



Conor M. Baldwin
Chief Financial Officer

Allison Chambers
Deputy CFO

MEMORANDUM

TO: Eileen M. Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*

FROM: Conor Baldwin, Chief Financial Officer

CC: Sheryl Wright, Interim City Auditor
Billie Jo Turner, School Department CFO

DATE: September 21, 2021

SUBJECT: MOTION RESPONSE: 8/10/2021 - M. LEAHY - Req. City Mgr. Review Payroll Operations Of The City And School Department To Ensure It Is Operating At 100% Efficiency

In response to this motion, a substantial amount of collaboration and coordination has taken place over the course of the summer between the payroll division of the Office of the City Auditor and the School Department's payroll office. Immediately prior to the end of the last school year, there was a major turnover of several long-time staff in both offices which required a transfer of institutional knowledge and led to a few issues in the weekly payroll process.

These issues, however, have brought to light an opportunity for greater efficiency in the processes. The following are initiatives which have been put in place, to date, to ensure payroll is operating at 100% efficiency.

- The City Auditor and Payroll Systems Analyst from City Hall are meeting with the school department payroll office twice per month to discuss and resolve ongoing issues, as well as to make progress in implementing changes in the MUNIS system;
- The School Department payroll office has been granted access to add new employees and create employee changes in the MUNIS system, greatly reducing the manual, paper-driven process which previously existed;
- Reviewed recommendations from the 2019 Investment Analysis from Tyler Technologies for improvements to the HR/ Payroll process and identified where MUNIS modules can be optimized to increase benefits to both the employees and the payroll staff. As these recommendations are adopted, both offices will schedule sessions with MUNIS implementation staff.

Aside from the aforementioned efforts, it would be beneficial to both the city and schools payroll staff to add one additional full-time equivalent (FTE). Between July 1st and the date of this memorandum, approximately 377 new employees were added to the payroll system from the school department. In contrast to prior years, this surplus of new employees is a direct reflection



Office of the City Manager
City Hall • 375 Merrimack Street • Lowell, MA 01852
P: 978.674.4402 • F: 978.970.4007
www.LowellMA.gov

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of the influx of federal funding for the school department paired with the staffing needs to address the learning loss caused by the pandemic. Therefore, it is likely that any administrative overhead to support the administration of these programs could likewise be eligible for funding through such grants as ESSER. It is the recommendation of the finance department that this matter be referred to a joint finance subcommittee with the City Council and School Committee for further deliberation and discussion.