

CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01609

The School Committee of the Worcester Public Schools met in person with a virtual option in Open Session at 4:00 p.m. in the Esther Howland Chamber at City Hall on Thursday, June 4, 2026 to discuss the FY26 Worcester Public Schools budget.

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.

There were present at the Call to Order: Member Biancheria, Member Binienda, Member Johnson, Member Mailman, Vice Chair McCullough, and Member Roy , and Mayor Petty.

Member Alvarez arrived at 4:08 p.m. and Member Guardiola arrived at 4:15 p.m.

Budget items discussed:

1. 500101-96000: Retirement. Ms. Sara Consalvo, Chief Finance and Operations Officer, noted retirement calculations are processed by the auditors office.

A motion to approve this item was presented. On a voice vote of 8-0, this motion was approved unanimously. Member Guardiola was absent for the vote.

2. 540103-92000: Transportation. Ms. Consalvo noted we currently run 101 full size bus routes, 76 mid size bus routes, and wheelchair and mid-day routes as well. WPS will be increasing our van fleet to 20 in FY27. The budget also accounts for a slight decrease in McKinney-Vento funding and an increase in fuel costs.

A motion to approve this item was presented. On a voice vote of 8-0, this motion was approved unanimously. Member Guardiola was absent for the vote.

3. 500122-92000 Athletics Ordinary Maintenance and 500-91116 Athletic Coach Salaries (taken together). Ms. Consalvo noted this account is for non-salary (coaches separate) items, maintenance, equipment, officials fees, insurance, rentals (ice, pools) (no rental fees for Northbridge indoor track) offset by revenues from game receipts, dues.

Member Biancheria made a motion to receive an update on crew team implementation.

There was discussion and clarifications made by Ms. Consalvo and Mr. Dave Shea, Athletic Director, when asked about clock operators, increased MIAA fees, dues, insurance, contractual medical services through Coastal, UMass, as well as stand-by transportation contracts, should WPS buses not be available. All were answered satisfactorily.

A motion to approve Athletics Ordinary Maintenance was presented. On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

4. 500-91116 Athletic Coach Salaries. This includes all coaching salaries for all sports, including all additional sports that will be added for FY27.

A motion to approve Athletics Coaches Salaries was presented. On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

5. 500123-96000 Health Insurance. Ms. Consalvo informed the Committee that all district health premium costs for current and retired employees. increased 8%. Vice Chair McCullough asked about a recent decision for Caremark (WPS prescription insurance) not to cover weight management medication. Superintendent Allen noted we are tied to the City's decision not to cover these medications and keeping the plan that includes them would result in an increase of 14% (without the medication, the increase is 8%). The City decided to not cover the medication to keep premiums lower for employees.

Member Mailman asked why the increase is 10% when rates are 8%. Ms. Consalvo said that this is a buffer for new employees who will opt in.

Member Biancheria made a motion to send an update on this issue in a Friday letter.

A motion to approve this item was presented. On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

6. 500129-91000 Workers Compensation Salaries; 500129-92000 Workers Compensation (taken together). Ms. Consalvo explained these expenditures.

A motion to approve this item was presented. On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

7. 500120-92000 Personal Services. Member Binienda asked for an explanation of why WPS pays for the salary of an Assistant City Solicitor. Superintendent Allen said he talked to the City regarding the law department; due to funding offsets, we pay for an Assistant City Solicitor dedicated solely to WPS for our contracts. Member Mailman asked Superintendent Allen to reiterate the salary for Assistant Solicitor as it feels like we are not in control. Superintendent Allen noted that legally, the city is the undersigned of all contracts in the City, including WPS.

Member Binienda also asked about graduation expenses that were paid through one time free cash. FY26 and FY27 graduation funds will be paid from this cash. Superintendent Allen also noted that WPS has reached agreements with most schools and WPS is working with DCU to move all school graduation ceremonies to the arena side.

This account also includes New England Center for Children (NECC) to work in SAIL classrooms with behavior interventions and staff training.

Member Mailman asked if WPS has any after-school program providers in our schools, and if this is included in community partnerships. Superintendent Allen said WPS does still have providers and we are currently seeking outside/additional sources to enhance after-school programming, noting that these are fee based services so they are not a cost to the WPS budget.

A motion to approve this item On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

8. 500132-92000 Special Education Out-of-District Tuition. This account includes \$5.8 circuit breaker funding and more.

Member Mailman asked what the per pupil expenditures for the Worcester Alternative School. Ms. Consalvo noted it was \$74,000 per pupil. Dr. Tammy Murray, Director of Special Education and Intervention Services noted the per pupil cost for these students who are being reassigned to the Central Mass. Collaborative (CMC) is \$40,000 while still receiving all required services as per their Individualized Education Plan (IEP); this results in significant savings for WPS.

Member Mailman clarified with WPS Administration that the Worcester Alternative School staff personnel is not being cut, but reassigned and then asked why WPS cannot provide the same services as CMC does for \$40,000 instead of \$74,000. Superintendent Allen mentioned that we could but it would result in cutting staff.

It was noted that the rental for Worcester Alternative School building was \$200,000. 36 students are going to CMC from the Worcester Alternative School, in addition to the current 276 students that already attend CMC. Superintendent Allen also said that WPS will have 55 seats open for additional students.

Member Johnson noted that more communication from Administration would have gone a long way in informing the public about these changes and perhaps quell some of the upset that has occurred.

A motion to approve this item was presented. On a voice vote of 9-0,

this motion was approved unanimously.

9. 500-92204 Instructional Materials. All instructional materials (school based) will be funded at \$75 per pupil. Also included in this line item are district wide instructional materials, curriculum, and student furniture.

Member Binienda asked if the district art repair line included instrument repair, to which Ms. Consalvo indicated it did. Member Binienda noted she thinks the amount should be increased and Ms. Consalvo said she would check into this.

Member Biancheria made a motion to receive a listing of how every elementary school is spending the extra \$1 per pupil expenditure for recess supplies.

Member Mailman made a motion to receive a report on net school spending and free cash from the city.

A motion to approve this item was presented. On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

9. 500136-92000 Miscellaneous Education-Non-Salary
500136-93000 Miscellaneous Education-Capital
540136-92000 Miscellaneous Education-Rentals

A motion was made to hold these three items. On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

10. 500137-96000 Unemployment Compensation.

A motion to approve this item was presented. On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

11. 500146-92000 Building Utilities

A motion to approve this item was presented. On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

12. 500152-92000 Facilities Department Non-Salary. It was noted that this item included maintenance, custodial needs, trash removal, and WPS's portion of the Facilities Master Plan.

Member Mailman made a motion to receive a report regarding the costs of the Facilities Master Plan.

A motion to approve this item was presented. On a voice vote of 9-0, this motion was approved unanimously.

It was moved to recess to Executive Session at 5:30 p.m. and Mayor Petty stated that the committee would reconvene in Open Session.

It was moved to recess to Executive Session by roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, Member Guradiola, yes ; Member Johnson; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; and Member Roy, yes, Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 9-0, it was moved to recess to Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristi Turgeon,
Clerk of the School Committee

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