



FRANKLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Massachusetts

FY27 Superintendent's Recommended Budget

*Level Services through
Fiscal Discipline • Transparency • Strategic Planning*

Jana Melotti
School Business Administrator

Lucas Giguere
Superintendent

January 27, 2026

Tonight's Overview

- ❖ FY27 Budget Theme & Context
- ❖ Bottom Line & Key Cost Drivers
- ❖ Strategic Actions: Reorganization + Zero Balanced Budget (ZBB) Approach
- ❖ Major Cost Drivers (Gen Ed, SPED, Transportation, Healthcare)
- ❖ Revenue Areas (Revolving, Grants, Circuit Breaker)
- ❖ Timeline



Franklin High School



Franklin Middle School



Washington Street K-2 & 3-5



Lincoln Street K-2 & 3-5



ECDC at Oak Street



ECDC at Pond Street



Aligning Resources to the Portrait of a Graduate (PoG)

FY27 prioritize teaching and learning, student wellbeing, and equitable opportunities aligned to the PoG.



Strategic Objectives



Navigating a Challenging Fiscal Landscape

Commitment to Services

Recommended budget protects core programs prioritizes students, with a total operating request of **\$81.2M**



Sustainability

Reduced reliance on one-time revolving funds to support long term stability



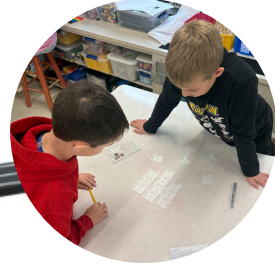
Structural Deficit

Contractual, SPED, and Healthcare costs are rising faster than State Aid and Local revenues.



Strategic Reorg. Savings

\$3.2M in avoided recurring costs from reorganization as a commitment to optimizing our resources.



FY27 Budget Development Process



Strategic

Resources are aligned to FPS priorities with a focus on efficiency, equity, and long-term fiscal sustainability.



Transparent

Constraints, and trade-offs are communicated clearly so stakeholders understand what is funded, what is at risk, and why.

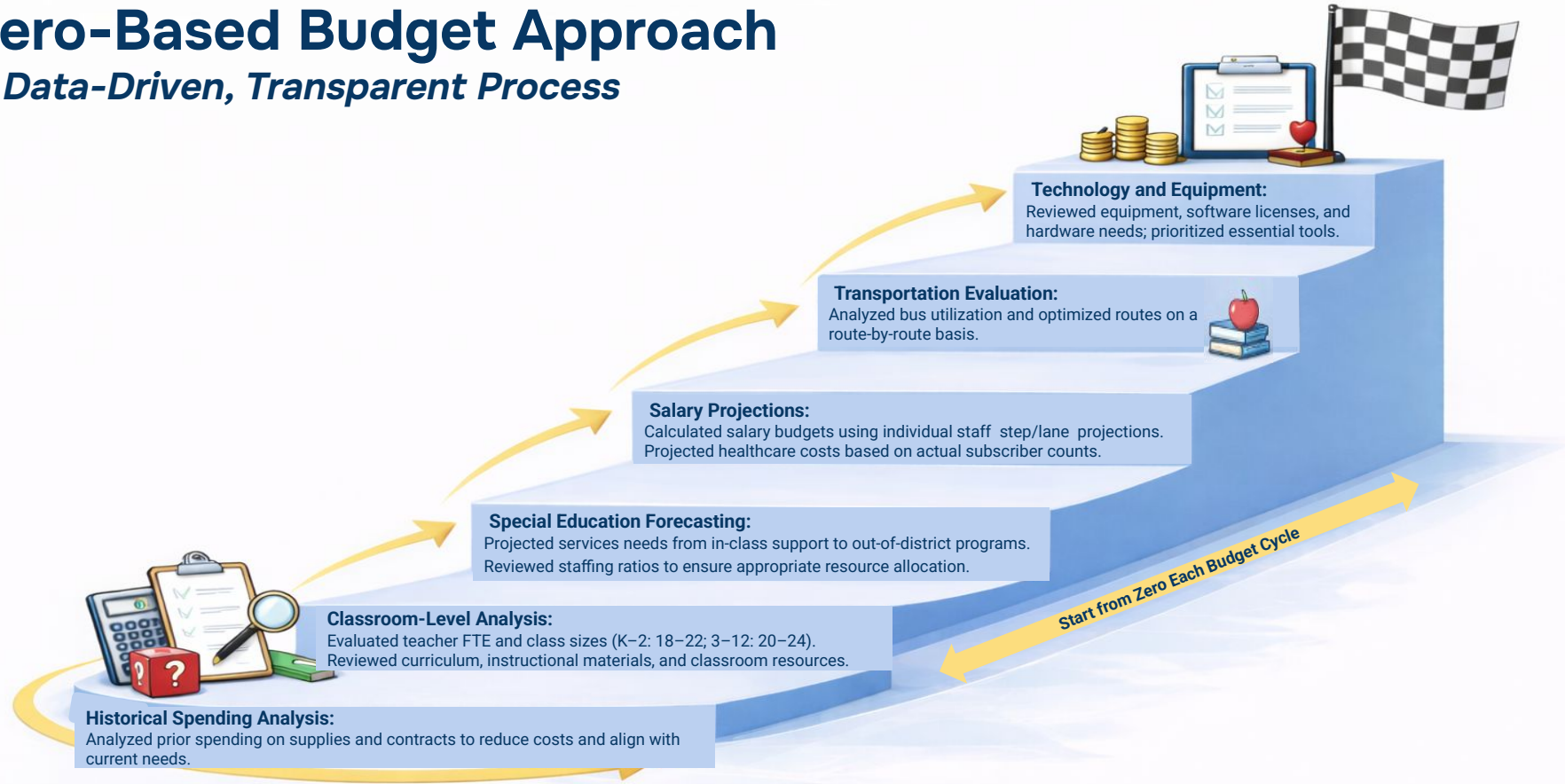


Collaborative

Developed in partnership with school, district, department leaders to support our educators and students.

