



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

March 16, 2021

Called for 6:00 p.m. in the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of discussing any and all business that may properly come before the Committee.

Members Present: Vice Chair Bowman, Member Fantini, Member Rachel, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Member Wilson, Mayor Siddiqui

Also Present: Member Vera-DeGraff, Anais Killian, Student School Committee Representatives

Mayor Siddiqui in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The Mayor provided a statement to the public regarding Governor Charlie Baker's Executive Order on guidelines for remote participation and then read the call of the meeting.

The meeting proceeded to the first order of business with a roll call vote for the purpose of a sound check: Member Wilson PRESENT; Vice Chair Bowman PRESENT; Member Fantini PRESENT; Member Rojas PRESENT; Member Rachel PRESENT; Member Weinstein ~~ABSENT~~; Mayor Siddiqui PRESENT

The Mayor opened the meeting to the Superintendent for an announcement about the School Calendar.

The Superintendent gave an update on the School Calendar in regards to Rosh Hashanah. The revision is to have the first day of school on Wednesday, September 8, 2021. They will have to negotiate this with the CEA and there will need to be a follow up conversation.

The Chair opened the meeting for public comment and clarified that tonight the Committee cannot take any public comment on the budget and recommended that if people wish to speak on that they come to the budget meeting on March 25, 2021.

1. **Public Comment:**

The following individuals were heard:

- Giulia Fulci, on schools reopening
- Catherine Reilly, on schools reopening
- Sam Bachelor, on schools reopening
- Deborah Morse, on the School Calendar
- Josie Dickman, on the School Calendar
- Franz Joseph, on schools reopening
- Judith Epstein, on the School Calendar
- Tal Seell-Shavit, on the School Calendar
- Jamie Lichtenstein, on the School Calendar
- Peter Squires, on the School Calendar
- Dan Monahan, CEA president, on the School Calendar and schools reopening
- Pete Lubesky, on schools reopening
- Cheryl Keane, on schools reopening
- Mary Alexander, on schools reopening

- Paul Fiore, on schools reopening

On a motion by Vice Chair Bowman, seconded by Member Rachel, on the following roll call vote, it was voted to close public comment: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA

2. Student School Committee Report:

Member Vera-DeGraff expressed concerns about the CPS calendar starting on a major Jewish holiday, and commended the administration on swift action to change it but also noted that Yom Kippur is not a holiday and students would have to choose again to go to school or celebrate their religion. He shared that on March 17th the junior student class government was hosting an event for juniors to come together and share how their year is going and they will file a report with the dean of students and update the committee as well. He also updated that the committee that registration for the spring sports opened Monday, March 15th. He also shared that family teacher conferences are happening in the next few weeks.

Member Killian shared an update about spring SATS to the Committee: will be separated into three cohorts, no cost to students, and no registration necessary. She also shared an update about in-person learning, CRLS students found it nostalgic while freshman had a different experience because they had never seen the building before. Some students found they were more productive in-person. She noted that for teachers who are remote, students have to report to the cafeteria and that it can be distracting because they are all taking different classes/when they have to speak its hard on the students. Finally, the conversations about cohorts is important and the possibly combining cohorts.

Member Wilson asked if Principal Smith is on the call and is able to speak on cohort A/B and share some problem solving that his staff could be considering. Dr. Gittens will speak to this during the presentation.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

- February 12, 2021 Special Meeting
- February 25, 2021 Special Meeting
- March 2, 2021 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Member Wilson, seconded by Vice Chair Bowman, on the following roll call vote, it was voted to accept the records: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports:

#20-308 Joint Motion by Member Fantini and Mayor Siddiqui

Whereas, the Cambridge Public Schools participate in the Journey into Education and Teaching Program, known as JET, to provide a pathway at little cost for paraprofessionals to get their bachelor's degrees and Massachusetts teacher licensures; and

Whereas JET (www.jetintoteaching.org) supports the goals of building local teacher pipelines and developing an educator workforce that reflects the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of our students; and

Whereas JET provides the program structure for recruitment and support such as: advising, guiding in application procedures for college admission and financial aid, participating in cohort groups, providing local educator mentors, and professional and career development opportunities; and

Whereas Cambridge must commit to providing and compensating mentors as part of our commitment to JET Paraprofessionals; and
Whereas JET is an education program of the Massachusetts Foundation for Teaching and Learning; and
Whereas Massachusetts is unique in providing a state education grant that funds the undergraduate education of employed eligible paraprofessionals who commit to becoming teachers; and
Whereas JET already has demonstrated a record of success; and
Whereas meeting application deadlines is critical; now therefore be it
Resolved that the Superintendent collaborate with JET and report on how the program will operate in Cambridge.

Mayor Siddiqui shared that the Superintendent provided an update on his March 5, 2021 Weekly: there have been three sessions with paras who are interested in applying. Member Fantini shared that he is pleased with the progress of this.

