
**FINANCE & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2026
NHS NORTH BOARD ROOM**

A meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee was held at NHS North on Monday, September 21, 2026. Ms. Lamphier called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Present: Ms. Lamphier, Ms. Lewis, and Mr. Salvi

Also Present: Ms. De Gray, Mr. Smith, Mr. Beer, Ms. Mills (Ledge St.), and Ms. Gagne (Ledge St.)

Also Present: Members of the Public, Channel 22 Videographer

Ledge Street Playground

- Ms. Mills, Ms. Gagne, and Mr. Smith presented a new Ledge Street playground for approximately 450 students (pre-K through Grade 5), including 21% receiving special education services, more than 40% English language learners, and 73% economically disadvantaged.
- Proposed site: former ball field on school district property with expanded space and accessible design.
- The new site provides more space, improved accessibility, rubberized surfacing, safer separation from the roadway, fencing over approximately 75% of the area, lighting, better drainage (flooding) and a walking path. The existing playground will remain in use while future renovation decisions are considered.
- Installation is expected to take about one month after equipment delivery, with weather potentially delaying surfacing until spring or summer.
- Community fundraising: \$25,000 for fencing, lighting, and a walking path; additional donation acceptance and spending details will be addressed through the district process.
- City resolution R-26-048 authorized \$247,386.18; the proposed contract is \$247,147.20.

Ms. Lamphier moved, seconded by Mr. Salvi, to approve the contract with M.E. O'Brien & Sons, Inc. of Medway, Massachusetts, to provide the Ledge Street Elementary playground equipment and rubber surfacing in the amount of \$247,147.20. Funding is from account 91.1001.994600-081100-0000 account (City Resolution R-26-048). Motion passes 3-0.

Special Education Contracts

Beacon Communication Services

- Beacon Communications, a speech services company, have increased their rates modestly to \$147.50 per hour for the SLP and \$90 per hour for assistants. Staffing needs remain under review based on IEP service-hour data.
- Questions were posed to Mr. Beer around the need to hire internally and reduce the number of contracted services.
- Mr. Beer highlighted the systemic reduction in college students entering the field of education and special services as a global issue.

Ms. Lamphier moved, seconded by Ms. Lewis, to approve the contract with Beacon Communication Services for staffing of 1.0 SLP and 1.8 SLPA for the 2026-2027 school year at a cost not to exceed \$368,943.75 Funding to be charged to the Operating Budget under Contracted Services. Motion passes 3-0.

Reach the Top Tutoring

- Reach the Top Tutoring: interim instruction for students between placements or hospitalized; maximum \$85,000.
- Mr. Salvi requested historical data on the number of students tutoring annually.

Ms. Lamphier moved, seconded by Mr. Salvi, to approve the contract with Reach the Top Tutoring for hourly tutoring services for the 2026-2027 school year at a cost not to exceed \$85,000.00 Funding to be charged to the Operating Budget under Out-of-District Budget. Motion passes 3-0.

Boothby Therapy Services

- Boothby Therapy Services: augmentative communication and assistive technology; 288 hours at \$155 per hour, maximum \$44,640.

Ms. Lamphier moved, seconded by Ms. Lewis, to approve the contract with Boothby Therapy Services for Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC) and Assistive Technology (AT) contracted services for the 2026–2027 school year, at a cost not to exceed \$44,640.00. Funding will be charged to the Operating Budget under Contract Services. Motion passes 3-0.

Grant-Funded Contracts

- A grant-funded behavioral therapist and BCBA supervision item was presented (informational).
- Mr. Salvi requested information on the District's spending for educating kids who need special education in charter schools or non-public schools.

MS 280 – Purchases Over \$10,000

- Ms. De Gray explained the requirement for the District to present FY26 MM 280 expenses over \$10,000.
- The committee asked for the report to be given in Excel format and for a list of the account codes and the department they correspond to.

Ms. Lamphier moved, seconded by Ms. Lewis, to accept the FY26 MM280 report of expenses over \$10K. Motion passes 3-0.

Expenditure and Transfer Reports

- FY27 August transfers were approved, including a transfer supporting English 3D digital licensing.
- FY27 state adequacy aid is approximately \$62 million, about \$4.4 million lower than the prior comparison year, driven partly by lower enrollment and fewer free and reduced-price lunch applications. Heating, transportation encumbrances, grant funding, and expenditure trends were also discussed.
- July and August expenditures, encumbrances, transportation, stipends, retirement payments, heating, and LED efficiency upgrades were reviewed.
- Free and Reduced lunch application eligibility, income guidelines, outreach, and available support through schools and Meals Matters were discussed.

Ms. Lamphier moved, seconded by Mr. Salvi, to approve the FY27 August Transfer Report. Motion passes 3-0.

Ms. Lamphier moved, seconded by Ms. Lewis, to adjourn at 7:31 pm. Motion passes 3-0.

Submitted by Tara C. Kinsella