Zero-Based Budget Approach

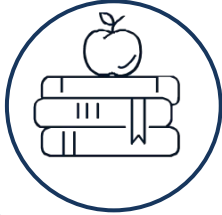
A Data-Driven, Transparent Process



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FPS applied a zero-based budgeting approach to every major cost center to ensure spending aligns with actual need.

District Overview



About Us

- **Schools:** 7
- **Teachers:** 384.6 Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)
- **Total Employees:** 1,039



Financial Data

- **Total Per Pupil Expenditure* (FY24):** \$19,414
- **FY26 Chapter 70 State Aid:** \$30,460,643



Student Enrollment

- **District:** 4327
- **ECDC:** 135
- **Lincoln St. Elementary K-2:** 497
- **Lincoln St. Elementary 3-5:** 536
- **Washington St. Elementary K-2:** 424
- **Washington St. Elementary 3-5:** 399
- **Franklin Middle School:** 998
- **Franklin High School:** 1338



Franklin serves 4,327 students across seven schools while spending below the state average per pupil—requiring disciplined, strategic budgeting to maintain services.

*2024 is the latest data available
[Spending Comparisons - School Finance](#)

The Bottom Line:

FY27 Budget Request Overview

Operating Budget Request

\$72,341,254

+2.5% increase

Healthcare Request*

\$8,814,000

+14% increase

Total Request

\$81,155,254

+3.6% Total Increase



Staffing
(Foundational Driver)

Education is a people-centered service. Staffing levels reflect enrollment, program needs, and current school structures.



Compliance
(Non-Discretionary Costs)

Required costs driven by mandates and contracts, including special education, transportation, and collective bargaining obligations.



Operations
(Structural Supports for Learning)

Organizational supports sustaining the educational model, including class size structures and academic, behavioral, and mental-health services.

**Healthcare Request includes: Health Insurance and Medicare for active employees*

What FY27 Requires to Maintain Level Services

Maintaining FY26 services in FY27 requires protecting core programs while absorbing rising fixed costs.

Key Drivers of Level-Service Budgeting

Mandated Services & Compliance

- Special education tuition and transportation
- State and federal requirements
- Services for students with complex needs
- Projected health insurance increases

Preserving Core Programs

- Core academic programs and staffing aligned to recommended class sizes
- Safety, mental health, and student supports
- Curriculum materials and professional development

Optimizing Resources

- Reallocation of staff, materials, and funds to match enrollment and caseload needs
- Stabilize class sizes
- Reorganization efficiencies that stabilize the system

Collective Bargaining & Obligations

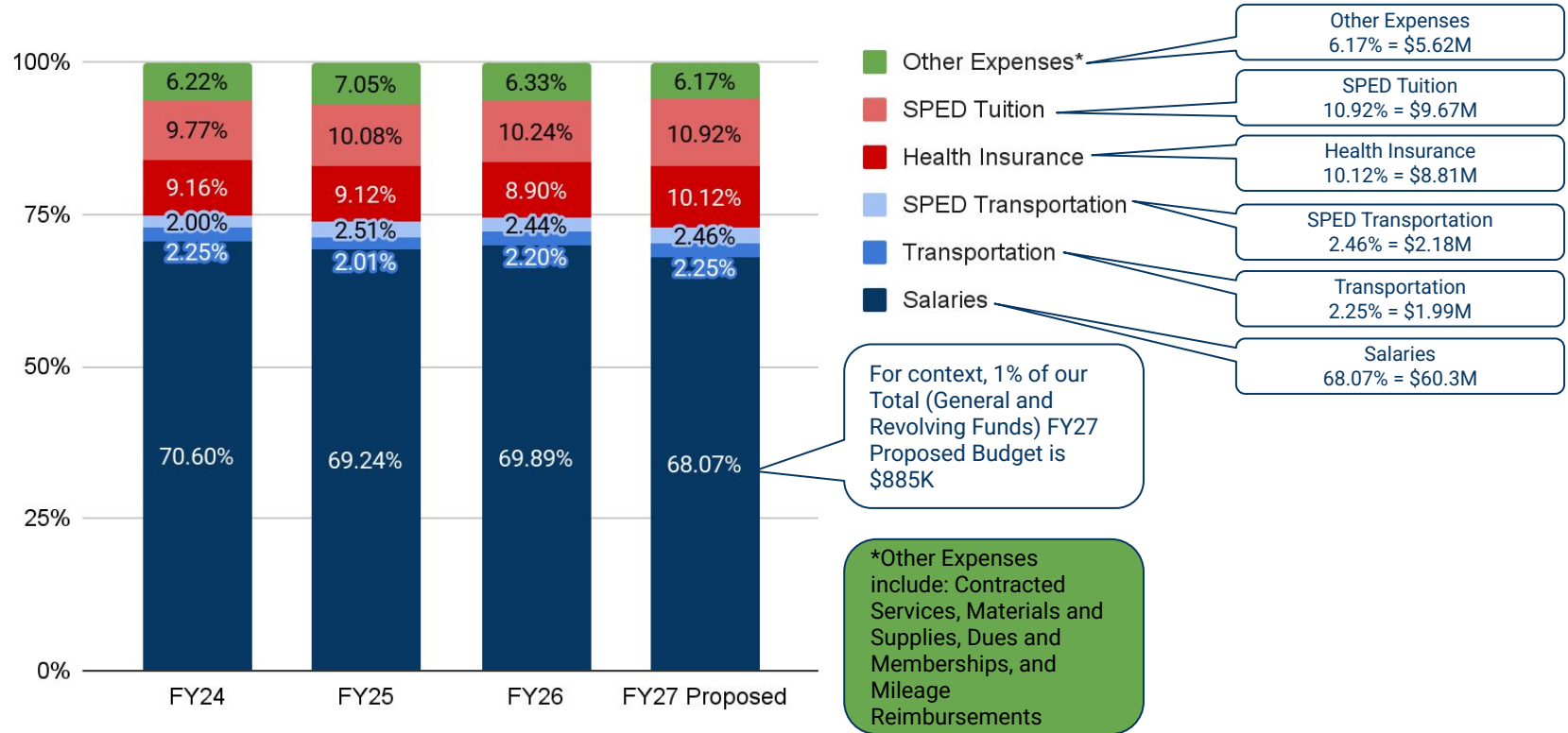
- Anticipated collective bargaining agreements and current contractual obligations
- Projected health insurance increase
- Increases in special education tuition and transportation