On a motion by Member Fantini and seconded by Member Rachel it was voted to remove **#20-308** from Awaiting Reports and place on file: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA

#21-27 Joint Motion by Mayor Siddiqui, Member Rojas and Vice Chair Bowman

Whereas: Providing the best education and ensuring the wellbeing of our scholars are the highest priorities of the Cambridge School Committee and CPS Administration; and

Whereas: The data shows extreme negative consequences of school closures on scholars' mental, physical, and academic wellbeing; and

Whereas: There is growing evidence that more students can and must be brought back in-person with urgency; and

Whereas: The School Committee and Administration are committed to adaptability and quickly pivoting plans as necessary amid the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas: CPSD must continuously revisit conditions and plan for further expansions; and

Whereas: While the current reopening model recommendation allows families to opt into in-person learning, not all scholars in the district are eligible due to staffing and space constraints; now therefore be it

Resolved: That the Superintendent work with his team to provide a report on what is and is not working with the existing model and the possibilities for subsequent expansions by Friday, April 2, 2021; and be it further

Resolved: That the Superintendent provide an update on the impact of vaccine rollouts on further in-person expansion planning by Friday, April 2, 2021.

#21-27 was passed over.

Mayor Siddiqui shared her appreciation for everyone involved in trying to help the Committee navigating the pandemic and that there is more to do.

7. Superintendent's Agenda:

7a. Presentations:

Mayor Siddiqui opened the meeting to Superintendent Salim for a [presentation](#). First, Superintendent Salim turned the meeting over to Dr. Doberteen and Tracy Rose-Tynes for an update.

Ms. Rose-Tynes reported that testing is going smoothly. She shared the numbers with testing: last week they tested 1,358 staff, 1,199 swabs from pre-k through 5, Grades 6-8: tested 494 students, High school: 146, CRLS athletes: 161. Total testing last week was 3,446 tests and of all those tests, 2 positive cases with children. Overall we are increasing the testing and seeing less of positivity. She thanked the School Health Unit for all their hard work. Dr. Doberteen thanked the staff for supporting in mitigation strategies to keep kids safe in school.

Member Rojas asked if there has been an increase in forms from parents to let their kids be tested.

- Ms. Rose-Tynes confirmed that there has been an increase.

Member Rachel asked if we could turn the testing information that was given changed into percentages.

Member Weinstein asked if the health staff feel like they have everything they need for expansion of in-person learning

- Dr. Doberteen shared that they are fully staffed and they are ready

Member Weinstein asked if there was some way to provide transportation for educator vaccinations for people who need it

- Dr. Doberteen stated that they don't have the ability to provide that.

Vice Chair Bowman had a follow up for Dr. Doberteen to explain how the supply distribution works around the vaccine

- Dr. Doberteen explained the state allocated vaccines based on its allocation from the federal government and that is all dependent on manufacturing rollout schedule. It is a rapidly involving landscape. Most of the vaccine is allocated to mass allocation sites, then pharmacies and then there are vaccines for health centers allotted for certain purposes. Dr. Doberteen shared that they tried to get a vaccination site for CPS and it was denied.
- **Mayor Siddiqui** shared the initiative from the Baker Administration to help 20 cities/towns that have been disproportionately affected by COVID and those communities included places like Boston, Chelsea, and Brockton. That is one of the reasons why Cambridge has not been able to get as many vaccines.

Member Fantini asked are we tracking staff who have received the vaccine.

- Mr. Maloney stated that information is something we are not going to be privy to.

Vice Chair Bowman discussed how it is important to know what percentage of our staff has been vaccinated and that will help us to plan going forward.

- **Mayor Siddiqui** shared that on **#21-27** awaiting report that issue is addressed and should be part of the response from the administration

Member Rojas also thanked that the community to help people get vaccines and that while some teachers have still not received the vaccination, a lot of them at least have an appointment now.

Mayor Siddiqui shared that her office and the Vice Mayor's office has assisted people in getting appointments for the vaccines and if people are struggling to get one, to reach out.

Superintendent Salim continued with the presentation and gave an overview on expanded in-person learning. Dr. Gittens shared that Principal Smith is working with his scheduling team to bring people in on the waitlist and perhaps combining cohorts A and B and the plan for anticipating for state requirements.

Member Rachel asked Dr. Gittens for clarification around the waiting list

- Dr. Gittens provided context on the waiting list and that Principal Smith's deans/guidance counselor are reaching out on who they think will benefit from in-person learning

Vice Chair Bowman asked for clarification: it seems like we are making plans for extended learning ahead of the state and whether it is a five day week goal.

- Dr. Gittens shared that there is a three pronged strategy, the team is trying to plan/anticipate on what it looks like to have the students in five days week and that the commissioner might only give a two week notice; they need to be ready to move.

Vice Chair Bowman asked about with the expansion what the implication on staffing and staffing vaccines is. Dr. Salim talked about how they can ask Ms. Richardson to speak on this.

Dr. Salim ended the presentation and opened the meeting for questions.

Dr. Salim asked Ms. Richardson to explain how we are thinking about staffing in particular with the upper school levels.

- Ms. Richardson stated how when they got the April 5th mandate, they started thinking about remote accommodations in particular to childcare issues and they are still in the process of figuring it out and what the expectations are going to be.

Vice Chair Bowman asked how the federal policy plays into this conversation and how the high school can leverage child care facility.

- Ms. Richardson confirmed they will adhere to all state/federal mandates.
- Dr. Salim shared that he will follow up on the childcare facility.

Member Wilson asked Ms. Richardson about the people who have remote accommodations and what will be the conversations we are having with the staff?

