

East Longmeadow Financial Oversight Committee
Meeting Minutes for April 24, 2025

Attendance:

Jim Broderick FOC Chair
Dawn Starks FOC Vice Chair
Richard Freccero, Kathy Hill, Anna Jones via zoom
Connor O'Shea Town Council President – ex officio
Kim Collins Finance Director
Rebecca Lisa Deputy Town Manager

Town Council Members: Connor O'Shea, Kathy Hill, Marilyn Richards and Anna Jones

Both FOC and Special Town Council Meetings called to order at 4pm.

Superintendent Gordon Smith and Pam Blair in attendance as invited guests to discuss responses to the questions submitted by the FOC, see both question and answers on attached document.

Question 1

Pam Blair further explained that DOE codes are set by DESE and we must comply with those classifications. She went on to give examples that the code is made up with a combination of the organization code which refers to the building along with the object code that refers to the position. Discussion ensued.

Question 2

Pam Blair explained the chart that was provided to FOC regarding funding sources. The chart listed Chapter 70 funds, grants such as ELEEf etc and revolving funds. Pam further explained circuit breaker and the rate of reimbursement per student. Further discussion ensued about Special Education and ESSER funds.

Question 3

Discussion regarding student enrollment for this year and 5 prior years. Enrollment has stayed consistent.

Question 4

Discussion regarding FTE for the past four years. Staffing has maintained consistent with the hiring of permanent substitute teachers for each building. Discussion about class size ranging from 18 students per classroom to about 21 per classroom.

Question 5

Gordon Smith explained the reduction in supply line item was due to that line item being moved out of the budget and instead to use school choice funds for supplies.

Question 6

Gordon Smith explained that the district wide tuition account is for LPVEC and the reason for the rise in cost was due to DESE mandated that ninth graders be permitted to enroll. Gordon also explained that the rise in Special Education line item is due to higher tuitions for out of district placement.

Question 7

Pam Blair explained that NSS is required for adequate education. Chart provided to compare NSS with neighboring districts.

Question 8

Organizational Chart of School Department provided to FOC and discussed.

Question 9

Gordon Smith explained the number of school choice students is roughly 48 students, 7 of which have an IEP.

Question 10

Gordon Smith listed the positions that were eliminated due to the budget shortfall.

Question 11

Rich Freccero asked how educational services may be impacted going forward to FY27. Gordon Smith listed a number of things including class size increasing, untested ways to support students, deploying staff to different buildings etc.

Discussion about the remaining FOC meetings. It was agreed to meet again on April 30, 2025 and on May 5, 2025. We will use 4/30 to recap school and discuss additional Chapter 70 funds if given and to review revolving funds,

Kathy Hill made a motion to approve the April 16, 2025 FOC minutes. Dawn Starks seconded the motion. Motion unanimously approved.

Richard Freccero made a motion to recommend to the Town Council approval of the Town Manager's enterprise fund budgets. Kathy Hill seconded the motion. Motion unanimously approved.

Dawn Starks suggested to review the storm water fee schedule for FY27. FOC also agreed to review revolving funds and reserve policy.

Dawn Starks made a motion to adjourn FOC meeting at 5:55pm. Kathy Hill seconded the motion. Motion unanimously approved.

Kathy Hill made a motion to adjourn Town Council meeting at 5:56pm. Anna Jones seconded the motion. Motion unanimously approved.

Joint Special Town Council/FOC Meeting-April 24, 2025 at 4:00pm Council on Aging Media Room

1. Explain why there are multiple line items for teacher salaries in each school building's budget

When setting up the Chart of Accounts, we must comply with the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education's (DESE) functional classifications for expenditures a/k/a DOE Codes. These DOE Codes are embedded into the Org Code in Munis (Organizational Code) when an account is set up. The Org Code plus the Object Code (object code determines the type of expenditure category such as Professional Salary, Clerical Salary, Other Salary, Supply & Materials, Contract Service, or Other Misc Expense) together with the Object create an account in Munis.

Example:

BP230500 511021

Org Code BP230500 (2305 DOE Code for teacher) Object Code 511021 (Teacher)

BP230599 511021 (If the last two digits in the Org Code start with a "9" that signifies this is a Special Education Account)

BP271072 511021 (DOE Code 2710 is an Adjustment Counselor)

BP352003 511021 (DOE Code 3520 is Student Activities)

I hope this clarifies to you why there are so many different line items.