Revenue Alignment

- Budget decisions informed by anticipated
 - Chapter 70 aid
 - Circuit Breaker reimbursement
 - Grants



Review of Budget Drivers



Structural Reorganization Generated \$3.2M in Cost Avoidance

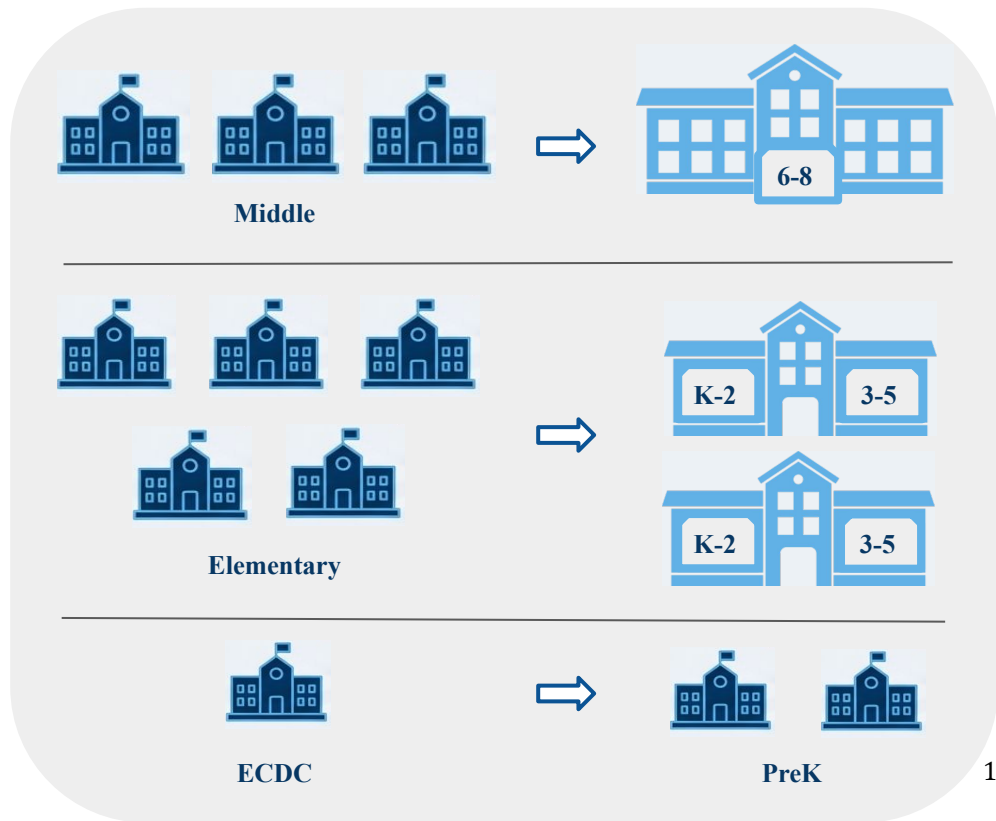
Reorganization was a necessary financial stabilization strategy.

The Shift

- Middle School: Unified all three middle schools into one Franklin Middle School.
- Elementary: Consolidated 5 schools into 2 K-5 complexes (Washington Street and Lincoln Street).
- ECDC: Expanded to Pond Street to increase capacity and revenue.

Financial Impact

Avoided \$3.1M in recurring costs in FY26 and at least \$3.2M in FY27 (compounded).



Annual Staffing Model

FPS conducts an annual staffing review to align resources with student needs and district priorities.



Data-Informed Review

Staffing is reviewed annually using enrollment data, program needs, and service requirements.



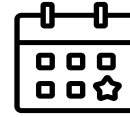
Alignment to School Structures

Staffing reflects current school configurations and instructional models to ensure consistency and equity across schools.



Reallocation of Positions

When adjustments are needed, existing positions may be reassigned to better match student and program needs.



Natural Attrition Consideration

Retirements and resignations are monitored and incorporated into staffing plans when appropriate.



Districtwide Perspective

Decisions balance classroom needs, specialized services, and overall fiscal responsibility.

This process supports stability for educators and students while responsibly managing resources.



Approach to Staffing Example

Lincoln St. K-2 (497 students)		Lincoln St. 3-5 (536 students)		Washington K-2 (424 students)		Washington 3-5 (399 students)	
Kindergarten (18-22 Range)	21 22 22 22 22 22 22 22	Grade 3 (20-24 Range)	21 22 22 22 22 22 22 22	Kindergarten (18-22 Range)	20 20 20 20 21 21 21	Grade 3 (20-24 Range)	19 19 20 20 20 20 20
Enrollment= 175 Sections= 8 Average= 21.8		Enrollment= 175 Sections= 8 Average= 21.8		Enrollment= 143 Sections= 7 Average= 20.4		Enrollment= 138 Sections= 7 Average= 19.7	
Grade 1 (18-22 Range)	18 19 19 19 19 19 19 19	Grade 4 (20-24 Range)	22 22 22 22 22 22 23 23	Grade 1 (18-22 Range)	19 19 20 20 20 20 20	Grade 4 (20-24 Range)	19 19 19 19 19 19 19 20
Enrollment= 151 Sections= 8 Average= 18.9		Enrollment= 178 Sections= 8 Average= 22.3		Enrollment= 138 Sections= 7 Average= 19.7		Enrollment= 134 Sections= 7 Average= 19.2	
Grade 2 (18-22 Range)	21 21 21 21 21 22 22 22	Grade 5 (20-24 Range)	22 23 23 23 23 23 23 23	Grade 2 (18-22 Range)	20 20 20 20 21 21 21	Grade 5 (20-24 Range)	18 18 18 18 18 18 19
Enrollment= 171 Sections= 8 Average= 21.4		Enrollment= 183 Sections= 8 Average= 22.8		Enrollment= 143 Sections= 7 Average= 20.4		Enrollment= 127 Sections= 7 Average= 18.1	
Grade Levels Served= 6		Sections/Grade= 15		Total Section= 90			

