



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

March 2, 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: Nuriel 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 Chair asked everyone to keep CRLS student Sina Ball in our thoughts and Elaine Carrieri's family on the loss of her mother Pauline and then 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 Rachel PRESENT; Member Weinstein PRESENT; Member Wilson PRESENT; Vice Chair Bowman PRESENT; Member Fantini PRESENT; Member Rojas PRESENT; Mayor Siddiqui PRESENT.

1. **Public Comment:**

The following individuals were heard:

- Dan Monahan, CEA President, 229 Lexington Ave., the opening went smoothly, congratulations all around, there is more work to do, looking forward to additional reopening plans
- Benjamin Driscoll, Cedar Street, in support of **#21-66** Remind Text App
- Selma Farsakh Ulm, Tremont Street, in support of **#21-66** Remind Text App
- Giulia Fulci, Broadway, in support of **#21-27** is hoping for in person learning five days a week
- Elena Fagotto, Bigelow Street, in support of **#21-27** is looking for expansion and full time in-person learning
- Gonzalo Anyosa, Bay State Road., in support of **#21-66** Remind Text App
- Chloe Duncan-Wald, Norton Place, in support of **#21-66** Remind Text App
- Keith Ericson, Concord Avenue, supports full time fall in-person reopening & DESE requirements
- Catherine Reilly, Linnaean Street, thanked the district for school reopening
- Lisa Sebesta, Mount Pleasant Street, pleased on re-opining in-person, upset about the waitlist at the Amigos
- Andrew King, Essex Street, in support of **#21-48**, BLM in School Motion for the curriculum
- Hope Perrine, Cambridge Street, in support of **#21-66** Remind Text App
- Betsy Preval, Harvard Avenue, read a statement from EOCC in support of **#21-48** BLM at School
- Doug Brown, Standish Avenue, **#21-27**, major challenges for IEP students, students are physically in class watching their teachers teach via zoom
- Matthias Lamb, Newport Road., in support of **#21-66** Remind Text App
- Michael Daniliuk, Griswold Street, in support of in-person classes, offered encouragement and thanked the district and School Committee for their efforts

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

2. Student School Committee Report:

Member Killian reported that students gratefully returned to class yesterday, Monday, March 1, 2021. There were some mistakes however, they are all very grateful and are sure it will all get better going forward. She pointed out that there are still many teachers that are not in-person, there is a Registry Forum article written by the two students representatives on what School Committee is

Member Vera-Degraff reported that he is thankful for all of the students that spoke at public comment and explained some sports regulations; the floating season has started; for this semester there will be football, cheerleading, indoor track and field, girls fly-ball and unified basketball

Member Wilson commented that she was at CRLS yesterday welcoming students, it was very exhilarating. She was happy to see everyone.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

- October 27, 2020 Roundtable Meeting
- January 12, 2021 Special Meeting
- January 14, 2021 Special Budget Meeting
- January 26, 2021 Special Budget Meeting
- February 2, 2021 Regular Meeting
- February 9, 2021 Special Meeting

On a motion by Member Rachel, seconded by Member Wilson, it was voted to accept the Minutes as presented: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar:

#21-48 Joint Motion by Member Wilson and Member Rachel

Whereas the Cambridge Public School District is committed to rigorous, joyful, and culturally responsive learning and has committed to implementing racial equity through the strategic objective in the district's plan focusing on equity and access; and

Whereas the Cambridge Public Schools are fortunate that American-born Blacks, immigrants from several African countries, and many children of the African diaspora constitute more than one quarter of the district population; and

Whereas a national movement of educators, families, administrators, and scholars have come together to proclaim a "Black Lives Matter at School Year of Purpose," as well as a "Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action, Affirmation, and Solidarity;" and

Whereas [Black Lives Matter at School](#) Week of Action will take place every year on a selected and consistent date to coincide with, and augment Black History Month; and

Whereas Black Lives Matter at School emphasizes that schools should be places for the practice of equity, for the building of understanding, and for the active engagement of all in creating pathways to freedom, and justice for all people; and

Whereas Black Lives Matter at School is intended to highlight, uplift, and affirm the rich history and contributions of the Black community for all students to learn, and to cultivate in Black students a sense of pride, self-worth, and self-love; and

Whereas Black Lives Matter at School is further intended to encourage ongoing critical reflection and courageous conversations concerning systemic racism and recent movements regarding police brutalities, social injustices, disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, racial and ethnic bias, and to affirm the right of Black students to be treated with respect and dignity within schools and communities; and

Whereas Black Lives Matter at School will offer a variety of educational opportunities such as workshops, teach-ins, cultural events, instructional activities, and expressions of unity; and

Whereas numerous Cambridge Public School educators have participated and endorsed Black Lives Matter at School, including the CEA Educators of Color Coalition; now therefore be it

Resolved that the Cambridge Public Schools welcome and encourage the participation of educators, staff, and students in community-based activities and events related to the Black Lives Matter at School February 1-5, 2021 and in future years; and be it further

Resolved that the Cambridge Public Schools invite educators across grade levels and content areas to use resources that are inclusive of all of our diverse learners to enrich instruction throughout the entire year; and be it further

Resolved that the educators, staff, and students who participate in Black Lives Matter at School, in alignment with all CPSD policies, will not face repercussions, punishment, reprisal, or reprimand; and be it further

Resolved that the Cambridge Public Schools intend for meaningful activities and events related to the Black Lives Matter at School to take place in all virtual school environments as well as in-school environments appropriate with COVID-19 Health and Safety protocols. (Bowman, 2-2-2021)

Member Wilson offered a substitute motion, which came before the Committee on the following roll call vote: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

Member Wilson stated that Black Lives Matter everyday not just during any one month of the year, this motion is to continue to do this work with joy in a meaningful way for our students to have an enhance sense of pride. Member Rachel explained that this motion was delayed last month because it was perceived as a mandate, which was not the intent. They have come together to recommit to supporting and educating our educators with this substitute motion.

Vice Chair Bowman asked that since this substitute motion has not been posted online and is not on the Agenda, the substitute motion be read for the public. Member Wilson read the substitute motion.

Vice Chair Bowman thanked the motion makers and the administration for bringing this motion forward. On the following roll call, **#21-48** was adopted: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

6. Awaiting Reports:

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

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.

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

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.

Mayor Siddiqui mentioned that reports are coming to us from the state and the federal level on what is working and what is not working on the vaccination roll out. We are still waiting for more information. This is a constantly changing issue on how to adapt **#21-27**.

7. Superintendent's Agenda:

7a. Presentations: COVID 19 Response Update.....Dr. Kenneth N. Salim,
Superintendent of Schools

Superintendent Salim framed the presentation for the evening; he expressed gratitude to ICTS, custodial staff, families and everyone that contributed to the re-opening and spoke on how palatable the excitement for the first day of school was yesterday. He explained the testing program and quarantining. The presentation is online and can be viewed.

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=0ef808350d&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1693154175852509993&th=177f4ac091a87b29&view=att&disp=inline&realattid=f_klsh6krz0

Dr. Salim paused the presentation for questions and answers opening the floor to Dr. Dobberteen and Nurse Tynes for any additional comments.

Dr. Dobberteen did not have anything to add to the presentation. Mayor Siddiqui thanked both Ms. Tynes and Dr. Dobberteen for their unwavering service to the School Department.

Member Rachel asked if testing will be mandatory for students and staff.

- Nurse Rose-Tynes stated that they do not have the consent forms from parents to test students. Once that is in place, they will be able to test a greater number of students week by week.

- Dr. Salim mentioned individual school outreach to parents and for the staff, the MOA has a provision that testing is required at least once per week for all in-person staff. This will go for non union staff also.

Member Rachel asked what the changes are in the quarantining process

- Dr. Dobberteen responded that the expectations for students at different age groups will respond specifically to their ages and abilities and they have tried to know in advance how students will respond. 6:00 a.m. every morning there is a meeting on this issue.
- Nurse Tynes added that each case is unique there is no cookie cutter approach to the decisions, can the teachers maintain six feet distancing at all times? Communicating with staff is imperative. Each school is different, and everyone needs to understand safety first. The collaborations at 6:00 a.m. every morning ensures that safety is always first.

Member Vera-Degraff asked if the students received the updates on the presentation.

- Dr. Salim answered that he will check, if not he will make sure they do go to the students.

Vice Chair Bowman thanked Nurse Rose-Tynes and Mr Maloney for the 6:00 a.m. collaborations and brought up the level of work that has been going on since the beginning, and she mentioned the pressure coming to us now from the state; it is extremely hard work and it took a long time to get this far.

Member Weinstein thanked Dr. Dobberteen and Nurse Tynes and everyone else involved with this work. On increasing the number of consent forms from families, if there is anything the Committee can do to help, he is offering that now.

Member Fantini asked if it is possible to track the number of families that are not responding to the forms?

- Dr. Pinkus-Brown responded that there is additional work to be done to get information to parents. Parents that gave their consent in the fall was only for symptomatic testing, now they need to reach out to them again for surveillance testing.

Member Fantini asked if we will be tracking folks in order to know who will and who will not get tested?

- Dr. Dobberteen answered that they will be tracking student data in the aggregate, but not for whether or not families have been tested.