So that you have a better understanding of the importance of the DOE Codes, I will elaborate a bit about the End-of-Year Financial Report (EOY Rpt). This report must be completed every September, for the previous fiscal year's revenue and expenditures for the School Department.

This report provides financial data and information about school districts, which DESE uses to determine per-pupil expenditures, net school spending compliance (NSS), federal grant compliance, and as a basis for future state aid projections. This data is also used to create financial comparisons between school districts.

This report is first broken down by the Funding Source, which means these are the expenditures from the Operating Budget, State Grants, Federal Grants, Private Grants, Revolving Accounts, and we also report the Municipal spending in support of schools.

Each municipality has an agreement with its school department that is approved by DESE. The municipal spending that is reported is determined by this agreement between the Town and the School Department on what percentage from the Town's

other departments should be reported on the EOY Rpt. Budget increases for these departments and any additional staffing impact how the School Net School Spending is reported; as these budgets increase, Net School Spending increases as well.

2. Provide, as previously, a printout which includes grant, current funding, and revolving funds so we could see the full financial picture, including a three-year look back

FY26 Projected School Department Funding Sources					
Funding Sources	Salary	Supplies	Cont Svc	Other	Total
Chapter 70 & Local Appropriation:					
FY26 Operating Budget	\$29,684,161	\$270,400	\$3,778,008	\$3,162,435	\$36,895,004
Additional Revenue Sources:					
Grants:					
Title I	\$ 253,720			\$ 25,911	\$ 279,631
Title IIA	\$ 25,805		\$ 12,000		\$ 37,805
Title IV	\$ 5,000	\$ 17,019			\$ 22,019
Special Education Early Childhood	\$ 17,000	\$ 1,230		\$ 1,530	\$ 19,760
DPH Comprehensive School Health	\$ 42,000	\$ 6,450	\$ 28,000	\$ 3,550	\$ 80,000
Metco	\$ 159,820	\$ 500	\$ 193,944		\$ 354,264
Special Education IDEA	\$ 32,533	\$ 17,109	\$ 825,053		\$ 874,695
East Longmeadow Educational Endowment Fund		\$ 54,388			\$ 54,388
Revolving Accounts:					
Athletic				\$ 152,000	\$ 152,000
Preschool Tuition	\$ 75,690				\$ 75,690
Transportation			\$ 100,000		\$ 100,000
Circuit Breaker			\$ 1,693,096		\$ 1,693,096
School Choice		\$ 300,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 550,000
Grand Total	\$30,295,729	\$667,096	\$6,780,101	\$3,445,426	\$41,188,352

FY24 - The Whole Picture - School Department Funding Sources

Funding Source	Salary	Supplies	Cont Svc	OOD Tuitions	Total
Chapter 70 & Local Appropriation:					
FY23 Operating Budget	\$ 27,884,129	\$ 592,265	\$3,041,502	\$ 1,801,119	\$33,319,015
Grants:					
Title I	\$ 288,527	\$ 26,366			\$ 314,893
Title IIA	\$ 52,096		\$ -		\$ 52,096
Title IV			\$ 20,306		\$ 20,306
Special Education Early Childhood	\$ 18,530	\$ 645			\$ 19,175
DPH Comprehensive School Health	\$ 63,000	\$ 4,550	\$ 12,450		\$ 80,000
METCO	\$ 184,632	\$ 500	\$ 159,523		\$ 344,655
Special Education IDEA	\$ 24,759	\$ 6,726	\$ 40,597	\$ 770,000	\$ 842,082
ESSER III	\$ 1,246,550	\$ 713,897	\$ 270,000		\$ 2,230,447
Foundation Reserve	\$ 139,073				\$ 139,073
East Longmeadow Educational Endowment Fund		\$ 39,076			\$ 39,076
Total Grants	\$ 2,017,167	\$ 791,760	\$ 502,876	\$ 770,000	\$ 4,081,803
Grand Total	\$ 29,901,296	\$ 1,384,025	\$ 3,544,378	\$ 2,571,119	\$ 37,400,818

