



Finance Office

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To: District/School Leadership
From: Derek Pinto, Assistant Superintendent of Finance
Date: January 2, 2025
Subject: Finance Office Updates

Budget Meetings: To date we have completed 50+ budget meetings with our school sites and departments. We reviewed the Budget Workbooks, Position Control (to include grant funded positions), the new **account ledger** tool for monitoring budgets, collaborated on reallocating funding and proposed amendments to existing plans.

Budget Update: [Lowell City Council \(December 9 2025 \(11m30s\)\)](#) voted to approve FY25 Expenses in Excess of Appropriations. At the time of this writing, **we have reduced Outstanding Prior Year Expenditures by 99.3% over FY25.** Council member Gitschier **“commended the school department for amazing work”** and **“getting bills paid on time”**.

We have begun the FY27 **budget process**. Guardrails, funding formulas and the budget meeting process have been established by the Superintendent’s Cabinet. The budget calendar was approved in the SC Dec. 17, 2025 packet. We await the release of the Governor’s Budgets and enrollment projections in January.

LPS Finance is monitoring all **federal funding sources** through the federal budget process. Updates will be furnished as decisions become available. There are strong indications that reductions, consolidations and an elimination of funding sources are expected. Assessing the impact of these changes is underway.

Information Technology: 796 Google Chromebook Plus computers are in the process of being distributed to teaching staff as part of a pilot program to replace old technology and to ensure that we have dependable, current technology resources and can provide the best services to staff and students.

Grants: Grant meetings have been established with all grant coordinators to manage existing grants. There are two new portals to be managed in this area the: Executive Office of Education (EOE) grants portal and the Early Education and Care (EEC) grants portal which are in addition to two portals already managed: Grants and Education Management System (GEM\$) and Office of Refugee and Immigrants (ORI) virtual gateway.

Payroll: LPS Finance has completed three sessions of payroll related training for staff including: retirement registration, employee buybacks, buyouts (typically sick leave/vacation time) and retroactive payments. New team members and training have led to an earlier completion of payroll internally.

Purchasing/Accounts Payable: The Finance Department has broadcast Spending Deadlines/Important Dates via the LPS Leader - our internal weekly newsletter and primary channel of communication.

LPS Finance Communication Plan: This plan has been developed and broadcast to our constituents:

| Communication Method | Frequency/Timing | Purpose & Content | Audience |
|--|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Ad Hoc Communications (Email/Phone) | Daily, as needed | Address time-sensitive inquiries, clarifications, or emergent financial matters. | All constituents -open hour |
| Budget Meeting Recap Emails | Within 24–48 hours | Summarize key takeaways, next steps, and follow-up actions. | Cost Center Managers |
| Finance Office Hour | Mondays, 3:00–4:00 PM | Open forum for principals and staff to ask budget or process questions. | All constituents - open hour |
| Cabinet Meeting Broadcasts | Weekly (Tuesdays) | Provide status reports, budget progress, and strategic financial updates. | Cabinet |
| LPS Leader (Internal Newsletter) Notices | Weekly (Fridays) | Share short updates, reminders, tools, and financial tips for administrators. | LPS Leader |
| Email to Cost Center Managers | Monthly | Year-to-Date Budget Report, Open Purchase Orders | All budget leaders |
| All-Admin & Leadership Presentations / Q&A | Monthly | Present key financial updates, upcoming milestones, and respond to questions. | Leadership/All Admin Meetings |
| Clerical Updates/Training - Early Release | Bi-Monthly | Sharing information, reviewing processes, Q&A | Admin staff |
| Budget Meetings (Schools/Departments) | Quarterly or as needed | Review financial performance, discuss planning priorities, and gather feedback. | Cost Center Managers |
| School Committee Meetings | Twice monthly or as needed | Review financial performance, Responses to Motion, Information | School Committee/General public |
| Website | As needed | Positing of reports information | General Public |