

Melrose Public Schools - FY16 Budget Guidelines and Priorities January 6, 2015

It is the responsibility of the Melrose School Committee to review and approve the annual budget for the Melrose Public Schools. The Melrose School Committee and Administration will follow guidelines and priorities throughout the budget development process to ensure:

- transparency of process and accounting,
- strategic planning to create sustainable model for continuous growth,
- public input, including but not limited to, public comment during each category review, through site council planning, and at public budget forum,
- and maximum impact on teaching and learning.

I. FY16 Funding Priorities

The School Committee provides the following priorities to serve as a guide for community input, budget development and strategic decisions.

- Program** - Ensure access to engaging and appropriately challenging curriculum and instruction, for example through class offerings, curriculum alignment, differentiation of instruction, blended learning, and instructional practices
- People** - Maximize value of teacher contract to recruit, hire, train and retain staff who demonstrate high impact teaching practices and are supported to thrive in a professional learning community
- Resources** - Build and maintain a high quality learning environment including but not limited to staff, materials, technology, and facilities
- Reserves and Contingency** - Allow flexibility to address unexpected and hard to predict resource allocation due to the changing needs of the political, economic and educational environment

II. Current Fiscal Environment

The Melrose Public School Budget is impacted by available revenue, contractual obligations and state mandates. The School Committee will examine these conditions throughout the budget development process.

- Federal, State and Local Funding Conditions
- Contractual Obligations, including union contracts, retirement and benefits, special education
- State Mandates, including special education, educator evaluation, PARCC, RETELL
- Structural Deficit

III. Budget Formats

The School Committee and Administration will explore a variety of budget presentation formats to consider district spending more intentionally aligned with district wide goals and to allow for long-range planning.

- Historical Line Item Budget - Allocation of dollars by cost center (as listed below)
- Educators by Step and Lane (FTE) - Allocation of dollars based on teacher salary table
- Program Budget - Allocation of funding by each education program function

IV. Budget Organization

- Revenues
 - Local Aid
 - City Appropriation
 - Federal and State Grants
 - Applied Revenue (including Athletics, Use of Facilities, Circuit Breaker, School Choice)
 - Approved Fees including Education Stations, ECC, athletics, music - direct offset fees that do not appear in the budget
- Cost Centers

1. All Elementary Schools
 2. Middle School
 3. High School
 4. ECC
 5. Special Education
 6. Athletics
 7. Curriculum and Instruction
 8. Technology
 9. Administration
 10. System Wide
- C. Expense Categories (detailed within each Cost Center)
1. Salary
 2. Supplies and Materials
 3. Equipment and Technology
 4. Contracted Services

V. Budget Process and Calendar

The School Committee and Administration will follow this process and timeline to create the FY16 Budget.

Step	Process	Timeline
1.	Budget guidelines along with district goals/request for goals are distributed to budget holders	October 10, 2014
2.	Preliminary budget projections and goals submitted to the Director of Finance for review	November 21, 2014
3.	Completed School Council Meetings on Budget	December 18, 2014
4.	FY 16 Budget Finances, Process, and Proposals *	January 6, 2015
5.	Revised Budget *	January 13, 2015
6.	Budget presented to School Committee *	February 24, 2015
7.	School Committee review of Revenue, Revolving Accounts, including Athletics, Education Stations, and the Early Childhood Center **	March 3, 2015
8.	School Committee review of Staffing and Contracted Services **	March 10, 2015
9.	School Committee review of Supplies, Materials, and Technology **	March 17, 2015
10.	School Committee review of Special Education and Curriculum and Instruction, including Professional Development **	March 24, 2015
11.	Public Budget Hearing ***	March 31, 2015
12.	School Committee public budget deliberation discussion and vote on final budget and proposed fees *	April 14, 2015
13.	Present budget to Board of Aldermen as part of the Mayor's budget	TBD

*Public comment welcome and encouraged at the beginning of each school committee meeting.

** An additional public comment session will be added after discussion of each budget category.

*** Public budget forum specifically for public comment prior to budget approval.