- Ms. Richardson stated that the conversation will be centered on what the is need for the remote accommodations. Remote due to medical reasons will continue but based on child care will change.
- **Member Wilson** asked if staff who were granted remote accommodations based on child care needs, will continue to keep their child remote
- Ms. Richardson discussed that decisions will be based on a case-by-case basis

Member Fantini asked for further clarification about combining classrooms.

- Dr. Salim clarified that it is about the model and they are working with the principals around this.

Member Weinstein asked whether there is staff currently that are remote for medical reasons and if that accommodation would be revoked once they are vaccinated

- Ms. Richardson discussed how people were granted medical accommodations in accordance with CDC guidelines and those will change.

Member Rachel stated that she has four questions:

1) For the return of five day full time and that a good part of population will continue to remain remote and that remote learners are not getting the short end of the stick

- Dr. Salim stated that there will still be a need for remote assignments and staff that are dedicated with remote learners and the importance of the quality of remote learning to remain as robust as possible

2) Because of the low number of students in high school classes and whether or not it's possible to combine cohorts

- Dr. Gittens shared that they are working on combining the cohorts and that it's a class by class review and that it's actually feasible to make these changes.

3) Regarding in-person remote instruction and how we can ensure that all in person students have some sort of in-person instruction

- Dr. Salim shared the different models and the different reasons
- Dr. Madera provided further context on the models in terms of equity and that equity issues are not solely dependent on the working model. She shared that teachers have gone above and beyond and that no model is perfect for every child.

4) That lunch in regards to masking is the most dangerous thing and what are doing at each of the grade levels

- Mr. Maloney explained they are looking at opening the cafeterias as long as the mitigation rules are being followed, they are looking at gyms as well and they have started installing a limited number of tents.

Member Rojas asked a clarifying questions about the infographics received by mail and were those only received by students enrolled in in-person learning or did that go to all the families?

- Dr. Brown confirmed that the mailing only went to in-person families, all families received digital copies.
- Member Rojas stated it was good information and it would be good if families who were being asked to return to in-person received this
- Dr. Brown responded they could reshape that information and the investment in safety document that summarizes and the mailings could be expanded to all families

Member Rojas asked about getting a consultant from DESE for advice on lunch and that if they find problems with lunch it would allow us to get a waiver in time

- Dr. Salim stated there are problems then it would be a request to the DESE
- Mr. Maloney shared that the first choice for dining is always outside and as the weather gets better there will be more opportunity

Member Rojas asked for further clarification on the health and safety group

- Dr. Turk talked about how they have been meeting weekly and ample time to work through those things in a thoughtful way.

Member Weinstein asked when we anticipate knowing the number of families opting and wanted to make sure that our focuses on reducing the number of students on doing an in-person remote model, what can we do support staff collaboration time, and social distancing

- Dr. Salim shared that they will be doing additional follow up on the enrollment and for social distancing, if the classroom can do more than three feet, they will try.
- Dr. Salim clarified on staff collaboration time that it will be a real challenge and the role of the specialists.

Member Wilson asked about the in-person specialty programs, and expand on what DESE is saying about the specialty classes such as music and art and whether we need to renegotiate with CEA

- Dr. Salim talked about how the DESE guidelines were more about music classes and on whether or not it's related to the remote accommodation piece
- Member Wilson asked about the high school level
- Dr. Salim said there is not a distinction on core classes and electives
- Dr. Turk added that the biggest challenge has been on what to do with instruments and what to do with vocal. She shared that there have been conversations with starlight square for students to continue their craft.

Member Fantini discussed how they should celebrate the work they have done and moving on that one quick question that a lot of students coming back will there be a transition to welcoming students back into school

- Dr. Salim shared that there has been a lot of orientation in regards to the new health and safety protocols especially students that are new to the building such as sixth and ninth graders and it has been less than two and a half weeks for the extended in person learning and the first couple of days there have been tours of the building and staff and faculty and the difference on surveillance testing.

Member Fantini explained how it is important for families to know that it is not punitive to keep their child home

- Dr. Salim talked about how there needs to be a complete reworking of the schedule and they are trying to be candid about the expectations

Member Fantini asked for a clarification about summer school.

- Dr. Salim said that there should be both in-person options and remote options for summer school.

Member Rojas asked for clarification about the schedule

- Dr. Salim discussed about how for the week of April 28th to shift to five days a week for full days for the upper school.

Member Rojas asked Mayor Siddiqui for an update on the fields and afterschool programs

- **Mayor Siddiqui** discussed how the plans are underway on how to work on the in-person learning and once she has more information she can send that to the Committee.

Member Rachel asked about surveillance testing during April break.

Mayor Siddiqui wanted to clarify the in-person definition in regards to DESE guidelines and that the Cambridge model is acceptable.

- Dr. Salim explained about how they did have a conversation with DESE and reiterated that the Cambridge model is acceptable.
- Mayor Siddiqui shared that there is more guidance to come.

7b. CPS District Plan: None

7c. Consent Agenda:

The Superintendent's Consent Agenda was brought forward for discussion and adoption. Mayor Siddiqui removed **#21-76**. Member Wilson removed **#21-78, #21-79, #21-81, and #21-87**.

On the following roll call vote, items **#21-77, #21-80, #21-82** were adopted: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

21-77, Day & Residential Program Services not available from the Cambridge School Department, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions as detailed in the list in amounts not to exceed the shown rates, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the General Fund and/or Grand Fund Budget.