Franklin Middle School (998 students)		
Grade 6 (20-24 Range)	Grade 7 (20-24 Range)	Grade 8 20-24 Range)
Enrollment= 330 Core Subj. Teams= 3 Teachers/Team= 5 Sections= 15 Average= 22.0	Enrollment= 313 Core Subj. Teams= 3 Teachers/Team= 5 Sections= 15 Average= 20.9	Enrollment= 355 Core Subj. Teams= 3 Teachers/Team= 5 Sections= 15 Average= 23.7
Grade Levels Served= 3 Sections/Grade= 15 Total Sections= 45 <i>*Unified Arts and other staffing not included. Master Schedule development currently in progress.</i>		

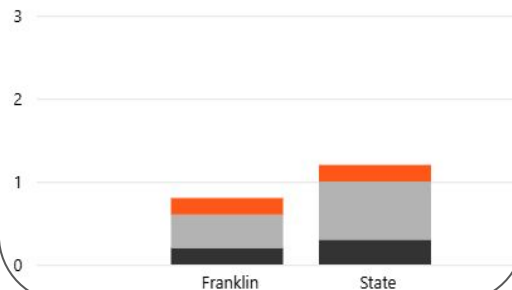
Franklin High School (1,338 students)			
Grade 9 (20-24 Range)	Grade 10 (20-24 Range)	Grade 11 20-24 Range)	Grade 12 20-24 Range)
Enrollment= 336	Enrollment= 345	Enrollment= 318	Enrollment= 339
Grade Levels Served= 4 <i>*Course selection currently in progress.</i>			



Radar 2025 Staffing Ratios - State Comparables

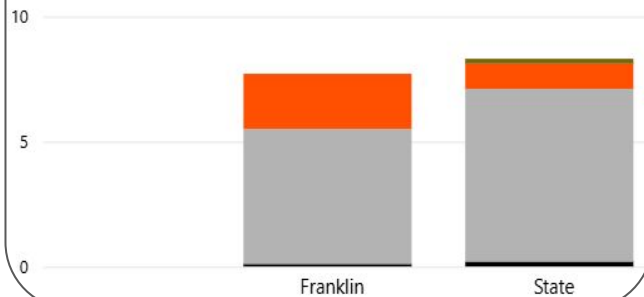
Leadership

● District Administrators ● District Instr'l Leaders ● School Leaders



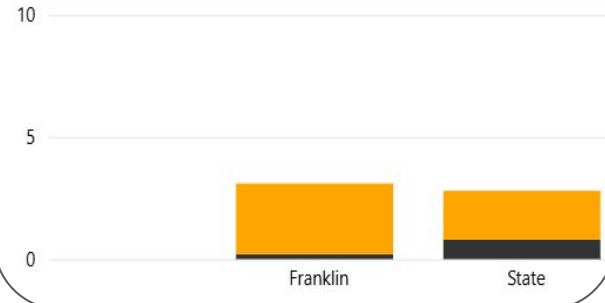
Teachers

● ESL ● General Ed. ● Special Ed ● Vocational



Paraprofessional

● Not Special Ed. ● Special Ed.



	District Admin	District Instr'l Leaders	School Leaders	General Ed. Teachers	Special Ed. Teachers	ESL Teachers	Special Ed. Paraprofessional (ESP)	Not Special Ed. Paraprofessional (ESP)
Franklin	0.2	0.4	0.2	5.4	2.2	0.1	2.9	0.2
State	0.3	0.7	0.2	6.9	1.0	0.2	2.0	0.8
Difference Franklin to State	-0.1	-0.3	0	-1.5	1.2	-0.1	0.9	-0.6

TE per 100 students

The MA DESE RADAR reports Franklin Public Schools falls below the statewide average regarding District Admin, Instructional Leaders, and General Education Teachers.



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General Education Overview

Comprehensive Program and Services

Academic programming: WIN blocks, intervention/enrichment support, EL Programming, Innovative Career Pathways

Staffing Costs

- Core academic educators
- Special subject teachers (e.g., arts, music, IT, PE).
- Nurses, Guidance Counselors, Administrators.

Curriculum & Instructional Resources

- Textbooks
- Digital learning platforms
- Classroom supplies & materials
- Tiered curricular resources

Extracurricular Activities

Clubs, athletics, and after school arts programs

Transportation

Daily bussing, late busses for after school clubs/activities

By aligning these investments, the general education costs provide students with equitable opportunities and high-quality instruction directly aligned to the Portrait of a Graduate.



Special Education Overview

Responsive to Evolving Student Needs

Ensure students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) receive support and services they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Commitment to Quality

Dedicated to providing equitable, high-quality Special Education services that meet the unique needs of each student.

Budget Considerations

Delivering supports and services through thoughtful planning and resource allocation to adapt to shifts in needs and mandates.

In-District Programs

Expanding specialized programs within the district allows students to stay in community, within the least restrictive environment.

The number and complexity of IEPs can change annually, reflecting the dynamic nature of student needs.



Special Education Costs

Historical Special Education Out of District Costs

Year	# of Students	Cost	Change	% Change	% Change to Total Budget
2022-23	81	\$7,619,726.92	-	-	-
2023-24	76	\$7,211,155.80	-\$408,571.12	-5.36%	-0.46%
2024-25	81	\$8,325,153.68	+\$1,113,997.88	15.45%	1.44%
2025-26*	77	\$9,514,045.07	+\$1,188,891.39	14.28%	1.52%

*Estimated based on projections

In-District vs. Out of District Costs

Program	# of Students	FPS Cost Per Pupil	Out of District Cost Per Pupil	Out of District Cost Per Pupil After Circuit Breaker Reimbursement (75% above threshold)	Savings
Elementary GOALS	28	\$51,034	\$96,368	\$62,402	\$318,204
Elementary REACH	15	\$52,443	\$137,221	\$74,379	\$329,040
Middle School STRIVE	4	\$66,604	\$237,104	\$137,299	\$282,780
High School STRIVE	13	\$45,186	\$177,508	\$84,450	\$510,432
NECC Partner Program	19	\$84,883	\$237,104	\$99,349	\$274,854

