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**To:** District/School Leadership  
**From:** Derek Pinto, Assistant Superintendent of Finance  
**Date:** January 29, 2026  
**Subject:** Finance Updates

### **Budget Process**

The budget process has begun in earnest and in keeping with the School Committee approved Budget Calendar. Recent developments include the following Cabinet review of the following:

- **Workbooks** for schools and departments. Whilst maintaining the same “look and feel” as in FY26, leaders will be asked for their input on “additional investments” above and beyond their budgets. Workbooks are being released along with a “**budget kickoff**” next week.
- **Assumptions** act as the core beliefs allowing LPS Finance to forecast financial outcomes, guide decision-making and manage risk through “what-if” scenarios. Historical data and trends are used, as well as some “known cost” service increases.
- **FY27 [Preliminary Chapter 70 Aid and Net School Spending Requirements](#)** have been released based on Governor Healey’s proposed state budget for the coming fiscal year. The proposal increases aid to districts by approximately 3.3% or \$241.8 million.
  - **For Lowell Public Schools, Chapter 70 Aid** is up by **5.54%**. The numbers are currently being analyzed by LPS Finance. These preliminary estimates are subject to change as the House and Senate deliberate on the budget. The budget must be constructed with flexibility to accommodate the changes that often occur in the state budget process. The DESE Commissioner will issue the final school spending requirements once the FY27 state budget is approved by the governor and the legislature.
- **Title 1-V: K-12 formula grants:** the administration initially proposed collapsing multiple grants into a simplified funding plan. The latest information is a bipartisan agreement preserving them as distinct programs, and that they will be **flat-funded**. **Title I** (low income students); **Title II** (teacher training) remains a flexible block grant for professional development; **Title III** (English Learners) appears to be preserved, which is a pivot from early administration proposals to eliminate the grant entirely; **Title IV** flexible student support looks to be maintained so that districts can use the funds for initiatives including stem and educational technology; **Adult Education** funding has faced the most volatility with a significant “on-again, off-again” status.

### **Community Participation**

The opportunities below were created to afford the community participation in the budget process.

- **Community Input Meetings:** were completed the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of January.
- **Community Survey:** was scheduled to close on Friday January 30, 2026.
- **Lowell Education Justice Alliance (LEJA):** was to hold a community school budget forum Thursday January 29, 2026.