Vice Chair Bowman asked if we can do a survey to find out why families are holding back? She also thanked the administration for the packet in the mail with the graphics in place, next time multiple languages will be great.

- Dr. Salim answered yes it makes a lot of sense to find out why there may be hesitation.

Member Wilson thanked the young people for participating in the videos and asked how are we communicating to families, it is just an email or do they get a video also?

- Dr. Salim answered there needs to be an opt in for text messages, we do have some tools to simplify the information for that

Member Wilson asked if folks need to keep being tested after they have been vaccinated?

- Dr. Dobberteen responded that vaccinated people need to keep following all strategies and precautions, there may still be a tiny chance the vaccinated folks will get sick, the data is not clear on how much the vaccinated person can still transmit the virus

Member Wilson asked how many of our staff have been tested since the return from Feb. vacation?

- Mr. Maloney answered that he will put the numbers up on the dashboard.
- Nurse Tynes answered that 920 staff members were tested after the vacation week (the week of the 21st) and the numbers continue to increase.

Member Wilson asked for an update on the DESE request of April 1st.

- Dr. Salim answered that we have not discussed this yet because there have been many changes and they will likely continue. We are in a holding pattern.

Member Rojas asked if testing at a neighborhood site acceptable or do they need to be tested at the school sites?

- Dr. Salim responded that he will check with public health and get back to the Committee.

Dr. Salim returned to the PowerPoint presentation at the last slide.

The Chair opened the floor for the pleasure of the Committee. Mayor Siddiqui asked Dr. Salim to speak more about CRLS students opting to go back home since they found out when they arrived at school, their teachers are still remote.

- Principal Smith replied that the experience is different from what students are used to prior to COVID-19. There are days that students are in-person and their teachers are remote. Some students still want the experience of leaving home and will continue in-person regardless of the venue of the teacher. Some students are not looking for that kind of experience and will decide to remain at home. All students have designated remote learning spaces for classes where the teacher will remain online. They log into their classroom, put their headphones on and complete the class and are then dismissed. This may extend to music classes; those spaces are still being finalized around the parameters for playing music.

Member Weinstein asked how many elementary students are at school with a remote teacher?

- Dr. Salim answered that it is just a handful of classrooms.
- Dr. Madera stated that they are taking all requests seriously and are using a critical eye to look at their capacity under the rules of the pandemic. They would love to let everyone in, but they don't have the space for everyone. A seat will not always mean a seat that the student has been learning with since October. Sometimes transferring to another school may be an option in order to find a physical seat.

Member Fantini motioned, seconded by Mayor Siddiqui to suspend the Rules to bring Motion **#21-62** forward for discussion and adoption. On the following roll call, **#21-62** was brought before the Committee: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-62 Motion by Member Fantini:

That given the small numbers of children in grades K-8 that for various reasons are not able to return to school in-person, the Superintendent make every effort to find solutions to provide in-person opportunities to these children.

Discussion on **#21-62** followed.

Member Fantini emphasized that he feels very strongly about the fact that there has been too much emotional and mental trauma on our kids. We need to let these 22 children know that we care enough about them to go to the ends of the earth to support our kids being in a classroom, especially if space is not a problem.

Member Rojas stated he wants to talk about space when classrooms are being combined?

- Dr. Gittens responded that she has been working intensely with Principal Marero about this issue. The constraints differ from what is going on at other elementary and middle schools.

Member Fantini asked if the SAT exams have been announced yet for CRLS?

- Principal Smith responded that they will be announced mid-March or by March 24th. The challenge is that we will need to have some conversations about running school and the SAT tests on the same three dates. They want to minimize the disruptions as much as possible.

Member Wilson asked what is the ratio of students and staff that are remote vs. in-person.

- Dr. Salim answered that on the February 2nd presentation this information was shared. He acknowledged that a lot of information has been shared over this pandemic.

On a motion by Member Fantini, seconded by Member Wilson, on the following roll call vote, **#21-62** was referred to the Superintendent: YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

7b. CPS District Plan: None

7c. Consent Agenda:

Member Fantini moved, seconded by Member Wilson, on a roll call vote, to bring the Superintendent's Agenda forward for discussion and adoption. Member Fantini removed **#21-51**. Member Wilson removed **#21-54**. Member Weinstein removed **#21-56**.

On the following roll call vote, items **#21-52**, **#21-53**, **#21-55**, **#21-57** through **#21-61** were adopted:

#21-52, 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:	2	\$92,381.04
Residential Program Tuition Contracts:		
45 Day Program Contracts:	—	<u>\$92,381.04</u>
Total:	2	\$92,381.04

#21-53, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for interactive display hardware, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

CCS Presentation Systems, 132 Northeastern Blvd, Nashua, NH, for the period February 22, 2021 to February 21, 2022 in the amount of \$100,000.00

#21-55, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for temporary medical services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Norton Staffing & Recruiting, 34 Elm Street, Cohasset, for the period January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 in the amount \$150,000.00

#21-57, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for carpentry & maintenance supplies, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Home Depot, 11 Dan Road, Canton, for the period February 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$100,000.00

#21-58, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for computer hardware and accessories, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

CDW Government LLC, 230 N. Milwaukee Ave., Vernon Hills, IL, for the period of February 15, 2021 to February 14, 2022 in the amount of \$100,000.00

#21-59, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for written translation services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Cross Cultural Communication Systems, P.O. Box 2308, Woburn, for the period February 22, 2021 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$50,000.00

#21-60, Approval of Gift of an in-kind donation of three boxes of photo books made by an individual donor to the Visual & Performing Arts Department be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the above donations as described.

#21-61, 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.

Coronavirus Prevent Fund Grant for the period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$344,725.00. Grant SC21205.

Description: This state grant will be used to cover partial costs for personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies and air filters.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#21-51, Approval of the Amendment to Memorandum of Agreement between the Cambridge Education Association Units A, B, C, D, and E and the Cambridge School Committee Regarding School Reopening be adopted as follows: That the School Committee ratify and approve the Amendment to November 2020 Memorandum of Agreement between the Cambridge Education Association Units A, B, C, D, and E and the Cambridge School Committee Regarding School Reopening.

Discussion followed on **#21-51**.

Member Fantini thanked the CEA for their collaboration, every time we deliberate we get stronger. He thanked the Superintendent for being at all of the meetings, fully participating, very few Superintendents attend them all. After a lot of meetings, they were able to come up with a solution.

Vice Chair Bowman stated that Member Fantini really captured it. It was a pleasure to work with our Dean in order to move the conversations forward. That we have an agreement, it speaks to the strength of the CEA and the District. As soon as there is direction from the state to vaccinate our educators, Cambridge Public Health is ready to move forward. This goes for our grocery workers also. It was a collaborative effort.

The Mayor recognized the bargaining team of Member Fantini and Vice Chair Bowman for all of those many meetings and hard work.

Superintendent Salim thanked the Committee bargaining team, and the district bargaining team. Certainly there have been disagreements, but they have been able to come to an agreement which is an outstanding result. Dr. Salim spoke on the complexities of the different problem solving techniques that were explored and decided upon.

On the following roll call vote, **#21-51** was adopted: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-54, 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:

Norton Staffing & Recruiting, 34 Elm Street, Cohasset, for the period of January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 in the amount \$46,150.00

Discussion followed on **#21-54**

Member Wilson removed this in order to ask whether this speaks to classroom instruction for the students that are waiting for seats for in-person learning.

- Dr. Salim answered that this first came up when we needed more educators and substitutes were hired on a temporary basis to fill the gap.
- Ms. Richardson responded that our substitutes have agreed to work remotely as opposed to working in-person. The fee that we pay is for the agency and for the individual substitute to work both in person and online.

On the following roll call vote, **#21-54** was adopted: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-56, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for written translation services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Language Connections Inc., 2001 Beacon Street, Suite 105, Brighton, for the period November 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$50,000.00

Discussion followed on **#21-56**

Member Weinstein is wondering how these services are going to be used.

Dr. Pinkus-Brown responded this contract is for expanding our existing services for translations. We are able to caption recorded videos in other languages also thanks to this contract.

On the following roll call vote, **#21-56** was adopted: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

Member Fantini requested to suspend the Rules, seconded by Member Wilson, to return to **#21-51** for the purpose of a revote because the representation of the City Manager by Ms. Sheila Keady Rawson was not voted. On the following unanimous roll call on suspension for the reason stated: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

On the following roll call vote, **#21-51** was adopted: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Ms. Keady Rawson ABSENT; 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 Weinstein removed **#21-64** and **#21-66**. Member Rachel removed **#21-65**. On the following roll call, **#21-63**, **#21-67**, **through #21-73** were adopted: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-63 Motion by Vice Chair Bowman

That Lisa Richardson, Chief Talent Officer of Human Resources, be appointed as the official School Committee Executive Secretary Search Liaison Designee.