*Includes transportation costs

Estimated Total Savings

\$1,715,310

Operating Budget Detail: Salaries vs. Expenses

Salaries (Drivers)



Increase driven entirely by
contractual obligations:
+\$1.1M

Expenses (Strategic Adjustments)



Total Expense Increase:
+\$654K

19



School Salary Lines

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	FY26 BUDGET	FY27 PROPOSED	\$ +/- TO LINE ITEM	% +/- TO LINE ITEM	% +/- TO TOTAL BUDGET
FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL	\$15,147,493	\$15,576,413	\$428,920	2.83%	0.59%
FRANKLIN MIDDLE SCHOOL	\$12,670,111	\$12,653,667	-\$16,444	-0.13%	-0.02%
LINCOLN ST K-2 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	\$6,226,465	\$6,362,185	\$135,720	2.18%	0.19%
LINCOLN ST 3-5 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	\$6,446,747	\$6,426,652	-\$20,096	-0.31%	-0.03%
WASHINGTON ST K-2 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	\$6,396,007	\$6,439,313	\$43,306	0.68%	0.06%
WASHINGTON ST 3-5 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	\$5,448,625	\$5,599,299	\$150,674	2.77%	0.21%
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER	\$2,874,478	\$2,938,479	\$64,001	2.23%	0.09%
ATHLETICS	\$392,609	\$402,415	\$9,806	2.50%	0.01%
SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE	\$326,154	\$334,299	\$8,145	2.50%	0.01%
TEACHING AND LEARNING	\$497,417	\$509,861	\$12,444	2.50%	0.02%
HUMAN RESOURCES	\$330,250	\$338,517	\$8,267	2.50%	0.01%
SCHOOL COMMITTEE	\$3,250	\$3,500	\$250	7.69%	0.00%
BUSINESS OFFICE	\$309,152	\$332,656	\$23,504	7.60%	0.03%
TECHNOLOGY	\$906,692	\$979,875	\$73,183	8.07%	0.10%
STUDENT SERVICES	\$1,275,908	\$1,409,947	\$134,039	10.51%	0.19%
TOTAL SALARY BUDGET	\$59,196,358	\$60,307,078	\$1,110,720	1.88%	1.54%



School Expense Lines

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	FY26 BUDGET	FY27 PROPOSED	\$ +/- TO LINE ITEM	% +/- TO LINE ITEM	% +/- TO TOTAL BUDGET
FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL	\$212,532	\$203,441	-\$9,091	-4.28%	-0.01%
FRANKLIN MIDDLE SCHOOL	\$72,628	\$70,031	-\$2,597	-3.58%	0.00%
LINCOLN ST K-2 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	\$45,075	\$41,564	-\$3,512	-7.79%	0.00%
LINCOLN ST 3-5 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	\$36,371	\$35,353	-\$1,017	-2.80%	0.00%
WASHINGTON ST K-2 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	\$34,068	\$34,890	\$822	2.41%	0.00%
WASHINGTON ST 3-5 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	\$35,077	\$29,183	-\$5,894	-16.80%	-0.01%
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER	\$24,416	\$22,576	-\$1,841	-7.54%	0.00%
ATHLETICS	\$500,440	\$512,929	\$12,489	2.50%	0.02%
SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE	\$56,214	\$16,515	-\$39,699	-70.62%	-0.05%
TEACHING AND LEARNING	\$361,880	\$371,701	\$9,821	2.71%	0.01%
DISTRICT WIDE/CENTRAL OFFICE	\$1,220,431	\$1,146,115	-\$74,316	-6.09%	-0.10%
HUMAN RESOURCES	\$25,875	\$26,457	\$582	2.25%	0.00%
SCHOOL COMMITTEE	\$12,913	\$11,050	-\$1,863	-14.42%	0.00%
BUSINESS OFFICE	\$54,223	\$13,780	-\$40,443	-74.59%	-0.06%
TRANSPORTATION	\$1,864,000	\$1,992,175	\$128,175	6.88%	0.18%
TECHNOLOGY	\$510,181	\$431,313	-\$78,868	-15.46%	-0.11%
STUDENT SERVICES	\$13,403,874	\$14,510,143	\$1,106,269	8.25%	1.53%
REVOLVING AND CIRCUIT BREAKER FUNDS	-\$7,090,566	-\$7,435,040	-\$344,474	4.86%	0.48%
TOTAL EXPENSE BUDGET	\$11,379,631	\$12,034,176	\$654,545	5.75%	0.90%

The Healthcare Cost and Strategic Proposal

Health Insurance: +14% Increase (\$1.08M)