	<u>#</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Day Program Tuition Contracts:	1	\$74,278.49
Residential Program Tuition Contracts:		
45 Day Program Contracts:	—	<u>\$74,278.49</u>
Total:	1	\$74,278.49

#21-80, Approval of in-kind donation of \$175.00 made by the Microsoft Workplace Giving Program as a match for employee volunteers' time in the TEALS Program at CRLS to support computer science programs at CRLS be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the above donations as described.

#21-82, Grant Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated.

FY21 Special Education IDEA Allocation INCREASE for the period September, 2021 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$10,852.00. Grant SC21605.

Description: The purpose of this Federal Entitlement Grant Program is to provide funds to ensure that eligible students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education that includes special education and related services designed to meet their individual needs. The temporary salaries line is an offset for the Proportionate Share of services provided to private school students. The remainders will be used for out-of-district tuition for students, with the expectation of \$3,000 for membership dues to the Massachusetts Urban Project.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#21-76, Approval SY2021-2022 Cambridge Public Schools District Calendar, be approved.

Discussion followed on **#21-76**.

Mayor Siddiqui discussed how several issues have been brought up such as Yom Kippur and Diwali and that there are a lot of legal implications on what days to close schools. She motioned sending **#21-76** back to the Superintendent.

Member Weinstein seconded the Mayor's motion and asked the administration if they could consider Rosh-Hashanah as a two-day holiday and for there to be a bigger conversation.

Vice Chair Bowman emphasized the complexity of this issue and the legal ramifications; and that we are respecting faith traditions in an equitable way.

Superintendent Salim withdrew Recommendation **#21-76**.

#21-78, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for custodial supplies & equipment, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Casey EMI, 8 Panas Road, Foxborough, for the period February 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$500,000.00

Discussion followed on **#21-78**.

Member Wilson asked Mr. Maloney for further context on this recommendation.

- Mr. Maloney discussed about how they don't want to fall short on any part of PPE and is not concerned about that from an expense standpoint.

Member Wilson asked if going forward could there be more of an explanation on how these funds are being used.

On the following roll call **#21-78** was adopted: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA: Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA

#21-79, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for temporary employment services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

The Stepping Stones Group, 2568 Trailridge Drive East, Suite 100, Lafayette, CO, for the period February 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$200,000.00

Discussion followed on **#21-79**.

Member Wilson asked for further explanation on what we are hiring for.

- Claire Spinner provided further context on the contract; it is to make sure that we can immediately address a vacancy while we go through the normal hiring process.

Member Wilson asked for clarification on the hiring to help with evaluations.

- Claire Spinner clarified that Dr. Morgan would have more specifics. She shared that they are looking to get a recovery team to help with the backlog of the evaluations.

On the following roll call **#21-79** was adopted: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA: Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA

#21-81, Grant Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated.

FY21 Reading Recovery-formerly early Literacy Intervention for the period February 18, 2021 to June 20, 2021 in the amount of \$268,413.00. Grant SC21632

Description: The grant supports ongoing professional development by Lesley University in Reading Recovery for two CPS Teacher Leaders (.40 FTE each). These Teacher Leaders support the Early Literacy Interventionists, who provide individual tutorial assistance to at-risk first grade students. In addition to part-time teaching duties, the Teacher Leaders supervise, train, and conduct professional development for Reading Recovery teachers from both in and outside of the district. The grant also provides for contracted professional development and participation in the annual Reading Recovery Teacher Leader Institute, the National Reading Recovery and K-6 Literacy Conference, as well as instructional materials for both trained and in-training teachers.

Member Wilson asked for further background on this tool and to get a better sense of what the outcomes are.

- Dr. Turk provided further context on the grant and that she considers this to be a tier 2 intervention and that those students who are having extreme difficulties with regular classroom tier-1 interventions. She provided this grant funds teacher and professional development.

Member Wilson clarified if this was funding from the state annually.

- Dr. Salim confirmed yes and that there has been a change in the name of the grant.

Member Wilson asked for further clarification on what the milestones are for the students in this program.

- Dr. Turk explained how this is for the short term and that she could provide numbers to the Committee.

Member Wilson asked the Committee whether or not this should be referred to a Sub-Committee for further discussion.

Member Weinstein shared that he would welcome a roundtable on how we are approaching reading and literacy in the Curriculum and Achievement Sub-Committee.

On the following roll call, number **#21-81** was adopted: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA

#21-87 Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for equipment rental, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Sunbelt Rentals, 2431 Deerfield Drive, Fort Mill, SC, for the period of April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$73,185.00.

Discussion on **#21-87** followed.

Member Wilson asked for further clarification on this contract from Mr. Maloney.

- Mr. Maloney shared that some principals who initially turned down the offer for tents, have wanted it. He said that they will update the Committee on how it went and if they will need it.

Member Wilson asked if any of the tents have been put up and if they are being utilized yet.

- Mr. Maloney provided an update that they have been starting to put the tents up starting yesterday. They are up at the King Open and the Peabody currently.

On the following roll call, number **#21-81** was adopted: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA

9. School Committee Agenda (Policy Matters/Notifications/Requests for Information):

The School Committee Agenda was brought forward for discussion and adoption. Member Fantini removed **#21-83**.