FY25 Projected School Department Funding Sources

Funding Source	Salary	Supplies	Cont Svc	Other	Total
Chapter 70 & Local Appropriation:					
FY25 Operating Budget	\$ 30,156,006	\$ 676,074	\$ 3,158,571	\$ 2,004,475	\$ 35,995,126
Grants:					
Title I	\$ 121,663	\$ -	\$ 21,998		\$ 143,661
Title IIA	\$ 30,000		\$ 20,318		\$ 50,318
Title IV			\$ 23,075		\$ 23,075
Special Education Early Childhood	\$ 17,500	\$ 564		\$ 1,575	\$ 19,639
DPH Comprehensive School Health	\$ 32,000	\$ 16,450	\$ 28,000	\$ 3,550	\$ 80,000
Metco	\$ 205,059	\$ 500	\$ 139,890		\$ 345,449
Special Education IDEA	\$ 70,817	\$ 6,090	\$ 809,298	\$ 3,960	\$ 890,165
East Longmeadow Educational Endowment Fund		\$ 51,094			\$ 51,094
Revolving Accounts:					
Athletic				\$ 122,000	\$ 122,000
Preschool Tuition	\$ 75,000				\$ 75,000
Transportation			\$ 100,000		\$ 100,000
Circuit Breaker			\$ 2,746,354		\$ 2,746,354
School Choice	\$ 594,072	\$ 30,570	\$ 52,500		\$ 677,142
Grand Total	\$ 31,302,117	\$ 781,342	\$ 7,100,004	\$ 2,135,560	\$ 41,319,023

FY 23 School Department Funding Sources					
Funding Source	Salary	Supplies	Cont Svc	OOD Tuitions	Total
Local Appropriation:					
FY22 Operating Budget	\$ 26,958,264	\$ 795,865	\$ 2,698,923	\$ 1,613,485	\$ 32,066,537
Maintenance (DPW FY2010)		\$ 161,235			\$ 161,235
IT Support (IT Dept FY2010)		\$ 91,853			\$ 91,853
Total Local Appropriation	\$ 26,958,264	\$ 1,048,983	\$ 2,698,923	\$ 1,613,485	\$ 32,319,655
Grants:					
Title I	\$ 243,548	\$ 40,141			\$ 283,789
Title IIA	\$ 50,351		\$ -		\$ 50,351
Title IV			\$ 20,541		\$ 20,541
Early Childhood	\$ 17,440	\$ 857			\$ 18,297
DPH Comprehensive School Health	\$ 43,000	\$ 20,500	\$ 16,500		\$ 80,000
Metco	\$ 190,323	\$ 600	\$ 142,615		\$ 333,538
Special Education IDEA	\$ 24,700		\$ 31,856	\$ 749,952	\$ 806,508
IDEA ARP "264"		\$ 1,863	\$ 10,600		\$ 12,663
Special Education IDEA American Rescue "252"	\$ 2,500	\$ 25,073	\$ 108,347		\$ 135,920
SOA Education Workforce Diversification			\$ 24,240		\$ 24,240
Prof Based Outcomes - Languages Other than English		\$ 11,100			\$ 11,100
PEBT Reimbursement	\$ 3,070				\$ 3,070
Elem & Sec Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER II)	\$ 260,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 105,608		\$ 965,608
Elem & Sec Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER III)	\$ 1,003,200	\$ 757,247	\$ 470,000		\$ 2,230,447
Summer School Expansion & Engagement	\$ 68,712	\$ 27,700			\$ 96,412
East Longmeadow Educational Endowment Fund		\$ 33,161			\$ 33,161
Total Grants	\$ 1,906,944	\$ 1,518,242	\$ 930,507	\$ 749,952	\$ 5,105,645
Grand Total	\$ 28,865,208	\$ 2,567,225	\$ 3,629,430	\$ 2,363,437	\$ 37,425,300

3. Provide the number of students for the last four years, this year, and projected for FY 26

- SY 25 - 26 - 2519 (estimate)
- SY 24 - 25 - 2499
- SY 23 - 24 - 2507
- SY 22 - 23 - 2541
- SY 21 - 22 - 2492

4. Provide the number of full-time FTE for the last four years, this year, and projected for FY 26

	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	Grant & Revolving Funded
Unit A	249.50	252.00	254.00	256.00	257.00	241.00	5.65
Administration	12.00	13.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	
Clerical	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00	
Custodial	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	
Paraprofessionals	93.50	92.50	96.50	97.50	98.00	95.00	8.00
Permanent Building Sub				5.00	5.00	5.00	
Food Service							16.46
Total	395.00	397.50	404.50	412.50	414.00	395.00	30.11

5. Explain the major reduction in supplies and materials and the impact

The FY '26 Level Services Budget for the School Department was approximately \$3 million or an 8.57% increase. Realizing that this would be too challenging a request for the Town to meet, the School Committee worked to reduce the original amount by \$1.2 million and bring the request to a 5% increase.