This single line item represents 1.5% of the total budget

Strategic Shift to Town Employee Health Insurance Line

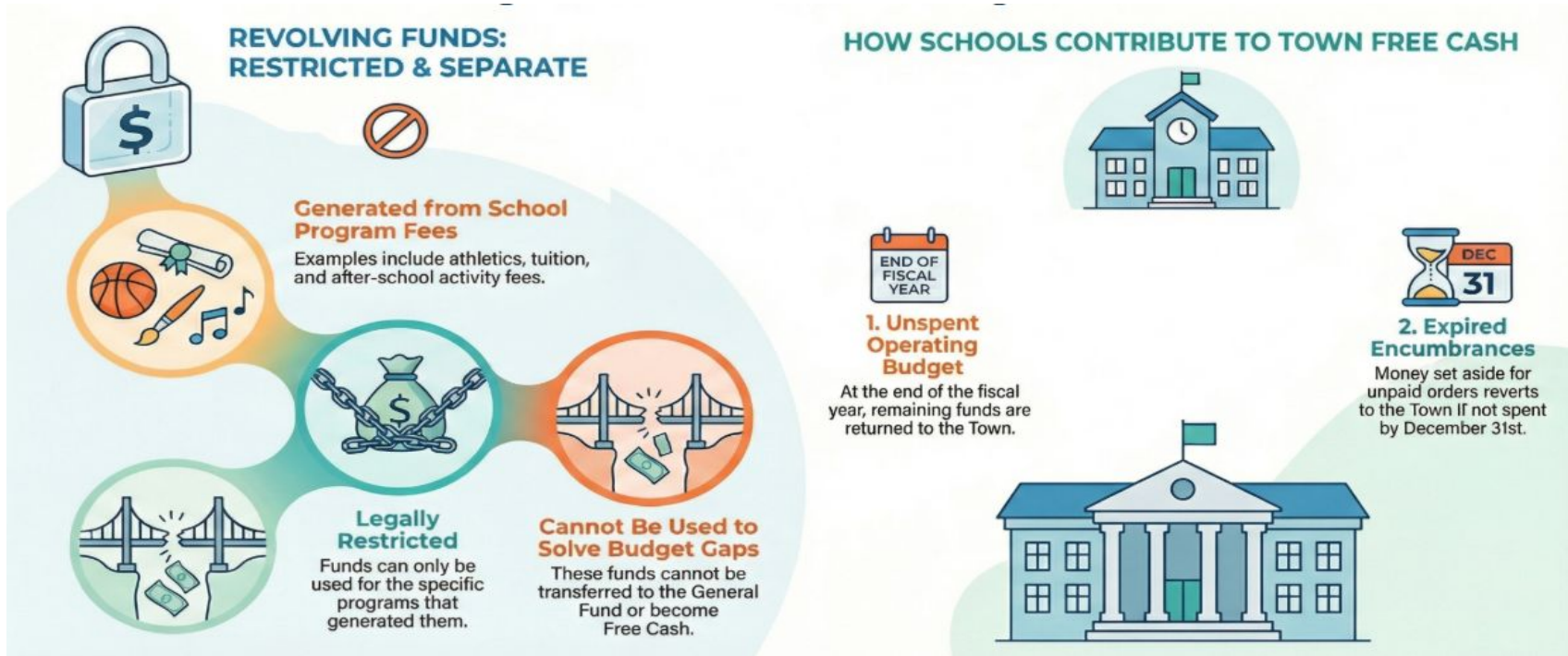


Proposal: Move the School Department Health Benefits line to the Town Employee Health Benefits line.

*~ Centralized administration for all Franklin employees
~ Aligned with GIC transition July 2026*

*~ Improve forecasting
~ Eliminate duplicate accounting*

Franklin Public Schools: Understanding School Funds



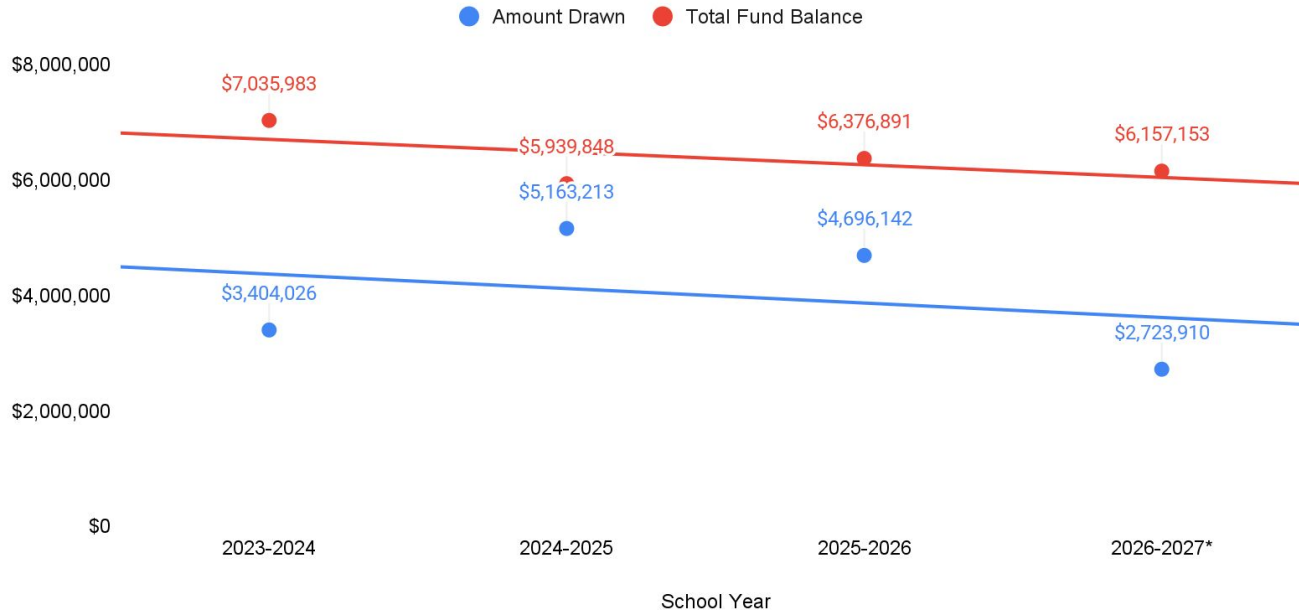
Revolving funds are legally restricted and cannot be used to create Free Cash or offset unrelated costs. However, schools contribute to Town's free cash annually through its operating budget and expired encumbrances.



Reliance on Revolving Funds

A decline in available fund balances necessitates dependence on the operating budget.

Amount Drawn and Total Fund Balance



Continued drawdown of reserves is unsustainable.



Revenue - Revolving Funds

Funding Source	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Actuals	FY26 Budgeted	FY27 Proposed	FY27 vs FY26 % Change
Lost Books	\$0	\$0	\$110,000	\$25,000	-77.27%
ECDC Tuition Receipts	\$950,000	\$800,000	\$968,907	\$600,000	-38.07%
Athletic Receipts	\$688,026	\$1,000,000	\$800,000	\$671,910	-16.01%
Pay to Ride	\$1,300,000	\$900,000	\$800,000	\$700,000	-12.50%
Technology Receipts	\$65,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	0.00%
LLL Solutions	\$56,000	\$56,000	\$196,000	\$196,000	0.00%
School Lunch Receipts	\$280,000	\$280,000	\$280,000	\$280,000	0.00%
Student Activities Receipts	\$65,000	\$36,000	\$156,000	\$156,000	0.00%
FEF Legacy Program	–	–	–	–	0.00%
FHS Parking Fees	–	–	\$30,000	\$35,000	16.67%
Total Revolving	\$3,404,026	\$3,132,000	\$3,400,907	\$2,723,910	-19.91%

Overall revolving request is projected to decrease by 19.9%, as continued drawdown of these funds is unsustainable.



