



# NEWTON

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Office of Superintendent of  
Schools

Dr. Anna P. Nolin

To: Newton School Committee  
From: Anna Nolin, Superintendent  
Re: Budget Update Final: FY 26  
Date: May 19, 2025

I tried to write a **neutral-ground summary memo** that aligns with both my position as Superintendent and Mayor Fuller's positions, while respecting the roles of the School Committee and City Council under Newton's city charter and Massachusetts General Law. This memo details the compromise, picking up from where we left off in April of 2025. It also includes a **draft School Committee motion**.

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### **Newton Public Schools FY26 Budget Recommendation Summary Memo**

**To:** Newton School Committee

**From:** Dr. Anna Nolin, Superintendent

**Date:** May 19, 2025

**Subject:** Summary of Final FY26 Budget Recommendation for Approval

Over the past several months, the Newton Public Schools (NPS), in collaboration with the Mayor and City financial leadership, have engaged in sustained discussions to close the \$2,443,023 gap between the School Committee's approved FY26 budget and the City's proposed allocation. These discussions have been guided by shared goals: maintaining direct services to students, supporting the stability of school operations, and preserving the City's long-term fiscal integrity.

The resulting recommendation reflects financial realities while minimizing the impact on students, families, and staff. Below is a summary of the recommended elements:

## **Recommendation on Funding and Reductions**

### **Use of Free Cash (June 30, 2024 Certified Free Cash) – Total \$4,995,612**

1. The Superintendent and the Mayor recommend substituting an additional \$1.1 million of free cash to address specific maintenance costs.

**\$1.1 million to fund** specific Charter Maintenance items from the district's operating budget selected by NPS composed of the following list of summer projects: [Summer Projects](#) **\$635,414 as well as** \$464,586 for two items from the operating charter maintenance line:

- **•\$300,000 to fund** upgrades to Newton South High School --reconfiguration of spaces and accessibility and repair items
- **•\$164,586 to fund** repair for items identified during preventative maintenance inspections for elevator, HVAC, and air handlers.

This is added to below use of Free Cash;

2. **\$1,170,612 to fund** departmental expenses, including (already docketed by the Mayor and approved by the city council finance committee last week):

- IT needs and Chromebooks
- Charter maintenance backlog
- Thrive PD and transportation consulting
- Science consumables and curriculum materials

3. **\$1.3 million to fund** health insurance increases (already docketed by the Mayor and approved by city council)

And finally, the Mayor will amend the docket request of \$2.525 million for a NPS list of facility projects to use \$1.1 million for Charter Maintenance projects selected by NPS (as described above) and \$1.425 million will fund the following:

4. **\$1.425 million to fund** capital facility improvements selected by NPS

- Theater rigging
- Secondary gym equipment replacement
- Replacement of portion of Williams roof
- Upgrades to Newton South auditorium, cafeteria and space utilization
- Mason Rice unit ventilators
- Arts equipment replacements (stools, stands, tables, risers)

**Reductions Recommended by NPS to Eliminate Remaining Funding Gap - Total  
\$1,350,000**

This is the portion of the memo that needs your careful review as we spoke of ideas for reductions in theory and now we have to put some of them into action. The good news is we do not have to make the full \$2.4m reductions previously discussed. From the previously proposed reductions, I recommend the following:

**Non-Personnel Reductions (previously proposed)**

- **\$243,689** of operational costs such as MCAS tutoring stipends, field trip stipends, a late bus for athletics, language awards testing
- **\$350,000** previously proposed and discussed small amounts drawn from revolving accounts deployed to defray operational costs in FY 26 budget to increase carryforward by this amount

**Total Non-Personnel Reductions: \$593,689**

**Personnel Reductions (all previously proposed)**

- \$293,000 digital learning coordinators/IT staff (3 FTE)
- \$30,925 Student Services Visually Impaired Teacher (.32 FTE)

**Total Personnel Reductions: \$310,950 (3.2 FTE)**

## **Delays and Reduction of Spending –Formerly Proposed Possible Reductions, now delayed items**

### **Preschool Class–Delay Opening to February given current 3-year old headcount**

This is a classroom that exists in preschool now, but we would reduce it for the fall of 2025 and re-add it next calendar year (Feb 2026) as legally required when the full class of 3 year olds may be eligible and expected to enroll. We have found a way to temporarily place the teacher to fill a preschool leave until the new classroom is ready.

- 1 preschool classroom for aging-in preschoolers: **total reduction \$146,757, # of FTE reductions saved: 2.575**

### **Reach Program Part 2–Delay Opening to February given IEP schedule and when these families will need to know the program is available vs. outside placement**

4 special education aides: total cost \$141,444, these will allow us to address the movement of elementary students who may become 5th grade Reach students (we will open half of this program in fall of 2025 –grade 4 and the rest of grade 5 – will need to be added by Feb of 2026).

- **Saves \$141,144 or 4 FTE of aide reductions**

**TOTAL delay and use of revolving to fund carryforward and the delay of program implementation: saves NPS \$350,000+ \$146,757 + \$141,144 = \$638,201.**

Doing this means NPS does not reduce any student facing current classroom teaching positions already in the budget and restores most student services reductions.

### **Total reductions by NPS:**

**\$243,689 + \$310,950 (3.2 FTE) reductions + \$445,361 in program delay = \$1,000,000**

## **Remaining Concerns and Assumptions**

- The Superintendent and the Mayor both understand that the School Committee will advocate **throughout the FY26 school year and** FY27 budget process to move as much of the expenses supported by Free Cash as possible into the NPS FY27 base allocation budget.
- The Superintendent anticipates, but at this time cannot assure, an incremental ~\$872,250 of Chapter 70 funding coming from the Commonwealth to the City of Newton.
- The **Free Cash allocations are subject to City Council vote**; the School Committee's approval is required only for the **operating budget** portion.

### **Next Steps and Recommendation**

In consultation with the Mayor and our legal counsel, and in light of the city charter authority, I recommend the School Committee approve the revised budget in the motion below, which aligns with the authorized FY26 appropriation and has been crafted in partnership with the school district's attorney, Andy Waugh.

**DRAFT MOTION I [ SC member ] move that the School Committee vote to authorize the superintendent to use a budget of \$292,963,623 for FY26.**

**This budget includes two funding sources:**

- **An operating budget allocation of \$288,713,973 from the City of Newton.**
- **A stabilization fund distribution of \$4,249,650**

**In addition to the funding sources above, the School Committee supports the the following NPS-related Free Cash items totaling \$4,995,612:**

- **\$1,300,000 for health insurance costs;**
  - **\$1,170,612 for departmental expenses;**
  - **\$1,100,000 for charter maintenance costs; and**
  - **\$1.425 million for a NPS list of facilities projects**

### **Closing Note**

This recommendation balances fiscal prudence and our educational mission. It minimizes harm to student-facing positions, preserves strategic investments, and strengthens our advocacy for adequate base funding moving forward.