



April 15, 2025

Manchester Board of Mayor and Aldermen

Re: FY26 Budget

To our Colleagues on the Board of Mayor and Aldermen:

We, the Manchester Board of School Committee, are writing in response to City Budget as proposed by the Mayor. We deeply appreciate our joint work to support the funding of our schools for our students. We know that city governance involves difficult decisions, and we recognize the weight of balancing fiscal responsibility with the needs of our residents. However, we are writing today to formally express our collective rejection of the mayor's proposed budget in its current form. Although we understand the intention to address broader municipal challenges, the proposed reductions to public education funding would have devastating consequences for our students, our educators, and ultimately, the future of our city. Our schools are not merely line items in a budget—they are the heart of our community and the foundation of our city's future growth and prosperity. We as a Board are united in our commitment to strengthening and supporting our schools and our students. Because we know that a strong, well-supported school system helps everyone in our city.

If enacted as written, the proposed budget would necessitate many harmful cuts and reductions to student services, including:

- Cutting teachers and support positions, forcing increases in class sizes across the district.
- Reducing individual student support and differentiated learning, hurting all of our students.
- Halting the growth of our athletics programming.
- Undermining special education services, disproportionately affecting our most vulnerable learners.
- Undoing the progress we have seen over the last several years.

Cuts like these drive families out of Manchester, and they can also deter potential new teachers, damaging recruiting efforts. Bottom line: they hurt our students, our families, and our city. We remain hopeful that, together, we can find a path forward that upholds our shared commitment to the children and families we all serve. We welcome the opportunity to engage in continued dialogue and collaboration to craft a budget that reflects the values, priorities, and long-term vision of a thriving city with excellent schools.

We urge you to reconsider this budget, reinstate the budget as unanimously approved by the BOSC, and commit to fully supporting our 21 schools and 11,865 students. We look forward to seeing an update. Thank you for your consideration.

With respect and resolve,

James O'Connell, Vice Chair
Committee Member, At-Large

Peter Argeropoulos
Committee Member, At-Large

Julie Turner
Committee Member, Ward 1

Sean Parr
Committee Member, Ward 2

Karen Soule
Committee Member, Ward 3

Leslie Want
Committee Member, Ward 4

Jason Bonilla
Committee Member, Ward 5

Dan Bergeron
Committee Member, Ward 6

Chris Potter
Committee Member, Ward 7

Jessica Spillers
Committee Member, Ward 8

Robert Baines
Committee Member, Ward 9

Joy Senecal
Committee Member, Ward 10

Elizabeth O'Neil
Committee Member, Ward 11

Carlos Gonzalez
Committee Member, Ward 12