On the following roll call vote, items **#21-84** and **#21-85** were adopted: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-84 That the Report of the Governance Sub-Committee on February 24, 2021 be accepted as presented

February 24, 2021

GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

#21-84

Virtual Governance Sub-Committee Report
Wednesday, February 24, 2021
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA

Called for the purpose of continuing to discuss the code of ethics of the School Committee. It is anticipated that this meeting will last no longer than 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Member Rojas, Chair; Member Wilson; Member Weinstein

Also Present: Maureen MacFarlane, Legal Counsel, Chandra Banks, Conflict Mediator and Rowan Marcus, IT; Noelene Gabriel, Community Charter School of Cambridge; Leonard Russ, Community Charter School of Cambridge, and Racheal Jean Louis, Community Charter School of Cambridge; Jenny Chung, Educator and Parent; Eva Valenzuela, parent; Sarah Rosenberg, Educator and parent; Glenn Kocher, President Mass Association of School Committees

Chair Rojas began the meeting at 5:00pm with reading the notice to participate as well as going over the agenda:

Goals:

- Review the recommended changes to the code of ethics of the School Committee and consider bringing back to the School Committee for adoption.
- Provide opportunity for community members to ask questions and/or share concerns and ideas on this topic.

Welcome and Agenda Overview

- Give context around the meeting: Review the proposed changes to the code of ethics of the School Committee. When last presented to the School Committee, it was referred back to the subcommittee.
- Public comment will be framed as a Q&A

Review topics to discuss and some frequently asked questions

- Review suggested changes to the code of ethics of the School Committee in the context of considering adding restorative justice practices. The aim is for the code of ethics to not only talk about what is expected from committee members, but also how to respond when a school committee member's actions fall short of those expectations.
- When the recommendation was heard at the last school committee meeting, it was referred back to the subcommittee for further review. It was suggested that Glenn Kocher of the MASC could provide feedback on possible unintended consequences. Some School Committee members voiced concerns about being tied in reviewing constant complaints/accusations against school committee members.

The meeting then proceeded with introductions of participants.

Member-Rojas provided a recap and updated the participants with what the code of ethics document looked like and went through the revisions step by step.

Member Weinstein followed up with a detailed summary of some of the concerns that were raised in the initial document and how it is reflected in the document today.

Member Wilson added that the process of change is difficult and adding amendments to this document is one portion to this meeting however we are looking at an understanding to the restorative justice piece and how do we diffuse potential challenging situations.

Chandra Banks reflected on Restorative Justice and remarked that is not supposed to be on based on the tools but on the values.

Chair Rojas clarified the complaint procedure and went over the concerns raised.

Glenn Kocher is not familiar with the present policy however he is familiar with the model that the document is based on in Cape Cod.

Maureen MacFarlane added that she has suggested changes to the current revised document and proceeded to go through the them line by line.

Glenn Kocher is in favor of the revised changes from Maureen MacFarlane and pointed out that there needs to be a definition of restorative justice. Also cautioned not to interfere with the members right to dissent. There is wide latitude to issuing a complaint and the right of free speech is not compromise. Member's right to speak freely and confidentially with their constituency. Mentioning that the School Committee should rely on their legal counsel for guidance. An example could be "one person's passionate advocacy could be one person's offensive language.

Member Rojas will circulate the red lined changes from Maureen MacFarlane to the participants.

Glenn Kocher spoke again and conversation came back to the Cape Cod version of their policy and Mr. Kocher found flaws it as well. Asked can this policy be used to embarrass elected officials, and used the example of withholding pertinent information. He then itemized specifics from the document.

- Member Wilson gave context to Mr. Kocher with retelling an incident from 2019 and how it was handled. Spoke of the investigation process and its outcome caused more harm. The restorative justice process could have been used to help with the healing from this incident. She then proceeds to introduce the Members of the Community Charter School to speak on Restorative Justice.

Noelene Gabriel, Community Charter School of Cambridge echoed what Chandra Banks said as well, noting it's not about tools and strategies it is about values and philosophies. Defined by Fania Davis, she went into the meaning and definition and explained it as, a relational practice that brings together people who are affected by wrong doing, to address need and responsibilities and heal harm to relationship and community.

Leonard Russ, Community Charter School of Cambridge began his thoughts that there needed to be restorative leaders who will hold, promote and explain the Restorative Justice purpose and philosophy. Restorative Justice tenets are Community, Accountability, Trust and Interconnectedness. Implementation is a multiyear process.

Racheal Jean Louis, Community Charter School of Cambridge, spoke of their experience with Restorative Justice at their school and its many facets and its circles of instances where conflicts and challenges were resolved. There is a constant rebuilding of connections and values. Questions the committee on why not spend time on healing and what is the worst that can happen?

Leonard Russ followed up with If you really want to dismantle white supremacy culture, Restorative Justice is the philosophy.

Noelene Gabriel followed up as well, it is a process of people not about rules and policies. The foundation is about trust.

Chandra Banks commended the Community Charter School of Cambridge for their hard work and all they have done to implement the Restorative Justice process.

Chair Rojas asked how has Restorative Justice been implemented at Community Charter School? Does the School Committee have stated values?