#21-64 Joint Motion by Member Weinstein, Member Fantini and Member Wilson

Whereas: The success of every student pre and post-graduation is an important goal of CPSD; and

Whereas: CPSD has not yet achieved its goal of closing racial and economic opportunity gaps; and

Whereas: The strengths, needs and goals of each student – academic and social/emotional – are individual; and

Whereas: During and post-pandemic student needs may be even more varied than prior to the pandemic; and

Whereas: The approach sometimes referred to as Individualized Student Success Plans has shown promise improving student achievement and well-being; and

Whereas: In recent years CPSD has committed itself to pursuing this approach; and

Whereas: This approach might be critical post-pandemic, as well as valuable independent of pandemic response; and

Whereas: There are many choices to be made when moving forward with an individualized student success plan model, including determining the goals of the approach, how we will know how students are doing, and what we will do about what we learn; now therefore be it

Resolved: That CPSD will establish a working group on individualized student success plans as a part of the COVID-19 Task Force, with this working group to first convene before April 16 2021 (April break); and be it further

Resolved: That this working group will include members with relative expertise and experience designing and implementing individualized student success plan models, together with community members, CPSD educators, CPSD scholars, and CPSD caregivers; and be it further

Resolved: That this working group will work in coordination with the Curriculum and Achievement Subcommittee to develop recommendations to the administration and full School Committee for implementing individualized student success plans on a pilot basis and/or districtwide in the upcoming 2021-2022 school year, and will act in an advisory capacity on an ongoing basis.

Discussion followed on **#21-64**.

Member Weinstein explained this motion should be of help for educators to support our students.

Member Fantini added that we want to center our students' work; this motion is helpful for our students to move from grade to grade. He looks forward to working with our colleagues to increase the pace of moving the students forward.

Member Wilson added the importance of partnerships and wrapping our arms around the scholars.

Member Rojas asked Dr. Salim to speak on this motion. Dr. Salim stated there are many different learning plans. Looking at the overall purpose and fitting it into the existing plans and having those discussions and interactions will lead to a positive end.

Dr. Gittens stated that individual plans means that we need to marry IEPs with Assessments and have teachers know how to administer and use this union.

Dr. Pinkus-Brown has heard lots of different versions of this motion and wanted to add that other districts that have done in phases and we may find many changes in the roles of external partners becoming part of the picture. She wants to make sure that all of this can be accomplished by the date of April 16th.

Member Weinstein, made it clear that there was a typo in the motion on the word relative. The word should be relevant. On the following roll call, **#21-64** was adopted as corrected: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-65 Joint Motion by Mayor Siddiqui and Vice Chair Bowman (in collaboration with Student Member Killian and Student Member Vera-DeGraff)

Whereas: Many scholars rely on CPS schools for their menstrual and sanitary hygiene, and many scholars have not been in schools for learning; and

Whereas: CPS established a motion for menstrual equity almost four years ago, for the district to install dispensers providing free menstrual products in all gender-neutral and female-designated school bathrooms; and

Whereas: Many of these free products are not accessible to CPS scholars who are learning remotely, and these products could be given to those in need; and

Whereas: CPS has been having meal pickups at various locations for scholars and families to take home food meals; now therefore be it

Resolved: That CPS works with school nurses, administrators, and family liaisons to identify the need for access to these free products, create care-package bundles of sanitary products for scholars and

families, and have them available for pick up at every school during meal distribution or other designated locations convenient for CPS students; and be it further

Resolved: That the Superintendent work with the Chief Operating Officer to explore delivery options for scholars in need, who are unable to pick up care-package bundles.

Member Killian explained that about four years ago CPS began providing menstrual products to students, since many scholars have not been in school due to COVID-19, they want to make sure that families still have access to these products at designated locations where meals are being supplied to families.

Vice Chair Bowman acknowledged Mr. Maloney for thinking through how this can move forward.

On the following roll call vote: **#21-65** was adopted: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-66 Joint Motion by Member Weinstein, Mayor Siddiqui and Member Rachel (in collaboration with Student Member Killian and Student Member Vera-DeGraff)

Whereas: Effective communication with families and scholars is a priority of the Cambridge Public Schools and the School Committee, especially in the constantly evolving context of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas: While students receive many CPS communications via email, there is currently no framework for CPS to use text messaging as a way to regularly contact and update its student body; and

Whereas: Many scholars in 2021 are most efficiently reached and notified by text message, much more so than via email; and

Whereas: The Remind app is a simple and effective tool already being used by some CPS educators to send out text message updates and reminders to scholars; and

Whereas: In the absence of a centralized communication system that reaches the majority of the CPS student body, many scholars report that they receive conflicting information by word-of-mouth, and are not sure what information is accurate (such as changes to schedules and information about the expansion of in-person learning); and

Whereas: Not all caregivers are able to consistently communicate updates from CPS in a timely manner to their children, especially if they work long hours, are rarely at home, or cannot regularly check their emails, and some caregivers rely on their children for school-related information; and

Whereas: The enhanced use of a district-wide student text messaging system, such as the Remind app, would align with and support the Superintendent's goal to elevate student voices, through "quarterly feedback opportunities, strengthened roles in decision-making, and asking how they want to be communicated with;" now therefore be it

Resolved: That the CRLS administration leverage student communication tools by providing scholars with the option to receive relevant school and district-wide updates through enhanced CPS use of a text messaging tool such as the Remind app; and be it further

Resolved: That the Superintendent work with upper school principals to explore the feasibility of implementing a similar system for upper school students; and be it further

Resolved: That the Superintendent and his cabinet explore the use of text messaging as an important way to collect further student data and receive student feedback.

Discussion followed on **#21-66**.

Member Vera-Degraff provided context on this motion as a way to keep information transparent and clearly available to students.

Member Weinstein thanked the two Student Representatives for this motion.

Member Rachel thanked Member Vera-Degraff for leading this motion, identifying the problems and sharing the feedback.

Member Rojas is supportive of this motion and also stated his concern about having smart-phones in middle schools and lower; not using computers and managing information and life skills.

Dr. Salim spoke on support around executive functioning skills, including planning. He is prepared to share additional information as follow-up.

Member Fantini stated that people will have to opt in for Remind. He asked Principal Smith if it is going to enhance communication.

Principal Smith stated that the remind app is already in use in schools for caregivers and students; it is part of a suite and is good for a two-way communication. All students do not have consistent access to a texting device, i.e. they do not all have phones. Remind App is the easiest interface to work with but there will need to be a little bit of work on this. He uses School Messenger and Remind. He can tell them to please check their email. There has to be a balance, they cannot move totally away from email as much as he would love to. He reminded everyone that a text should be short and quick.

Vice Chair Bowman had a few concerns as this moves forward. She gets a lot of overwhelming information by email and she hopes we don't do the same thing via texts.

Member Vera-Degraff just wants to set the framework for a school-wide scale.

Member Killian stated that technology is constantly evolving and keeps changes daily. Everyone needs to keep up. It is what the students want at this time, in order to be kept in the know.

Member Rachel stated again there needs to be a communications team and she is ready to vote.

Mayor Siddiqui shared that she has received a text that is only a link which is a good thing for her.

Mayor Wilson added it is important to keep up with the modern times. She cautioned that we remain mindful that young peoples' phone numbers change often. How will we be able to keep up with frequent changes of phone numbers?

On a motion by Member Rachel, seconded by Member Weinstein, on the following roll call, **#21-66** was adopted: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-67 Report of the July 17, 2020 Special Education and Student Supports Sub-Committee

July 17, 2020

SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SUPPORTS SUB-COMMITTEE

**Virtual Special Education & Student Supports Sub-Committee
Friday, July 17th, 2020
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA**

Called for the purpose of discussing what we learned from the Spring, and planning for the Fall, including remote, in-person and hybrid, with a focus on emerging models. The meeting started at 4 p.m.

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

Also Present: Mayor Siddiqui; Member Killian, Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Morgan, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Jean Spera, Special Educator Director; Robin Harris, Director of Family Engagement

Member Wilson is in the chair. Member Wilson provided context and guidelines for the meeting. Member Wilson opened the meeting for a presentation.

Dr. Morgan started the presentation with "Part 1: Spring 2020-Lessons Learned"

- Successes: Technology, Family/Parent Engagement, Live/Synchronous Learning, Asynchronous Learning, and Materials
- Challenges: Technology Connectivity/Access, Instruction/Services/Materials, Parent/Caregivers in particular with communication (overloaded with emails), and Staff Supports

Dr. Morgan continued the presentation with “Part 2: Fall Planning”

- DESE Guidance: CPSD is required to develop 3 plans for each model of In Person/Hybrid/All Remote regardless of model we are in there will be a focus on instruction and services, not resources and support. Prioritize students with disabilities. Need to develop a comprehensive plan for resources and support. Tasked with providing family support safety and health guidelines.

Dr. Morgan discussed the different working groups such as Students with Disability Group and how they are connected.

Dr. Morgan ended with challenges to address:

- Remote learning: inconsistency, tension in families’ needs, and educator challenges
- In-person (hybrid/full): Transitions and scheduling

Member Wilson opened the meeting for public comment.

Nathan B stated there was difficulty with transitions and changes of scheduling in the Spring. Dr. Morgan responded that they are trying to make the schedule consistent and looking at ways to continue to build supports for students.

Rosalie Rippey expressed her concerns about the quality of online and remote learning experience especially with children who have families with health concerns and that if someone does get sick that schools will need to close. She was looking for clarification on specialized teachers, training, scheduling, and office hours. Dr. Morgan discussed how they want to have conversations with families about their experience of remote learning and scheduling. She provided that in working groups they are discussing with parents about communication with educators. She encouraged feedback to her office.

Rosalie Rippey asked for further clarification on specialized teachers. Dr. Morgan responded that the district is still disseminating information and getting information from teacher’s needs and who is going to be able to come back.