Revenue - Grants

Funding Source	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Actuals	FY26 Budgeted	FY27 Proposed*
IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	\$1,220,876	\$1,267,273	\$1,268,915	\$1,268,915
ECDC Grant	\$18,570	\$44,503	\$44,496	\$44,496
Title I	\$146,274	\$149,344	\$182,876	\$182,876
Title IIA	\$65,023	\$60,768	\$71,964	\$71,964
Title III A	\$14,968	\$20,258	\$20,329	\$20,329
Title IV A	\$10,719	\$10,941	\$10,485	\$10,485
Innovation Career Pathways	–	\$15,000	\$75,000	\$0
Total Grants	\$1,476,430	\$1,568,087	\$1,674,065	\$1,599,065

Grant Funding Overview

- Stable for the last 4 years, but no inflation adjustment.
- Most grants governed by federal/state agencies.
- Exposure to federal and state budget uncertainties.
- Increased risk of level-funding or reductions in future cycles.
- The ICP competitive grant was awarded, but it is not expected moving forward.
- Grants remain essential but cannot reliably fund recurring staff or core programming.

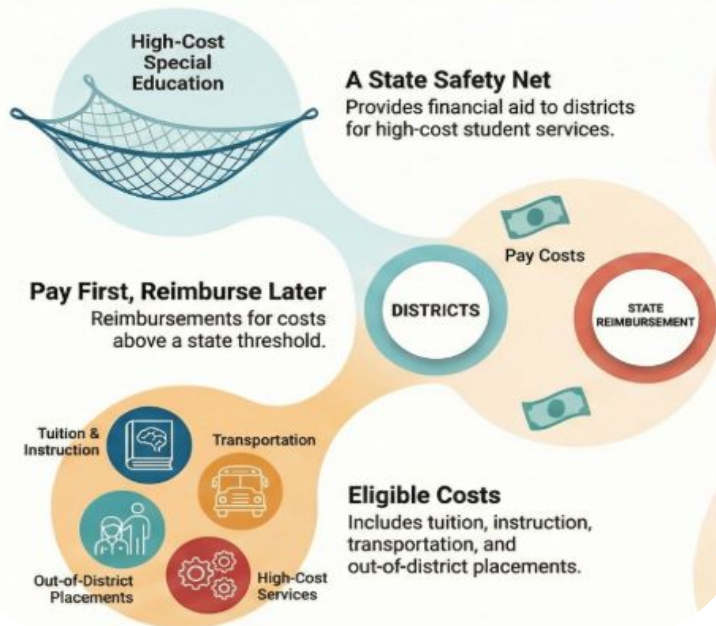
*FY27 Proposed = FY26 grant awards (FY27 allocations won't be known until Summer FY27)



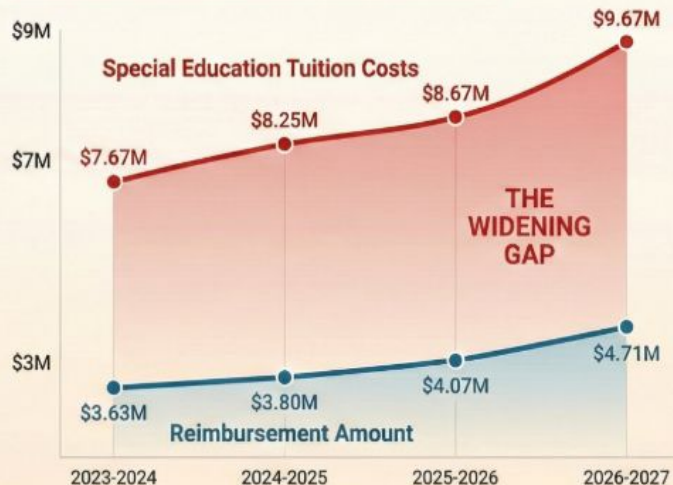
Franklin Public Schools: The Growing Gap in Special Education Funding

The “Circuit Breaker” reimbursement program for high-cost special education is failing to keep pace with rising tuition costs, creating a critical funding shortfall.

HOW THE 'CIRCUIT BREAKER' PROGRAM WORKS



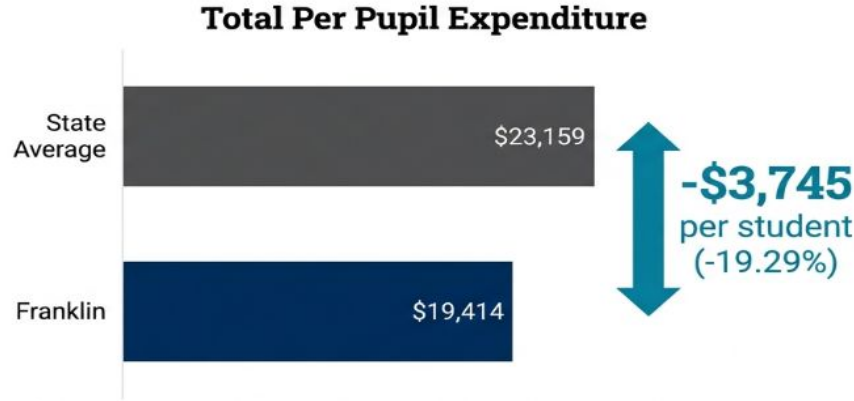
COSTS ARE OUTPACING REIMBURSEMENTS



A Projected \$5 MILLION Gap

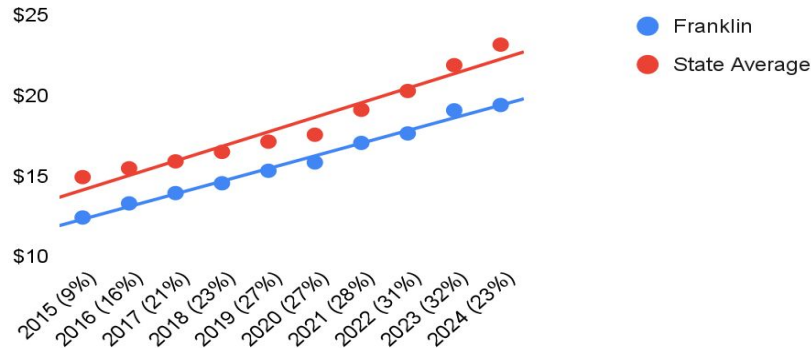
By 2026-2027, the funding shortfall is projected to reach **nearly \$5 million**, as costs grow much faster than state aid.