- Chandra Banks answered that there are not defined values and they are not clear. There needs to be a conversation about what are the District's values.
- Leonard Russ answered that the head of their school is part of the leadership team that implemented the Restorative Justice philosophy. Urges the participants to go through the Restorative Process.

Chandra Banks reflected on the process of listing values and its parallel to a complaint. Values need to be established in order to screen the Restorative Justice process. Speaks to the process and its importance and that it is a time consuming.

Member Wilson reflected on how hard change is and the unknown. There has to be a starting point. Considers a future motion on sitting in a circle and doing the work. Put the work into the understating and appreciating what this process is.

Chair Rojas spoke on the working towards something to present to the School Committee with consideration to what was brought up. Do we need a description to what Restorative Justice is?

Glenn Kocher speculated that the lay reader, student, teacher and parents may not understand what is Restorative Justice is? A definition would be useful.

Member Weinstein agreed and built on what Mr. Kocher was saying. Clarity as to the needs to addressed and the process is relevant as well.

Jenny Chung shared her thoughts about freedom of speech and "the liberty to swings one's arms ends just where one's nose begins." Brought up power dynamics and when harm is caused it has to be addressed.

Member Weinstein wanted clarity to some of the concerns that were raised. There are complaints and concerns regardless of the policy. Not having a clear policy to address leaves those concerns and harms unaddressed

Chandra Banks explained her previous training and wants to have people trained with enough resources and by people who are thorough in the understanding with what Circle Training is and its process is. Went on to discuss in detail how it could work and the limits put on by the district. Specifies the individuality of trainings and its uniqueness.

Member Wilson reflected on the constant abuse delivered to staff, leadership and student. There needs to be a starting point for this process. Brings up the benefits of a late motion. Or Vote on the revised Code of Ethics.

Chair Rojas reviews next steps; incorporate revisions proposed by Maureen MacFarlane and trainings on Restorative Justice

Adjourned 6:24pm

Attest:

Jennifer Dever Wood
Cambridge School Committee

#21-85 That the Report of the Special Education & Student Supports Sub-Committee on February 25, 2021 be accepted as presented.

February 25th, 2021

SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SUPPORTS SUB-COMMITTEE

#21-85

Virtual Special Education & Student Supports Sub-Committee
Thursday, February 25th, 2021
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA

Called for the purpose of discussing the information regarding Grid B and Grid C services, and what it will look like for 4th, 5th, upper and high school scholars.

Members Present: Member Wilson, Chair; Member Rachel and Member Weinstein

Also Present: Alexis Morgan, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Representing the Office of Student Services, Karyn Grace, Shelagh Walker, Jean Spera, and Desiree Phillips; Jillian Kalen, Ena Valenzuela; Cambria Russell; Lisa Downing; Dr. Jill Crittenden, COVID Safety Task Force; B. Kimmerman, Educational Liaison to the Mayor

Member Wilson, Chair of the Sub Committee welcomed and started the meeting at 6:00pm by reading the notice to participate and that the meeting will be recorded. She then proceeded to have the members and participants partake in a breathing exercise. Parameters for the meeting were discussed and explained.

Objectives that were introduced were to discuss the Grid B and Grid C services for expanding the in-person model for 4th, 5th, upper and high school scholars.

Presentation from the Office of Student Services for the incoming students was made by Dr. Alexis Morgan see attached.

[..\Downloads\Subcommittee February .pdf](#)

Dr. Morgan yielded the floor to Desiree Phillips, Coordinator for OSS, who shared a video for clarity regarding the breakdown of the presentation, the video was done by the Putnam Avenue Upper School.



OSS Day v2 (1).mp4

Dr. Karyn Grace continued the presentation of what is planned for summer as well as fellow peer, Shelagh Walker who continued the discussion.

Chair Wilson asked Dr. Jill Crittenden her thoughts on the protocols spoken about

- Dr. Crittenden, parent and COVID 19 Safety Task Force - Something's that can be deemphasized is objects are not considered a big concern. Such as touching a basketball and sharing materials, etc. Noted that eye protection has not been mentioned and should be part of

the prevention dialogue as well as touching your face. Mask wearing is critical; really good masks make a difference. She then demonstrated ways to wear masks effectively. Recommended a KF 94 mask. Learn about proper steps to ensure safety and mask wearing

Chair Wilson opened up the meeting for questions from the participants.

No questions.

Dr. Morgan reminded the members that there was an OSS Town Hall the previous day and there was hearty discussion during within the setting.

Member Rachel thanked the participants and asked about providing OSS staff with higher quality masks? Also with the updated March guideline, would an OSS provider be in two schools per day?

- Dr. Morgan answered yes two schools per day could happen.
- Desiree Phillips clarified as well there are very few staff who have to go to many schools.

Dr. Morgan informed the panel that a protocol was provided to OSS staff for consistent safety practices for fighting COVID in schools as well as do a follow up reminder.

Member Rachel asked about compensatory services and the length of the day.

- Dr. Morgan answered that this is just not a OSS issue. We are working on programs that can support our families. Partnering with various stakeholders/partners.

Nathan, Senior at CRLS, remarked that there will be remote classes while being in person. If there are days he doesn't have an in person class, can he stay home.

- Desiree Phillips's replied that the student will be assigned to remote workrooms and would be able to work remotely those days.