Mercedes Soto asked if teachers are able to share best practices for distance learning. Specifically asked how OSS is working with schools who are outplaced.

Katherine Gamble shared her experience with her son having an IEP and that the liaison was overwhelmed. She asked how the district is going to handle co-taught classes and the implications for Special Education classes. She also asked if the district has an autism consultant for students who are having difficulties with remote learning.

Ena Valenzuela discussed three points 1) Her concern about the verbiage about wearing a mask on the bus and the need to contact OSS rather than working with the bus driver and what is the distancing and time frame on the bus? 2) Concerned about the fact about silos of working groups. There seems to be no communication between all the different groups. 3) How will discipline be changed due to the stresses of going to school in Pandemic and highlighted the importance of having a safe space.

Amara Donovan also discussed her concern about the behavioral discipline inconsistencies and increased surveillance of students. She further discussed how the surveys being utilized right now are not accomplishing gathering information from families. She advocated for the district to be more creative in their outreach efforts such as getting people on the ground and having district leaders be on the ground to build trust.

Member Weinstein discussed how on July 30th there is going to be a Sub-Committee to focus on a potential “caregiver university.”

Misha Rosenberg emphasized the focus of the IEP should be about what the individual needs of the child are. Member Wilson echoed Misha Rosenberg’s sentiments that the focus should be on the child.

Lily Rayman-Read provided her perspective as an educator and that too much was asked of our special educators in the spring. She advocated for a reduction of responsibilities in non-special-ed services for special education teachers. She discussed how there was not consistency in the spring and going forward there needs to be accountability and the need for more educator support.

Member Wilson extended the meeting for 20 minutes.

Mercedes Soto echoed Misha Rosenberg’s sentiments on centering the experience of the scholar.

Bobby Travers discussed his experience about being a para-professional during this time and their ability to take on more responsibilities and that they should be included.

Love Holland shared her experience as a 7th grade parent and that her students were not given enough work.

Robyn Towner discussed how there needs to be more attention given to students who have “moderate” needs and advocated to look at the students who did not participate in gen-ed and how to reach them. She also hopes that there will be a special educator on the working group.

Karen Dobak shared her experience of the lack of support for students with emotional difficulties, she is concerned there is nothing put in place for those students.

Amatul Mahmud shared her experience as an educator during this time and asked will students that experienced with COVID transitions and issues viewing remote learning be considered a first priority when they return to school.

Kini Udovicki spoke to her experience as a school counselor over the last four months. She asked how counselors will be integrated into the various models of reopening and how are the mental health needs of students going to be met.

Jennifer Bump discussed how many of our students struggled with virtual classrooms and they are needing much support when not in school. She advocated small groups as a better way to teach and asked how can special educators learn multi-sensory education remotely?

Ena Valenzuela read an appeal on the listserv by a parent named Margo. Margo is concerned about school plans and inclusion and asked how will all children be able to participate in daily inclusion this fall?

Member Wilson extended the meeting to six pm.

Dr. Morgan answered many of the questions:

- On capturing best practices for remote learning (Mercedes Soto’s questions): professional development is being developed in partnership with principals and teachers.
- On Katherine Gamble’s concerns: there is a need for more coordination between gen-ed and special-ed. Going forward there will be more district direction on how many hours educators will be working and the scope of the work.
- On Ena Vanzuela’s concern of children not being able to wear masks: She discussed how Jim Maloney is reviewing the transportation plan and support for bus staff in supporting the child.
- On the concern of increased surveillance: the teachers will be looking at students to make sure they are being safe but does not want it be a hostile environment

- On Social Emotional support: having a more responsive and trauma informed approach and additional training for staff. Also looking at support for staff.
- On putting people on ground if cannot reach students: not recommended because they have to maintain the safety and wellbeing of the people on the ground. There is a need to think out of the box on how to reach those students and advocated for the collaboration of many departments to achieve this.
- On Misha's concern for the lack of services/Lily's comment about the social workers being overwhelmed: Discussed how they were interconnected and how the upcoming district's plan to reduce the amount of paperwork.
- On professional development opportunities: Dr. Morgan discussed how that pre-COVID they were able to combine gen-ed and special-ed training.
- On centering experience of scholars and of parents not at the meetings: She discussed how there needs to be better community engagement
- On the under-utilization of para-professionals: There needs to be better communication techniques and they are working with the union to provide clarity on a plan.

Member Wilson extended the meeting.

Dr. Morgan continued:

- There is a need for greater partnership to understand what happened for the child to receive what is necessary for the student and parent needs to be supported
- Students not able to access virtual learning due to SEL and disengaging-we're developing a tiered model to address bringing children back to the virtual classroom with counseling or social group sessions. Expanding partnerships
- Integration of counselors-We will be working with our supports social workers to discover a model for the role of counselors regardless of settings.
- Students having difficulty in asynchronous learning-small groups essential, so we are in conversations with including more of those groups
- Multisensory education-will be asking educators about this. Trainings will be remotely to minimize risk, but we will work to provide it remotely and are training. Making sure that PPE is in place to keep everyone safe.
- Inclusion and reverse inclusion-Still trying to figure out but do have CDC guidelines, those students need access to their peers. Connecting with other schools and will be able to share more about this

Member Wilson thanked Dr. Morgan for her presentation and responses to questions. She called the next meeting for August 5 from 2-3:30. Member Wilson ended the meeting at 6:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Daley
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee Office

#21-68 Report of the August 5, 2020 Special Education and Student Supports Sub-Committee

August 5, 2020

SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SUPPORTS SUB-COMMITTEE

**Virtual Special Education & Student Supports Sub-Committee
Wednesday, August 5th, 2020
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA**

Called for the purpose of creating a space for families of Special education scholars to discuss concerns and hopes for the fall plan. The meeting started at 2 p.m.

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

Also Present: Dr. Morgan; Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Jean Spera, Special Educator Director

Member Wilson is in the chair. Member Wilson provided context and guidelines for the meeting. Member Wilson opened the meeting for a presentation.

Dr. Morgan outlined the presentation: updates, remote learning plan, and a Q&A section.

Ms. Spera gave updates on Compensatory Services and Recovery Support: 1) Recovery Support; 2) COVID-19 Compensatory Services; 3) Additional IEP Services. Ms. Spera also provided that DESE is targeting three groups of students to be a priority: 1) Already documented high-level needs students, preschool students who were not eligible, and students who are turning or have turned 22 between March-December 2020.

Dr. Morgan provided three possible staged approaches to reopening in accordance with guidelines from DESE: fully in-person, hybrid and fully remote. Dr. Morgan reviewed the plan for fully remote including four objectives: 1) Nurture Relationships; 2) Provide differentiated learning experiences; 3) Partner With Families, 4) Focus support on students with greatest needs.

Member Rachel shared the progressive stacking model for public comment: starting with scholars of color, then families of color, then educators of color and then others. Member Wilson opened the meeting for public comment.

Zuleka Queen-Postell asked how the district will monitor the services to students outside of the district. Dr. Morgan replied that CPS has case liaisons to connect with families and determine what services are needed for each family.

Zuleka Queen-Postell asked if there was someone appointed to connect with school/families during the extended years. Ms. Spera responded that there are various ways in which families and out of district students have been assisted throughout the summer into the school year.

Member Wilson asked how CPS is communicating with families out of the district. Dr. Morgan provided that they use an internal email list and are working on a better process of sending the information out.

Zuleka Queen-Postell asked how is CPS making sure out of school families are being heard? She shared that she's only received one communication and raised concern from other families. Dr. Morgan provided that they are trying to make different points of contact to families and moving forward, there has been discussion of check-ins beyond e-mails and they are striving to improve family contact.

Amatul Mahmud asked if there had been a decision made concerning the role of older staff and at-risk educators. Dr. Morgan discussed how there was a staff survey that closed on July 7th asking the staff members with extenuating circumstances. Data is now being analyzed and the plan will further be developed with HR Department and the Union.

Amatul asked for clarification on if that means students assigned and the role for next year. Dr. Morgan shared information about synchronous and pre-recorded instruction.

Ashley Brown asked about the outreach efforts of this Sub-Committee to solicit family opinions on what kind of learning might be happening this year. She shared that she received a petition via text asking the administration to adopt a fully remote model and her concerns that she did not get any chance to ask her opinion. Dr. Morgan clarified that text petition did not come from her office. Ashley Brown stated that it came across that it came from the district. Member Weinstein provided that it perhaps it came from

SE-PAC. Member Rachel remembered that perhaps it was the text from the district's survey on hybrid options.

Ashley Brown clarified that the text did come from SE-PAC and was unclear about how it differs from the school district. Rosalie Rippey provided context on what SE-PAC is and its relationship to the district.

Ashley Brown asked how the Sub-Committee reached out to parents to find out what their needs/opinions were. Dr. Morgan provided that the Office of Student Supports sent out a survey in mid-June asking for how they could provide better support. Then another survey came out from the district on parent preference for the summer and a follow up from liaisons. In regards to student reach-out, there has been a student working group and giving feedback. There are town halls and other Sub-Committees. Also discussed how her office is available.