During this first phase of the budget reduction, the School Committee voted to use School Choice Funds to offset the operating budget in FY '26. Therefore, the budget supply lines in the FY'26 Operating Budget were reduced, and these expenditures will be charged to the School Choice Revolving Account in FY26. This is why there is a large reduction in the supply accounts. In addition, there were two Memoranda of Understanding that were negotiated with the ELEA. One was to put individual Professional Development on hold for FY '26 and the other was to reduce the number of additional days that the Counselors work beyond the regular school year, from 10 days to 5 days. Additionally, the curriculum renewal line item will be redesignated for FY'26. These actions allowed for a reduction of \$822,500 from the original Level Services Budget. However, in order to bring the request down to a 5% request, the School Committee needed to reduce 6 positions. All of these actions combined reduced the School Department's Level 1 budget request by \$1.2 million or a 5% increase.

Ultimately, in order to reduce to a 2.5% budget request and meet the Town Manager's recommendation, the School Committee needed to have a second round of staff reductions to further reduce the budget request by approximately \$900,000. An additional 13 positions were reduced at this point.

6. Explain the dynamics causing the 58% (\$254K) increase in district-wide tuition and the 39% (\$673K) increase in special education tuition for a total 43% (\$927K) increase in tuition

The district-wide tuition account is for the LPVEC Vocational Education Program, and the enrollment from ELPS increased considerably when DESE mandated that ninth graders be permitted to enroll. ELPS and a few other LPVEC school districts had been only sending 10th through 12th grades. Since adding 9th graders, our enrollment has risen from 43 students, two years ago, to 70 students this year.

The special education tuition line items are broken out according to DESE DOE Codes as to whether it is a Special Education Day Placement In-State, Day Placement Out-of-State, or a Residential Placement.

In this current school year, there was a potential shortfall due to increased cost for special education expenditures in contracted services, specialized transportation, and out-of-district placements. We have expended all of the Circuit Breaker (CB) rollover from the previous year

as well as the bulk of the reimbursement received this current year. This means that there will be very little CB rollover to offset the expenditures in FY26. The Operating Budget line items have to be increased in order to cover the projected expenses in FY26. Circuit Breaker reimbursement for this current year was supposed to reimburse up to 75% of eligible specialized transportation costs. Unfortunately, the allotted amount after reimbursing for academic expenses only had enough funds left to reimburse school districts at 44%. The Circuit Breaker is a needed resource, but it can be a challenging resource to predict. The School Committee approved the use of School Choice funds during this school year to cover the deficit.

The CB Reimbursement and the Chapter 70 funding have not kept pace with the level of inflation in the past few years. Overall costs continue to rise on the expense side of the budget given that annual inflation rates for 2022 was 6.5%, in 2023 3.4%, and in 2024 at 2.9% . The Massachusetts Operational Services Division approved out-of-district tuition increases for FY'25 of 4.69% and for FY'26 of 3.67%. ELPS has only received the minimum state aid for FY'25, and this is projected again for FY'26 in the Governor's Budget. This is an increase of 1.35% and 1.93% respectively. Currently, in the Governor's Budget, this is \$75 per pupil or an increase of \$185,100. Recently, the House Ways & Means Committee has proposed that the amount be raised to \$150 per pupil. This would give the District an additional \$185,100.

If the minimum aid is increased by that additional \$185,100, it would be very helpful to the School Department if the Town increased our budget request by that increased amount.

7. Review increase in excess of required net school spending by the town and how we compare to other towns and cities

Required Net School Spending is the annual minimum that must be spent on schools to provide an adequate educational program. Net School Spending includes Chapter 70 and the appropriated local contribution, plus the municipal indirect spending for schools. These expenditures are reported on the End-of-Year Financial Report in the month of September for the previous fiscal year. DESE uses this information to compile many different reports including NSS.