Member Weinstein remarked how are preparing for additional staffing and how can we support that? How are we preparing to have additional staffing?

- Dr. Morgan referenced that the Summer of 2020 the opportunity was there and offered however very few enrolled, thus mitigating the need. There is a plan in place to start advertising for staffing and still aware there will be a remote piece for families. Reminds that it has been a challenging year academically.
- Jean Spera responded that they have been successful with the staffing. The previous managers have been able to get staff from other entities. Recognizes they will not get as many students similar to last year.

Member Weinstein wondered why there was a low number of student participating and followed up with outdoor education opportunities. Offers the suggestion to work with the Outdoor Education COVID Group. That there will still be two tracks for families, Remote and Outdoor.

Ena Valenzuela echoed Member Weinstein's thoughts and sees the viability of outdoor tutoring for the Summer.

Member Weinstein spoke of and the Summer remote program was not very successful. Remarked about the specialist going to multiple schools and how can the paperwork and tracing be more streamlined?

Chair Wilson reminded that families still need remote as their choice but there does need to be outdoor services for their children. Echoed what Ms. Valenzuela spoke about with the process of contract tracing.

- Shelagh Walker, answered the question of the contact tracing and the OSS coordinators and their travels to the different schools. She then proceeded to go through the procedures set in place and sites examples.

Chair Wilson asked about mask distribution done by the parents and how it is going?

- Dr. Jill Crittenden expressed thanks to Amada Beatty for all her efforts for the purchasing of these masks as well as singling out individual masks and family masks.
- Ena Valenzuela echoed what Dr. Crittenden said about the masks distribution and its success also spoke about the mask survey that was distribution to determined what masks are more successful.

Chair Wilson spoke about next steps from the members i.e., motions and future conversations.

Member Rachel inquired about buying masks in bulk for all in the district, specifically the KF 94 for the OSS team. Was curious of the number of staff?

- Shelagh Walker responded that the numbers would not be large. Would bring that number to James Maloney for possibility of purchase. As an FYI, there are vaccinations that have begun with OSS staff because of their licensures.

Dr. Crittenden agreed to the purchase and distribution of said masks, spoke of the comfort of the mask and to find something that everyone will wear consistently.

Member Weinstein asked about high quality masks and their practicality and how we can respond as a district to distribute.

- Desiree Phillips answered that ironically the free masks are quite good. Of course there is a need a high quality mask in certain instances.
- Dr. Crittenden responds does a mask fitting matter or does a masks with a good filter matter. The components of social distance and outdoors are the keys. Noted that the CDC has made recommendation for fit.

Shelagh Walker wanted to highlight that staffing has been a huge challenge, details the limited number of in person staff. Motions that there will be more scholars coming back to school and that impacts staffing. There will also be a shift between the in person and remote teams that are working with scholars.

Chair Wilson takes a moment to thank the OSS staff for all their efforts and hard work.

Member Weinstein remarked that children are going through multiple challenges and transmissions. Are there thing we can do with outdoor education. Should there be a meeting assemble of that working group?

- Dr. Morgan answered there will be finalizing their Summer principals and planning teams and they would be needed for this discussion. There will be an update as to who is on the planning team. Dr. Brown also noted that MCAS is coming and there will be an update provided for a later date.

Adjourned 7:19pm

Attest:

Jennifer Dever Wood
Cambridge School Committee

#21-83 Joint Motion by Member Fantini, Mayor Siddiqui and Vice Chair Bowman

Whereas: Jimmy worked for CPS for over 35 years as a Technical Specialist, an Aide in Information Technology, Culinary Arts, Hospitality, and First Work programs at RSTA and also as a member of the Facilities staff at ~~Donnelly~~-Russell Field, Thorndike Street, Berkshire Street, and the King Open School; and

Whereas: Jimmy Ravines, was known for his wonderful humor and wit, which was guaranteed to always get a hearty laugh out of everyone who knew him; and

Whereas: Jimmy will be remembered fondly by all who came in contact with him; and

Whereas: Knowing he will be sorely missed and never forgotten by his many loving family members and friends, we give thanks to his great spirit that endeared him to the lives he touched; and

Whereas: The King Open School Principal and community will lead an effort to honor James Ravines appropriately; now therefore be it

Resolved: That the School Committee go on record supporting the efforts of the King Open School's honoring of James Ravines with an appropriate ceremony held in his name.

Discussion followed on **#21-83**.

Member Fantini made a clarification that it was Russell field instead of Donnelly.

On the following roll call, number **#21-83** was adopted: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA

10. Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolence):

#21-86 Joint Motion by Mayor Siddiqui and Member Wilson

Whereas: My Brother's Keeper Task Force Cambridge worked with the Tufts School of Medicine and the Cambridge Health Alliance to hold the first of a series of COVID-19 vaccine clinics at the Cambridge Community Center on Sunday, March 7th, 2021; and

Whereas: On March 7th, 2021, 112 Cambridge residents, including CPS parents and caregivers, received their first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine and will be receiving their second dose on April 3rd, 2021; and

Whereas: Building community and partnerships are not only important to the School Committee, however to the City of Cambridge as a whole; now therefore be it

Resolved: That the School Committee go on record extending its gratitude for My Brother's Keeper Task Force Cambridge and their service to the Cambridge community and t; and be it further

Resolved: That a formal copy of this Resolution be prepared by the Executive Secretary to the School Committee.