Ena Valenzuela expressed her concern over the language of the presentation about being "told" what the plan for their child was and emphasized the importance of having families as stakeholders in addition to the teachers, union and others and the importance of centering child's independent needs. Dr. Morgan commented that the language of "told" rather than "heard" is an unfortunate miscommunication and the goal is to hear from our families, have a discussion and gather input. Dr. Morgan stated that parents are stakeholders.

Lisa Downing asked for an update about testing, evaluations, and other assessments. Dr. Morgan acknowledged the backlog of assessments and there has been discussion in creating another team dedicated to complete evaluations and IEP Meetings. Ms. Spera discussed how they are trying to broaden their ability to do testing.

Lisa Downing asked if there will be an opportunity for students who qualify for IEP but deferred IEP made, entitled for compensatory services too? Dr. Morgan confirmed that they will be providing those services on a case by case basis.

Misha Rosenberg asked if there should be a shift in the mindset and that most students will be doing remote learning. She asked if there could be a way to reduce the paperwork for educators and increase the services. Dr. Morgan provided an update from the working group that there has been discussion on minimizing paperwork. Dr. Morgan highlighted the importance of documentation as well as providing services.

Robyn Towner asked 1) What are we doing to work out educators split grades and are mixed between in-person and remote? 2) In the needs assessments with families, are we talking about students from June or we will we need to know the 2021 caseload? 3) What are some equitable ways to choose those students who didn't access gen-ed curriculum or special-ed curriculum? Dr. Morgan discussed how split grade level is a concern, the district still does not have a definitive plan but the goal. On the second question, Dr. Morgan provided an update from the discussions that have been happening and is still being developed. On the third question, Dr. Morgan provided that they are revamping educator expectations and the consideration of automatic weekly reminders to families/students.

Rosalie Rippey pointed out positives from Dr. Morgan's presentation. She asked 1) for clarification on the hybrid model having a part-time service model; 2) Extending the time period for transition services; 3) highlighted the importance of consistency in scheduling. Dr. Morgan discussed the aim for consistency across the district. Rosalie highlighted the importance of daily consistency. Dr. Morgan provided that the part-time service model is if the district goes remote and noted that some services will still need to be available in person. Dr. Morgan noted that the Special Services department needs to improve on getting information out. Ms. Spera provided an update that the department can be creative on providing transitional services.

Member Wilson extended the meeting for 15 minutes. Motion by Member Rachel, Seconded by Member Weinstein.

Carol Gavin asked what thoughts have been put into the in-class supports.

Karen asked about the extending transition about 1) Extending transition planning services beyond the age of 22?; 2) Are out of district students who aren't able to engage in the platform and high risk at risk of losing their placement? Dr. Morgan confirmed that they are not at risk for losing their placement.

Liza Gosselin discussed the importance of letting parents know immediately on whether students will have different teachers in regards to remote and in-person learning.

Dr. Morgan responded to Carol providing that the district is working with public health officials on how to keep students. Dr. Morgan responded to Karen that the department is working with families to see what additional supports would be necessary for adult students turning twenty-two. Dr. Morgan responded to Liza that they have to wait for the data surrounding staffing/students and that there may well be changes in regards to who is teaching what and how.

Liluye Jhala asked 1) If there is an option of looping teachers/special educators who have already built an in person connection with their students? 2) Are there any continuity with service providers from the summer months? If there is the opportunity to have one on one teaching assistants from universities to provide greater support? Dr. Morgan provided that looping has come up in conversations but have not come to a conclusion. For the second question, summer staff is diverse from all over the district and availability. We would try to continue to transfer skills learned to the supports for each student. In regards to the students from universities, Dr. Morgan discussed how it depends on the model and need to look at our existing staff to better utilize them then to look to branch out to connect with Lesley, Harvard, and others in the area.

Member Wilson summarized the meeting and the take-always. She discussed compensatory services, more levels of communication, decreased paperwork-increased services, partnerships with families, transitional services, and utilizing universities for supports. Member Wilson discussed how something not mentioned but that we should be thinking about is transportation and the importance of clear expectations.

Member Wilson invited anyone to provide additional questions/thoughts at awilson@cpsd.us. She discussed how in October the topic of the Sub-Committee will be reading benchmarks.

Member Wilson announced that there will be a virtual town hall meeting on Tuesday August 11 at 3:30 pm. Member Wilson thanked everyone. Member Wilson ended the meeting at 3:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Daley
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee Office

#21-69 Report of the September 30, 2020 Special Education and Student Supports Sub-Committee

September 30, 2020

SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SUPPORTS SUB-COMMITTEE

**Virtual Special Education & Student Supports Sub-Committee
Wednesday, September 30th, 2020
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA**

Called for the purpose of discussing the School Committee's contingency motion for in-person services for scholars on an IEP and how accommodations are met/adjusted for remote scholars. The meeting started at 6:00 pm.

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

Also Present: Dr. Morgan, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Jean Spera, Special Educator Director; Shelagh Walker; Dan Monahan, CEA President; Dr. Karyn Grace, District Coordinator of Inclusive Education, Instruction and Curriculum

Member Wilson shared the call of the meeting and outlined the structure of the meeting. Member Wilson opened the meeting for a presentation.

Dr. Morgan started her presentation "Remote Learning Presentation". She provided an update breakdown of the back to school timeline and restated the mission and vision of OSS. She discussed their approach to remote learning: Racial equity, student centered, relationships as foundational. She further discussed their two methods of providing services: 1) instruction and services 2) resources and supports. She discussed the fully Remote experience will incorporate family communication in weekly email and one on ones. Instruction and Services: Live structured lessons, prerecorded video lessons, student office hours. Resources and supports: Learning activities completed independently. She reviewed the expectations for the Remote Model with morning meetings, core class/specialized instruction and services, and specials class or subject. She presented how district-level support and consistency will be maintained.

Member Wilson opened the meeting for public comment.

Member Rachel asked Dr. Morgan to talk through what a sub-separate classroom would look like and how office hours are being communicated. Dr. Morgan provided that teachers will have access to ASPEN which will let them know families request. Dr. Morgan shared what the sub-separate classroom would look like and reported on the guidance from DESE, Public Health and others.

Member Rachel asked how we are thinking about reducing the transmission in pulling students out of classroom for supports. Dr. Morgan shared that first we need to ask if there is a possibility of remote services then the guidance is full PPE and social distancing and no limit on the number of students a service provider could see in a day. Desiree Phillips wanted to add that the upper school and high schools are also opening for a small number of students. The OSS are currently working with health and phys-ed and VPA department to figure out if any in-person specials will be an option there. Working out some of the stigma to attend gen-ed remote classes while at the school for services. Dr. Morgan added that at the elementary level there will be opportunities for interaction with peers within the pod model.

Lily Rayman-Read shared her perspective as an educator and clarified the hours in the advisory model. They are required to reach out to families once/twice and individual meetings with students on a regular basis. Then there are student support blocks/office from 2-3 pm and these periods are either voluntary or mandated, said we need to encourage students to come more.

Mercedes Soto asked what the process is for students significantly behind in reading in regards to screening: are they tracking engagement levels, how are we communicating process with caregivers/students and are we in communication with schools that been opened since September to learn best practices. Dr. Morgan provided an update that there are two working groups that out of district school representatives presented. Other district partners have started school in person and are hearing from them about their process also that they have Public Health officials on calls and providing training. There were also district-wide training about supporting students who demonstrate difficulties with reading. Dr. Grace discussed how they were able to bring Mary Briggs on a refresher training and remote learning strategies and Orton Gillingham.

Dan Monahan asked for clarification on whether there were no limitations on connections with students in the building. Discussed his concerns over special educators visiting multiple schools that it creates a large cohort. If one of those educators were to test positive, it would shut down multiple schools. Dr. Morgan responded that they are trying to limit number so that each school has a core set of staff. Some accommodations will need to be made to address gaps. Dr. Morgan shared the goal is to provide these services remotely and that they are having a meeting tomorrow to gain clarity on the public health official's guidance.

Dan Monahan pointed out that a lot of services can't be done with 6 ft. distancing. Dr. Morgan provided clarity that the goal is to limit contact to under 15 minutes with full PPE and ventilation and that there is still more information needed before sharing with staff.

Member Wilson asked for further clarification on what the 15 minutes entails. Dr. Morgan said that the fifteen minutes is if they need to get closer than six feet.

Dan Monahan asked for clarification on whether there will be training and how is the administration communicating to educators? Dr. Morgan shared that they are going to share the manual with school administrators and get feedback from them and there is another meeting tomorrow to discuss these pieces and ask the public health experts to share why this information was recommended. They also have conversations with OSS every two weeks (optional) to share information and new initiatives. They also can always post for more jobs, and in the interim there are agencies we are partnered with to fill in until someone is hired.

Member Wilson discussed the need to have experts in the meetings to help provide clarity.

Robyn Towner asked for an update on whether special educators will need to be remote/face to face/both? She wondered about families that request face to face meetings to discuss IEP. Dr. Morgan discussed family conferences, those decisions being made about whose coming in person is made by the IEP team. Discussed some of the staffing issues that are being negotiated with the CEA and that educators would be teaching either remote or in-person. She discussed how they will communicate with parents about potential differences in in-person and remote teachers.

Ellen Quinn shared her perspective as a special educator and asked for clarity on the use of technology. She shared that she feels as though special educator's voices need to be more included in the discussions. Dr. Morgan discussed how to get their voices more involved and discussed how the district is still making considerations about pods.

