



Thomas A. Golden, Jr.
City Manager

Mr. William Skinner, Superintendent of Schools
Lowell Public School Central Administration
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, MA 01852

Mr. Superintendent,

As we move through the quarter of the fiscal year, I write to update you of the ongoing preparations for the City of Lowell's FY2027 budget. My finance department has recently informed me that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ("DESE") has published the official compliance report for the district's spending requirements in FY2025. I am pleased to report to you, as well as to the City Council that the City of Lowell exceeded the Commonwealth's "net school spending" requirement for FY25 by approximately \$7.9 million. This figure is a true demonstration of the City Council's commitment to education funding, which is especially notable amongst gateway cities.

Education has always been a pillar of my Administration and a priority for the Lowell City Council. The House Ways and Means budgeted proposal for FY2027 increased the Chapter 70 allocation for Lowell by \$14.4 million. This increase and proposed level of funding for the Lowell Public School District is historic and a direct result of the Student Opportunity Act ("SOA"). This, funding will allow the district to focus resources towards the approximately 16,000 plus students in the city's schools.

In the FY2027 Annual Budget for the City of Lowell, the total proposed single line appropriation support to the Lowell Public Schools in will be \$287,966,413. This figure, however, does not take into account the approximately \$73 million in costs to support the district funded by the city budget, nor the aggressive capital investment campaign in the schools. According to DESE's report, if the city were to level-fund the schools from the tax levy, the district would again exceed the net school spending requirement by approximately \$8.1 million. This however, does not take into account rising fixed costs for the pension, health insurance and charter schools, which will increase this number further.

It is my sincere hope that this information will be useful to the School Department for budgeting purposes as you plan for the 2026-2027 school year. It must be noted that the amount of Chapter 70 funding from the Commonwealth is subject to further deliberation as it makes its way through the legislative process. The total appropriation to the schools could increase or decrease, proportionally to any decrease to the amount in the final budget approved by the state.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Golden, Jr.
City Manager

Cc: Mayor Rourke & Members of the Lowell City Council
Conor Baldwin, Chief Financial Officer