On the following roll call, number **#21-86** was adopted: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA

11. Announcements:

Member Rachel shared that the School Climate Sub-Committee will be meeting on Monday, March 22, 2021 on mental health plans.

Member Wilson shared that:

- The Special Education and Students Supports will be meeting on Wednesday, March 24, 2021

- Lori Lander and Eric Lander, created “We are America” helping students tell their stories-can listen to the stories at www.weareamericaproject.com
- The City has hired a College Success Director-Tawayna Garrett and her start is On Monday March 22, 2021.

Member Weinstein discussed how the deadline for the Women’s History month art submission is March 25, 2021.

Mayor Siddiqui shared that with Robin Harris there will be safety protocols on zoom on March 24th at 6 pm on Cambridge Street Upper schools to answer any questions.

Mayor Siddiqui gave an update about the Interim Superintendent search: we’ve received 17 applications, the ad-hoc sub-committee will convene in executive session and to narrow it down and screen further applications and they will also be in touch about next steps.

Member Rachel shared that on Thursday April 8 there will be a set of community conversations with finalists.

12. Late Orders: None

13. Communications from City Officers: None

Distributed Back-up Documents (copies on file in the School Committee office):

- Agenda
- PowerPoint Presentation

Statements from Public Comment (copies on file in the School Committee office)

- Statement re:

E-Mail communications:

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| ✓ Sophie Crafts | ✓ Scarlett Batchelor | ✓ Vincent Broich |
| ✓ Marine Gale | ✓ Sara Smolik | ✓ Jonathan Kraus |
| ✓ Debbie Klein | ✓ Shelley Rieman | ✓ Kathy Greeley |
| ✓ Ayala Livy | ✓ Hilary Shea | ✓ Beverly Mire |
| ✓ Michelle Fisher | ✓ Janet Zimmern | ✓ Margaret Rowe |
| ✓ Samantha Musher | ✓ Dara Manoach | ✓ Tal Seiberg |
| ✓ Wendy McCluskey | ✓ Kristin Canavan | ✓ Kunjal Shah |
| ✓ Katherine Wolff | ✓ Susan Markowitz | ✓ Naomi Oresenten |
| ✓ Maria Collins | ✓ Jasmine Lainez | ✓ Rachel Wyon |
| ✓ Rebecca Lavine | ✓ Ellen Birnbaum | ✓ Alicia Zeh-Dean |
| ✓ Elisa Van Voorhees | ✓ Phyllis Benjamin | ✓ Susan Geller |
| ✓ Laurie LaPorte | ✓ Mac Shotland | ✓ Benazeer Norrani |
| ✓ Elizabeth Epstein | ✓ Gal Kober | ✓ Jen Mason Scott |
| ✓ Maimouna Kane | ✓ Beth Britz | ✓ Rozann Kraus |
| ✓ Brian Eisenstein | ✓ Leigh O’Sullivan | ✓ Maura Kohl |
| ✓ Julia D’Amato | ✓ Rena Kirsch | ✓ Shelley Irvin-Kent |
| ✓ Elizabeth Coffey | ✓ Talia Weisberg | ✓ Jo Ann Neusner |
| ✓ Liz Anderson | ✓ Steven Greenberg | ✓ Belina Watt |
| ✓ Katie Bruno | ✓ Avra Goldman | ✓ Maya Harrington-Levy |
| ✓ Jeremy Kravitz | ✓ Ruth Bauman | ✓ Emily Winston |
| ✓ Adaline Lining | ✓ Frank Gillet | ✓ Malobika Baura |
| ✓ Joan Epstein | ✓ Iti Squires-Kasten | ✓ Peter Squires |
| ✓ Karen Engels | ✓ Michelle Izadi | ✓ Susan Turner |
| ✓ Pierre Belanger | ✓ Lonso | ✓ Poonam Thukar |

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| ✓ Eli Witkin | ✓ Talia Ben Sasson-Gordis | ✓ Katie DesRoches |
| ✓ Andrea Normoyle | ✓ Shelley Gross | ✓ Annika Bogstad |
| ✓ Kristin Beal | ✓ Abby Zanger | ✓ Roy Tishler |
| ✓ Alexandra Lennox | ✓ Shannon Finley | ✓ Jill Smith |
| ✓ Ken Sibling | ✓ Lily Grodzins | ✓ Matt Molberger |
| ✓ Prionti Talukdar | ✓ Rachel Chunnha | ✓ Elisa Gershowitz |
| ✓ Pippa Shulman | ✓ Sushma Rasman | ✓ Jackie King |
| ✓ Jonathan King | ✓ Julie Gregorio | ✓ Irene Goodman |
| ✓ Zaida Block | ✓ David Wilner | ✓ Sarah Block |
| ✓ Karen Morse | ✓ Paul Morse | ✓ Bari Brodsky |
| ✓ Leslie Lawrence | ✓ Sachiko Tanaka Rodes | ✓ Edward Bartholomew |

On a motion by Vice Chair Bowman, seconded by Member Rachel, on the following roll call vote, it was voted to adjourn the meeting: Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA. (9:19 pm).

Attest:
Allison Daley
Confidential Secretary
to the School Committee office