



February 6, 2026

Dear Belmont Public Schools Community,

On January 23, 2026, [Superintendent Geiser provided the community with an update](#) on the development of the FY27 (2026–2027) budget. I want to explain how this budget context relates to ongoing contract negotiations with the Belmont Education Association (BEA).

**The total budget for Belmont Public Schools in the current school year (FY26) is \$70.62 million, a 5.6% increase over the FY25 budget allocation.** This budget was supported in part by the operational override approved by voters in April 2024, which allowed the district to maintain key positions that support students' academic and social-emotional needs and to staff two new in-district special education programs at the CUE and BHS.

[Under the Town's multi-year financial model](#), the schools are projected to receive a **5.3% increase in funding for FY27**, which will result in a total budget of approximately \$73.37 million for Belmont Public Schools. The model also anticipates **modestly declining growth rates for the school budget in future years (e.g., 5.2% in FY28)**.

In the Superintendent's initial FY27 budget projections, anticipated expenses exceeded the amount allocated by the Town by approximately \$3.78 million. Although her later revisions closed this gap, the initial projection highlighted ongoing cost pressures, including rising special education expenses, higher substitute costs, maintaining high-quality curriculum, increasing health insurance rates, inflation, and the district's obligation to meet existing contractual commitments and mandated services.

**These fiscal realities have implications for the ongoing negotiations with the BEA**, including consideration of the salary and wage increases proposed by BEA leadership.

The current FY27 budget proposal includes funding to support our latest offers across all bargaining units. In other words, **our compensation proposals have been developed within the constraints of the FY27 budget.**

Our most recent offers for educators (Unit A) include:

Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA):

- 2.5%, 2.5% (2.25% steps 12-14), 2.5% (2.25% steps 12-14)
- Estimated Costs (3 years): \$9.65M

Parental Leave:

- 10 days paid leave plus 10 days paid, drawn from sick leave bank, plus
- 8 weeks of accumulated sick and/or personal days
- Estimated Cost: \$476K annually

Supplemental One-Time Payment:

- One time payment \$500 per Unit A member
- Estimated Cost: \$194,500

**Under existing contract provisions, educator salaries in our budget are projected to increase by 4.4% from FY26 to FY27.** With our proposals, this would provide meaningful and sustainable salary growth for educators and [help maintain their competitive position at the top of the pay scale among comparable districts.](#)

We also share the view that compensation for Unit C (Administrative Assistants and Clerical Aides) and Unit D (Paraprofessionals, Classroom Aides, Campus Monitors, and Building Substitutes) should be improved. To that end, we proposed a multi-year 8–11% COLA across both units (Cost: \$2.24M), additional paid time for Unit D (Cost: \$650K over 3 Years), increased FMLA protections for Unit D, increased longevity payments for Unit C, and a meaningful one-time payment for all in Units C and D ([Cost: \\$165K](#)).

These investments are possible in part because of the \$8.4 million override approved by Belmont voters in April 2024. The most recent BEA proposals exceed what Belmont taxpayers can currently afford under the Town’s financial model.

Proposals that exceed what the Town has allocated for the FY27 school budget would require difficult tradeoffs, including layoffs or other reductions in student programs and services. Our goal is to avoid those outcomes while still reaching fair agreements for members of all BEA units.

**Next Steps:**

We are awaiting the next stage of mediation with the assistance of a State mediator and will continue to keep the community informed as the process moves forward. For more information about negotiations, including FAQs, please visit: <https://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/o/bps/page/collective-bargaining-2025>.

Meg Moriarty, Ed.D., BSC Chair