As you can see from the chart below all of the LPVEC Districts spend over the Required NSS amount.

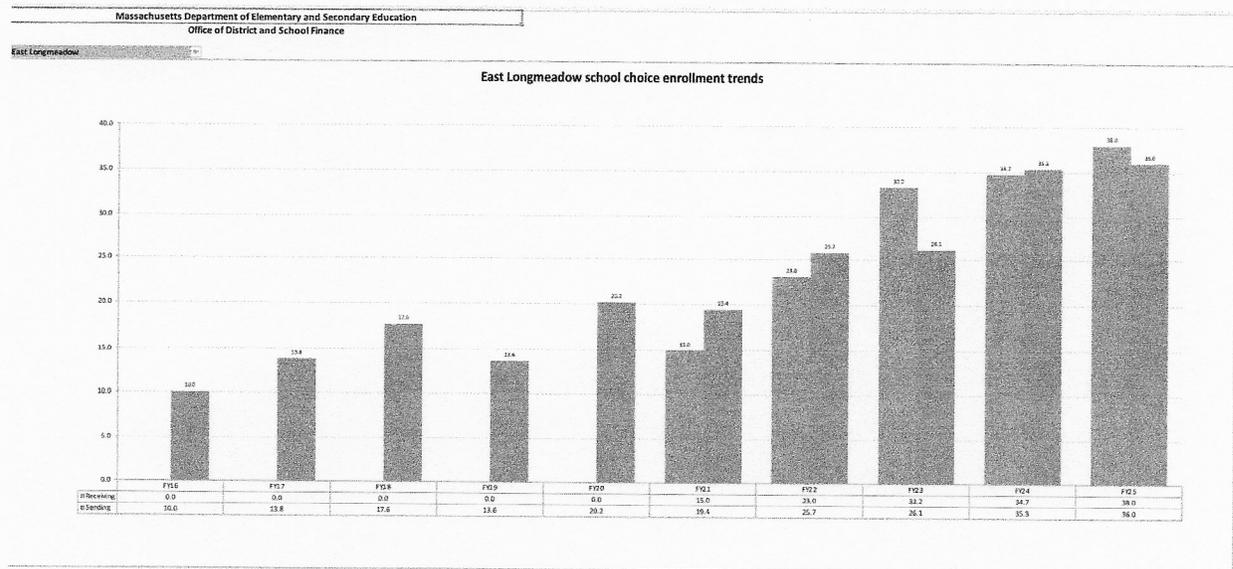
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of School Finance
Net School Spending (NSS) and Foundation Budget FY24 and FY25
308 Districts Reporting

FY24					
LEA	District Name	Required NSS	Actual NSS	Amt Over or Under Req'd	Actual as % of Req'd
0159	Longmeadow	33,192,701	47,506,748	14,314,047	143.1%
0005	Agawam	50,397,491	68,614,263	18,216,772	136.1%
0161	Ludlow	32,627,792	43,928,407	11,300,615	134.6%
0087	East Longmeadow	33,881,346	45,282,558	11,401,212	133.7%
0680	Hampden Wilbraham	36,311,317	45,920,404	9,609,087	126.5%
0766	Southwick Tolland	22,140,281	22,575,725	435,444	102.0%
0332	West Springfield	63,567,924	64,880,160	1,312,236	102.1%

8. Provide an organizational chart by building, including administration, teachers, clerical, guidance, and support staff.

ELPS Org Chart - We only have a district organizational chart.

9. Provide the number of school choice students and currently how many have special education needs



Currently, there are 7 school choice students with IEPs. Students with IEPs receive a higher School Choice funding amount sent to the receiving district based on the services provided.

10. Detail the number of positions notified 4/15 as being lost and the impact

- 2 District Academic Instructional Coaches
- ELHS Latin Tchr
- ELHS English Tchr
- ELHS Tech. Ed/Engineering Tchr
- BPMS Intervention Coordinator
- BPMS Computer Science Tchr
- Elementary Art Tchr
- 2 Elementary Enrichment Tchrs
- MS Fifth Grade Tchr
- MV Fifth Grade Tchr
- 3 MB Reading Specialists
- MB Preschool Tchr
- 3 Paraprofessionals

11. Speculate your plan for FY'27

To be discussed at the meeting on Thursday.

EAST LONGMEADOW PUBLIC SCHOOLS