Ellen Quinn asked for further clarification on the pod system and on the limit of how many classrooms special educators are allowed to go into. Dr. Morgan discussed how the goal is to not to spread out our staff. She provided that the "pod" can be one or 2 classrooms and they share staff like the para-professional or the special educator.

Laura Egitto asked for clarification on serving for the B Grid remotely and B minute guidelines. Dr. Karyn Grace did not have a definitive answer to this grid model and there needs to be determination made on asynchronous activities meeting the needs of students.

Laura Egitto asked how can we collect data being remote and to see if the child is actually accessing it? Dr. Karyn Grace discussed the importance of discussing norms with families in consult and shared some creative ways to check-in with students.

Laura Egitto asked for further clarification on B-Grid. Dr. Karyn Grace discussed how they are still trying to figure it out.

Member Weinstein asked for an update about the safety facilities manual and how will services be delivered to students with IEPS if schools need to close.

Member Wilson extended the meeting for ten minutes.

Dr. Morgan discussed how they wanted to provide additional support to students with unique needs, not sure whether it has to be reviewed by school committee. The additional staff they are bringing on board to do the back log will be considered essential workers.

Shelagh Walker shared that Grid-B question is being asked of coordinators daily and they are working hard on this.

BValerio asked how can we keep the case load manageable in remote and in-person services with all the meetings and paperwork to fill out and advisory? Dr. Morgan discussed how OSS does not determine advisory caseload, it is a building decision by the principal and advised BValerio to speak with her principal.

Mary Londino shared some strategies around grid based services at her school.

Member Rachel provided an update that the facilities manual is coming to a vote this upcoming Tuesday and there will be more clarity on limitations of interactions and pull-out plans.

Member Wilson summarized issues brought up during this meeting: safety manual, office hour communications, laminating workers for younger scholars; how services are provided in-person/remote. She discussed how the October Sub-Committee will be focused on reading levels. Member Wilson ended the meeting at 7:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Daley
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee Office

#21-70 Report of the October 28, 2020 Special Education and Student Supports Sub-Committee

October 28, 2020

SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SUPPORTS SUB-COMMITTEE

**Virtual Special Education & Student Supports Sub-Committee
Wednesday, October 28th, 2020
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA**

Called for the for the purpose of reviewing and discussing the OSS safety manual and OSS school coordination and collaboration. The meeting started at 6 pm.

Members Present: Member Wilson, Member Rachel, Member Weinstein

Also Present: Mayor Siddiqui; Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Morgan; Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Jean Spera, Special Educator Director; James Maloney, Chief Operating Officer

Member Wilson is the Chair. Member Wilson provided context and guidelines for the meeting. Member Wilson opened the meeting for a presentation.

Dr. Morgan outlined the presentation: 1) Overview 2) Health, Safety, and Operation 3) Instruction 4) Staffing 5) Next Steps 6) Q & A

Dr. Morgan started the presentation with part 1: Overview

- She shared updates of in-person and enrollment and the number of in-person Sub-Separate Classrooms

Dr. Morgan turned the meeting over to Desiree Phillips for part 2: Health, Safety and Operations

- Successes: collaborative effort between public health experts, administration and educators; PPE for staff; protocols for student observations; assessment space for OSS evaluators; many of our preschool students and students are sub-separate, including Post Grad, are able to wear masks throughout the day and are adhering to social distancing guidelines
- Key Challenges: some buildings using air scrubbers; some students are unable to wear marks; lack of familiarity with staff from get well room; social distancing for some students

Dr. Morgan turned the meeting over to Dr. Karyn Grace and Shelagh Walker for part 3: Instruction

- Successes in-person: students are excited to be back, educator commitment, growth and or/maintenance of skills towards IEP, engaging in lessons academically with peers, providing opportunities for social-emotional growth, collaboration: special ed/gen ed collaboration
- Successes for remote: provision of services as documented in the student's IEP, parent consultation, weekly special education learning remote plans, educator creatively adapting instructional materials/improving their skills using online instructional strategies; Zoom-G-Suite tools & SeeSaw tool
- Key Challenges in-person: Grid B Services, transportation, student absences, only sub-separate and SEI programs in the building, time to complete all necessary paperwork
- Key Challenges remote: some families want to participate in a "a la carte" remote education; Family/Student/Staff Concerns for students unable to access remote learning; insufficient collaboration for key planning efforts; reassigning students to reduce class sizes; time to complete all necessary paperwork

Shelagh Walker turned the meeting over to special educators to share their experiences in the field

- Janet Forte, Amigos Special Educator shared that students are adhering to safety guidelines, concerned about the amount of time that students are waiting, lack of materials for students, and staffing
- Christine Leonard, Occupational Therapist, shared that her students have also adhered to safety guidelines and the benefits of being able to provide services in-person, shared her appreciation for the weekly COVID testing, expressed her concern of cohorts and overworking and the amount of paperwork
- Liza Gosselin, King Open Special Educator, she's doing both in-person/remote as a personal choice and discussed her concern of being in-person and the isolation, shared her appreciation of the COVID testing, not access to remote and can't come in person

Dr. Morgan turned the presentation over to Jean Spera to provide an update on staffing.

- What is working well: recovery team, professional learning, education collaboratives
- Key Challenges: Staff/student ration, time to collaborate with other key staff, substitute shortage, needs to temporarily fill permanent vacancies, some of our in-person teachers are also teaching remote learners

Jean Spera then discussed action plan moving forward

- Next phase: planning for limited in-person services for some students with IEPS
- Winter 2021: planning for expanded hybrid in-person services for students as well with IEPS

Member Wilson opened the meeting for public comment.

Karen Dobak asked in regards to students who are having trouble with accessing/using remote learning technology, could they be assigned a coach to help? Desiree Phillips discussed her potential ideas to address that issue, a proposed "crash course" on technology, the goal is to have small groups to come in-person.

Amatul Mahmud shared her experience as a virus recovery team member the pros were that she was known and to collaborate with teachers, the cons were that it's hard to maintain social distancing while testing and some students are not wearing masks-she wondered how these tests are going to be possible? Dr. Lietchensen provided that in a situation where a special educator is unable to maintain three foot distancing for unmasked, they should be a high priority for PPE. Amatul discussed further issues with administering the test. Dr. Lietchensen discussed adherence to OSS to the manual, and sanitize their hands and that with the door open there should be proper air exchanges. Jean Spera discussed a follow up. Mr. Maloney discussed the expediency of getting air scrubbers.

Dan Monahan discussed how there are still things to work out but things are getting better. Discussed one outstanding issue: the overwork of educators and if there has been a consideration of adding more staff or other ways to decrease the amount of paperwork? Dr. Alexis Morgan asked what progress can be made with the staff operationally then they might consider hiring more. Desiree Phillips let the

Sub-Committee know that Dr. Morgan shares an update to the principals and that there was a recommendation to limit gen-ed responsibilities for OSS staff at this time. She also discussed the CPS caseload are the smallest in the state.

Member Wilson extended the meeting.

Dr. Lichtenstein shared that she heard that teachers are having problems with the grid b services and if there have been solutions. Shelagh Walker discussed the challenges and they are still making considerations.

Dr. Lichtenstein provided that “happy masks” have been effective in situations where students are having trouble masking. Member Wilson suggested a meeting between Dr. Lichtenstein to talk about effective masking options for students who are having difficulty with the masks.

Member Wilson opened the meeting up to other Sub-Committee members.

Member Rachel asked: why is transportation the hardest with masks, if there was some way to get less specialized support staff to help with the workload and discussed the importance of real-time communication with parents about room/teacher/school reassignments.

Member Weinstein asked what we are doing in preparation if schools close and then need to go remote. He also asked for clarification about the extended student absences and there are some scholars that might need to be out of the classroom and there is not a remote option, could there be a remote sub. Mayor Siddiqui and Member Wilson also echoed concern about the absences.

Member Wilson was happy to hear that students are wearing masks. She asked for further clarification on students running late/transportation and the “a la carte” remote and what the communication methods with families are.

Dr. Morgan answered the Member’s questions:

- Discussed how they have some students that have trouble wearing masks in any public setting.
- In regards to transportation, the delay could be caused by numerous things such as the driver still working out the route or in some instances if a parent opted in for the bus and then decided to keep their child home.
- They are preparing for what to do if the schools close and they all need to go remote
- They are not considering offering remote substitutes; if a child has to quarantine it’s a different story
- Desiree Phillips provided further context on students absenteeism and difficulty with masks
- Dr. Karyn Grace provided context on how they are dealing with students not wearing masks looking at it from different perspectives
- Shelagh Walker discussed how at the beginning of the year not wearing masks was a concern but they are making progress
- Jean Spera talked about kids not participating or attending and the importance of teams monitoring that and solutions

Zuleka Queen-Postell asked if there was a reason why in-person teachers are not creating a google classroom to allow for the option if a student is absent to log in. Dr. Karyn Grace discussed how this is a bigger district challenge and to have a broader conversation on this. Desiree Phillips clarified that the teachers are not unwilling to do this but it’s challenging with the instability: the option for back up remote for students in-person should not be a strategy.

