K-12 schools are funded, our students will not be left out of the Commonwealth's commitment to public education. In Boston, we educate among the highest concentrations of high need students across the state. That's why we partnered with cities, towns, school committees, superintendents and Legislators from across the Commonwealth to propose a fundamental fix to how schools are funded.

Every young person, in every community, deserves a full opportunity to learn, to dream, and to thrive in our 21st-century world. We will continue to ask for your partnership as we push for legislation at the State House that will change the City's educational future.

I respectfully request your support of the FY20 appropriation for the Boston Public Schools.

Sincerely,

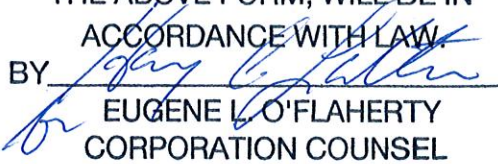


Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston

**CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL**

ORDERED: That pursuant to Chapter 224 of the Acts of 1936, as amended by Chapter 190 of the Acts of 1982, and as further amended by Chapter 701 of the Acts of 1986, Chapter 613 of the Acts of 1987, and Chapter 108 of the Acts of 1991, to meet the current operating expenses of the School Department in the fiscal period commencing July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020, the sum of ONE BILLION ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED TWENTY-SIX THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED NINETY-EIGHT dollars (\$1,177,526,598) be, and the same hereby is, appropriated, said sum to be raised by taxation pursuant to Section 23 of Chapter 59 of the General Laws:

Boston School Department \$1,177,526,598

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT
THE FOREGOING, IF PASSED IN
THE ABOVE FORM, WILL BE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH LAW
BY 
EUGENE L. O'FLAHERTY
CORPORATION COUNSEL