Total Per Pupil Expenditure (TPPE) Comparison to State Average



**Bottom
23rd
Percentile**

2015-2024 TPPE Historical Information



1. Franklin Public Schools ranks in the 23rd percentile among Massachusetts districts
2. 77% of Massachusetts districts spend more per pupil than Franklin.
3. Despite this relative spending position, FPS continues to deliver a high quality education.

2024 is the latest data available
[Spending Comparisons - School Finance](#)



The Revenue Challenge: “Hold Harmless” and Flat State Aid

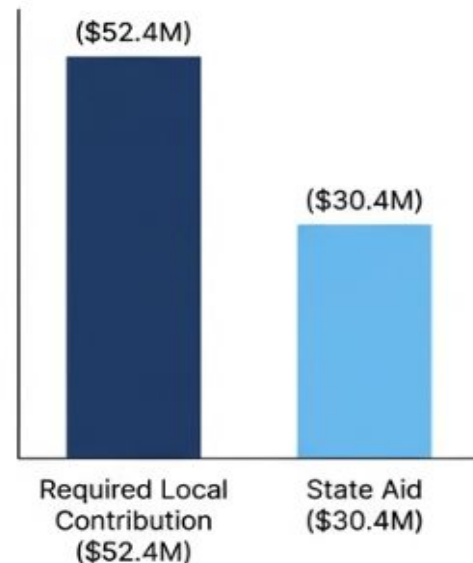
State funding formulas result in minimal growth despite inflation



Explainer

What is Hold Harmless?

Ensures districts don't lose funding when enrollment declines, but caps increases at minimal levels (\$30/student). For Franklin, this means State Aid is effectively flat while fixed costs rise.



Franklin's FY26 Chapter 70 Aid

State Foundation Budget

\$68,009,481

State decides "Adequate" amount based on:

- Enrollment
- Wage Adjustment Factor
- Inflation



Required Local Contribution

\$52,439,022

"How much can Franklin afford to contribute?"

Aggregate Wealth Model

- Average Income
- Municipal revenue growth factor
- Property wealth



Remainder funded by Ch70

\$15,570,459

- Based on formula established in late 90's due to growth
- **Total Chapter 70 Aid: \$30,460,643**
- Of this, **\$14,890,184** is excess base aid held harmless.

Minimum Aid:

Franklin is Minimum Aid District

- \$150 per pupil for FY26.
- \$30 per pupil is the annual increase expected in Ch.70 funding for foreseeable future.

FY26 Chapter 70

\$30,460,643

- Excess base aid final
\$14,890,184

Required Local Contribution

\$52,439,022

Required Net School Spending

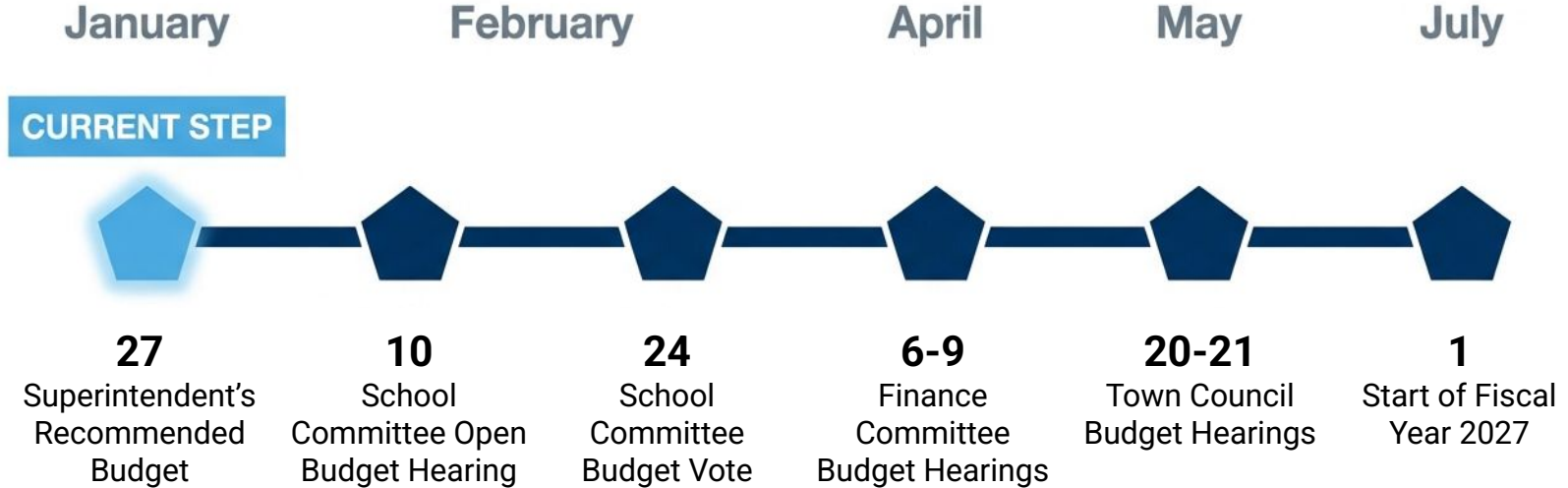
State determined:
\$82,899,665



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Franklin receives the minimum aid increase per pupil, resulting in flat Chapter 70 growth despite rising costs.

Path to Approval: FY27 Budget Timeline



A Disciplined Approach to Navigate a Challenging Fiscal Landscape

Structure Deficit



Contractual, SPED, and Healthcare costs are rising faster than State Aid and Local revenues.

Strategic Savings



\$3.2M in avoided in recurring costs from reorganization proving our commitment to optimizing our resources.

Sustainability



Reduced reliance on one-time revolving funds to support long term stability

Commitment



Recommended budget protects core programs prioritizes students, with a total operating request of \$81.2M