Member Wilson announced that the next Sub-Committee will be November 18th, 2020. Member Wilson ended the meeting at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Daley
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee Office

#21-71 Report of the November 18, 2020 Special Education and Student Supports Sub-Committee

November 18, 2020

SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SUPPORTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Virtual Special Education & Student Supports Sub-Committee
Wednesday, November 18, 2020
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA

Called for the for the purpose of discussing the reading level benchmark data, resources to scholars reading below grade level, dyslexia indicators, and professional development to educators. The meeting started at 6:00 p.m.

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

Also Present: Dr. Morgan, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Dr. Gittens, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools; Jean Spera, Special Educator Director; Dr. Madera, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education; Dr. Grace, District Coordinator of Inclusive Education, Instruction and Curriculum

Member Wilson opened the meeting and provided context of the meeting. There have been questions about how we are determining reading level benchmarks and disseminating the information and how do we support our scholars who are reading below grade level and are the other opportunities and tools to support growth in educators to support our young people who are reading below level. Member Wilson turned the meeting over to the administration for a presentation.

Dr. Morgan shared that they also have educators on the meeting who are going to share their experience. Dr. Madera started with the history of the “University Design for Learning” that Massachusetts uses. She discussed the core components of MTSS. She further shared the five components of reading instruction: phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, fluency and phonological awareness. She discussed the expectations of students by the end of first grade. To accomplish those goals the district has implemented several reading initiatives. She shared about reading recovery which are daily one-one intervention for first-grade students for 12-120 weeks it supports reading, writing and letter-sound relationships. The two outcomes are accelerated learning and referral for additional literacy support. She discussed how they are measuring reading recovery effectiveness.

Dr. Gaab, from Harvard University, started her presentation. She gave an overview of typical reading development. She discussed how development of basic reading skills is one of the primary goals of elementary education. She shared that Nation’s Report Card, which measures reading rates, no big changes in the last twenty-five years. She shared that about half of all our kids in MA are emerging from 3rd grade meeting reading levels, for black and latinx it was closer to a third (slide from Mass Literacy). She shared that 70 % of below average readers in 1st grade remain below average readers in 8th grade. She discussed how reading improves learning. She then went out to “the reading disability umbrella”: dyslexia and reading difficulty as a result of environmental circumstances such as low language skills, etc. They have a reactive model instead of a preventive/pro-active model. She further went on to explain the “dyslexia paradox”. She discussed the importance of early intervention. She highlighted the work that Mass Literacy has done, she recommended the district use these resources.

Dr. Christodolou started her presentation. She presented on three topics: professional development collaborations at CPS, research collaboration with CPS, and science of reading at CPSD. She discussed professional development opportunities on early intervention. She discussed how there was “Summer @ MIT” which was designed to understand how children learn during the summer, there were 60 participants who were 1st and 2nd grade students at risk for reading difficulty. She discussed best practices for early screening.

Dr. Morgan shared that Dr. Melissa Orkin met with teachers since September, every other week, on a structured literacy routine.

Member Wilson opened the meeting for questions.

Member Killian asked how educators are bringing these statistics into their work. Dr. Christodolou discussed the transitional value of research is realizing that these numbers are coming from real people and the trainings to respond to debunking common myths. Member Killian discussed the importance of humanizing the numbers. Dr. Gaab discussed the importance of trainings not to be top down and that we can all learn from each other.

Mercedes Soto discussed the importance of using a more proactive approach and her personal experience of a child who has reading difficulties. She asked what needs to happen for our district to implement this and that there is a disconnect and the problems will continue to be exasperated with remote learning. Dr. Madera discussed that there is a shift that is needed. Dr. Morgan discussed how in the Student Services, the sub-separate were not able to access the materials and the frustration of students who are having difficulty reading. She shared that they introduced a new reading program.

Whitney, a sub-separate teacher discussed the reading programs she implements and shared her experience. She discussed how she sees young people of color who are reading at a lower level and the pain students feel from having reading difficulties. She discussed the importance of consistency, urgency and the importance of students developing confidence as readers.

Member Wilson extended the meeting for twenty minutes.

Lisa Downing discussed her personal experience with the mental health component of students having difficulty to read. She asked what else we can do in Cambridge besides screening. Could we use the science of reading to improve our Tier 1? Dr. Christodoulou discussed how there are continued opportunities for reflection and commended the openness off the district to new ideas. She discussed using the summer to improve reading, streamlining the process to help educators to help/collaborate and engage with families. Dr. Christodoulou discussed her excitement between the links of screening and practice. She highlighted it's important to understand that reading difficulties can take on many different forms not just dyslexia. Dr. Gaab discussed how it would be important to take a closer look on how the new programs are implemented.

Karen commented that 5th grade that 83% of students on IEPs are reading below grade levels-how are we then addressing that for each of those students and how are we assessing them continuously through the end of high school and seeing if what we are doing is having a positive effect. The other piece is reading recovery improvements how does this fit into that statistic, why is the district using this. Dr. Morgan spoke on how the pandemic effected education and the multi-pronged approach and how they are analyzing data and they are now working to help teachers do this remotely. Dr. Madera talked about how the reading recovery is used as an intervention.

Dr. Turk circled back to Mercedes' question on what will it take. It has taken the pandemic, that with all of the challenges, as educators one of the positive has forced us to think differently, have conversations differently and implement differently.

Member Wilson extended the meeting. Member Wilson opened the meeting to other Sub-Committee Members.

Member Weinstein discussed how he wants to hear from others on the call to touch on if a piece has been missing such as support or if there is something that we could emphasize. Mercedes discussed how she wants to see the district approve a bold goal that 80% of students of all students with different socio-economic and racial groups will be reading proficiently by third grade. Member Weinstein discussed how one perspective of the district goal would be setting it at 100%.

Member Rachel discussed how at a recent SE-PAC meeting there was talk about how many students are screened for dyslexia and is there some sort of evaluation of what programs we should be using. Member Wilson said that this should be discussed at a later time, Dr. Morgan concurred.

Karen discussed how every elementary school develop a reading curriculum that is science based, we want to make sure that best curriculum is being used across the board for every student. Dr. Turk discussed how there has been conversation to have something consistent across the schools.

Whitney discussed that it's important to think about early interventions.

Dr. Gaab discussed how with students who are having difficulty reading it is important to provide emotional support.

Sarah discussed her perspective as an educator that she is seeing that students who are having difficulty with reading have multiple diagnosis and her concerns about students having to switch educators every year and the need for emotional support.

Member Wilson discussed the empowerment that comes with learning. She further discussed how as a district for early intervention and how the pandemic provides the opportunity to reshape how we are doing things. Member Wilson ended the meeting at 8 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Daley
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee Office

**#21-72 Report of the February 10, 2021 Budget Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole)
Community Meeting #2**

**C A M B R I D G E
S C H O O L C O M M I T T E E
(Official Report)**

Budget Sub-Committee Community meeting #2 February 10, 2021

Called for 3:00 p.m. broadcast from the Media Arts Studio, 454 Broadway, Cambridge, By Order of Her Honor, Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, acting in accordance with Chapter I, Section 3.5, of the Rules of the School Committee, there will be a Virtual Community Meeting #2 of the School Committee for the purpose of Staff discussions on FY 22 Budget Priorities.

Members Present: Member Wilson, Member Fantini, Member Rachel, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein,
Also Present: Anais Killian, Student School Committee Representative

District Members Present:
Superintendent Kenny Salim
Claire Spinner, Chief Financial Officer
Ivy Washington, Assistant Budget Director
Dr. Lyndsay Pinkus Brown, Chief Strategy Officer

Today's agenda is as follows:

Welcome from CPS School Committee Budget Co-Chairs

- Overview of CPS Budget
- o *clarifying questions
- Small Group Discussions by Grade Level
- o * How should CPS use its resources to help students recover, make progress, and succeed?
- o Individual reflection on Padlet
- o Small Group Discussion

FY22 Community
Meeting on Budget.ppt

Superintendent Salim began the Community meeting with introductions and asked Member Fantini to welcome the group.

Superintendent Salim presented the following overview of the FY22 budget.

He then broke for questions from the attendants.

Superintendent Salim handed the presentation over to Dr. Lyndsay Pinkus Brown.

Dr. Brown welcomed those who have joined in the last few minutes. Explained that they will be shifting to breakout rooms to discuss ideas on how CPS should use its resources to help students recover, make progress, and succeed.

The Breakout sessions were broken down by the subsequent categories:

Elementary Group 1, 2, 3, Upper School and the High School.

Amy Short moderated this breakout session.

Educators included in this session were:

Betsey Preval

Sarah Felone

Jo Quest Newbert

Kunjal Shah

Enny Chung

Caitlin O'Brien

Betsy Preval asked the following clarifying question about the budget. "The salaries and benefits portion of the budget – do they also includes the Superintendent, cabinet, school principals, etc."

Amy Short answered, yes they do.

A discussion commenced on the various needs at the upper schools. The below table are the issues and the ensuing dialogue that was held.

Upper GROUP 1 (Amy & Alisa)	
What's the problem to solve or opportunity to pursue?	What's the use of resources to address it?
<i>FY 21 Example:</i> Increase underrepresented students' college matriculation rates.	Invest in CRLS early college/dual enrollment program expansion.
We often assume that all families know what is available in the district. We think that the same type of communication works for all families, but they do not (non-English speaking families, newcomers)	
Middle schoolers require a much higher level of personal connection between students and adults, especially as they recover and thrive.	Fully and Intentionally investing in co-teaching model. OSS teachers can go into classrooms where teachers do not have second adults to help build relationships. Three literacy coaches (across the content areas) at each upper school (only 1.5 more than currently)

Literacy coaches are viewed as ELA coaches only, but should be viewed as across ELA, Social Studies, Science and Special Ed	Look at best practices to utilize literacy coaches fully and equitably across disciplines.
Often co-teaching plays as a teacher and an assistant and that is not the way it is supposed to play out.	Consistent partnerships with co-teachers including time to plan.
Tension around where does anti-racism and equity work live? Is everyone responsible? Or is it in one central place?	Invest heavily in this work and have equity coaches who are experts partner with current educators to help guide practices.
Could there be an opt-in for an extended day?	Significant stipend for educators to stay to run a meaningful extended learning opportunity (not remedial) that is district funded, not out of the school-site budget, so that it is equal across district. (Afterschool Resources Center as a model)
History and social studies is the smallest and least funded department.	Invest in history/social studies, especially so that they can provide resources around becoming antiracist
We need more mental health professionals in our schools. School committee and cabinet have not been as responsive as they could be. Guidance counselors (non-IEP) are overwhelmed and cannot support the majority of the student populations.	Use COVID recovery as a springboard to invest in mental health and curriculum for CPSD. Part of the curriculum piece means investing in restorative practices. Help kids and adults feel connected by training all staff members in restorative practices.

Break out session ended at 4:00pm.

Round Two began at 4:05.

Jenny Chung asked about more opportunity for educator participation.

- Claire Spinner answered that they are in the information gathering process and speaks to the meetings time frames and how this one target CPSD staff. This pre budget forum is current and it does not look like there would be to many more opportunities for this kind of forum. The process timeline is outline.

Besty Preval reflected that this is grades submission time and are we limiting participation by having educators choose between grades and or participating in the budget process.

Rounds two breakout session

Betsy Preval spoke of the advantages of the co teaching model and the disadvantages of the current system. She then broached the need for more mental health support for the scholars and there has to be an investment in restorative practices.

Caitlin O'Donnell echoed Betsy's points and then explained her rationale for the consensus. Spoke of the importance of the educator collaborative resources.

Jenny Chung detailed her groups conversation was about social justice and mental health.

Chris Colbath Hess spoke about co teaching model and the conversations of teachers needs and professional learning.

There will be a Community meeting on February 11, 2021.

Attest:

Jennifer Dever Wood
Cambridge School Committee

**#21-73 Report of the February 11, 2021 Budget Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole)
Community Meeting #3**

**C A M B R I D G E
S C H O O L C O M M I T T E E**

(Official Report)

Budget Sub-Committee Community meeting #3 **February 11, 2021**

Called for 5:30p.m. broadcast from the Media Arts Studio, 454 Broadway, Cambridge, By Order of Her Honor, Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, acting in accordance with Chapter I, Section 3.5, of the Rules of the School Committee, there will be a Virtual Community Meeting #3 of the School Committee for the purpose of Staff discussions on FY 22 Budget Priorities.

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

District Members Present:

Superintendent Kenny Salim

Claire Spinner, Chief Financial Officer

Ivy Washington, Assistant Director, Budget and financial Operations

Dr. Lyndsay Pinkus Brown, Chief Strategy Officer

Madelein McCormack, Chief of Staff, Mayor Siddiqui

Maggie Ravidou, Secretary, Office of Curriculum and Instruction

Nicole Sullivan, Family Liaison, Peabody School

Kunjal Shah, Family Liaison, Putnam Avenue Upper School

Robin Harris, Director Family Engagement

Dr. Alexis Morgan, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Student Services

Lillian Ratner, Family Liaison, Amigos School

Zakkiyya Witherspoon, Family Liaison, Tobin School

Today's agenda is as follows:

Welcome from CPS School Committee Budget Co-Chairs

- Overview of CPS Budget
- o *clarifying questions
- Small Group Discussions by Grade Level
- o * How should CPS use its resources to help students recover, make progress, and succeed?
- o Individual reflection on Padlet
- o Small Group Discussion

FY22 Community
Meeting on Budget.pc

Superintendent Salim began the Community meeting with introductions and asked Vice Chair Bowman Member Fantini to welcome the group. Thanks were given for everyone's attendance and work. Superintendent Salim presented the following overview of the FY22 budget and broke for questions from the attendants.

Superintendent Salim handed the presentation over to Dr. Lyndsay Pinkus Brown.

Dr. Pinkus Brown then welcomed those who have joined in the last few minutes. Explained the intent on how do we want to use their resources and support student's needs. Asked "What is the problem and the opportunity to pursue?" She further elaborated that they will be shifting to breakout rooms to discuss ideas on how CPS should use its resources to help students recover, make progress, and succeed. The conversation shifted to progressive stacking.

Robin Harris was introduced and asked to give an explanation to progressive stacking. Ms. Harris deferred to Emi Michaud Weinstock, who explained that progressive stacking is many stakeholders at a glance and how are they receiving equitable airtime?

The Breakout sessions were broken down by the subsequent categories:
Elementary, Upper School and the High School with the focus on.

- 1) What's the problem to solve or opportunity to pursue? 2)
What's the use of resources to address it?

What's the problem to solve or opportunity to pursue?	What's the use of resources to address it?
<i>FY 21 Example:</i> Increase underrepresented students' college matriculation rates.	Invest in CRLS early college/dual enrollment program expansion.
<i>Social emotional needs of kids and families is dire. We need to create more in school support before kids are in worrisome states of mind and behavior.</i>	Hire more social emotional learning teams like they have at KLO
<i>Families of color need supportive and safe spaces within the district- more programs</i>	Fund Families of Color Coalition who are doing this important work
<i>The CET worker's hours are limited. We have many South Asian families that need translation and support and can build bridges between school and home.</i>	We Must have a district South Asian district wide liaison. Need more district wide liaisons who can translate and have cultural competency.
<i>The translation needs are LARGE. Several participants raised this concern. Cannot build community unless consistent translation services are provided. Staff should not be expected to translate. It is kind, but not in their job description. It is a communication divide, and poor family engagement.</i>	In person translation is essential and valuable. IEP's and letters and robo calls and newsletters and invitations to events have to be properly, swiftly and professionally translated. In person translators are very important.
<i>Need more anti-racist work. Must fully become an anti-racist district.</i>	Keep funding PD. Keep building the BLM curriculum, more implicit bias training to all staff.
<i>Families in quarantine or isolation with covid need more help from the school.</i>	More funds available specifically to protect our families sick with this wicked virus.

Elena Fagotta, asked how will you determine students' needs (mental health and academics)?

Break out session ended at 6:45pm.

Group 1 Lillian Ratner spoke for her group that - Social and emotional wellbeing will be a big issue in the Fall and a paraprofessional assigned for that. As will be funding for the Families of Color Coalition and the education of the BLM curriculum, the importance of translation services.

Group 2 Kunjal Shah spoke for her group that understanding the mental health of scholars and families along with the co teaching model was their focus.

Group 3 Spoke about wrap around services and the Families of Color Coalition

Vice Chair Bowman ended the Community meeting with thanks for the robust conversation and participation with their idea and Member Fantini followed up that there were a lot of good ideas and responses.

Superintendent Salim thanked everyone for joining the meeting.

There will be a Community meeting on February 11, 2021.

Attest:

Jennifer Dever Wood
Cambridge School Committee

10. **Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolence):** None

11. **Announcements:**

Vice Chair Bowman motioned, seconded by Member Fantini, to suspend the Rules for the purpose of a conversation about **#21-63** in which it states Ms. Beard will be retiring and moving on at the end of August. After the following roll call, the Members took turns mentioning the merits that Secretary Beard has contributed to the School Committee office: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

Member Wilson stated the scholarship portals closed last week, she thanked the students that got their applications in and the volunteers. She also wants the community to know about the Summer College and Immersion program for Cambridge Housing Residents to participate in SAT prep which has been a tremendously successful program.

Mayor Siddiqui announced that there will be a Creative Arts Contest in honor of Women's History month in visual arts, and the spoken word. Also, there will be a Elevate Youth Program this spring to bring back the local parks programs to offer outdoor structured environments to our youth beginning March 22nd through the upcoming fall.

12. **Late Orders:** None

13. **Communications from City Officers:** None

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

- Notice
- Agenda
- PowerPoint Presentation COVID-19 Response Update

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

- Dan Monahan, additional reopening March 1, 2021, MOA and Student Success Plans
- Pouya Sadeghpour, in support of **#21-66**
- Ethan Kellogg, in support of **#21-66**
- Mohan Hathi, in support of **#21-66**

E-Mail communications: (copies on file in the School Committee Office):

- ✓ Azusa Lippit, in support of **#21-66**
- ✓ Michael Frehywot, in support of **#21-66**

On a motion by Member Fantini, seconded by Vice Chair Bowman, on the following roll call, it was voted, to adjourn the open session: Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA. (9:30 p.m.).

Attest:

Dosha E. Beard

Dosha Beard

Cambridge School Committee
Regular Meeting

March 2, 2021

Executive Secretary
to the School Committee