



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

October 11, 2022

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 Rachel, Member Bhambi, Member Fantini, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Member Wilson, Mayor Siddiqui

Also Present: Dr. Greer, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent;

Mayor Siddiqui in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m. The meeting was postponed several minutes due to technical difficulties.

The Chair 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 soundcheck: Member Weinstein PRESENT; Member Wilson PRESENT; Member Bhambi PRESENT; Member Fantini PRESENT; Vice-Chair Rachel ABSENT; Member Rojas PRESENT; Mayor Siddiqui PRESENT.

Vice Chair Rachel joined the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

1. Public Comment:

The following individual(s) were heard:

- Dan Monahan spoke regarding #22-242
- Anna Gosline spoke regarding #C22-230.

On a motion by Member Wilson, seconded by Member Fantini on a voice vote, public comment was closed.

2. Student School Committee Report:

Student Member Clemente and **Student Member Escamilla-Salomon** provided updates on the student perspectives at CRLS which included the October 6th Career Fair at CRLS, the Early College Program at Lesley University, college workshop and college application support, and homecoming. Both **Student Member Clemente** and **Student Member Escamilla-Salomon** discussed recent student advocacy work they are currently doing this school year which includes the implementation of a student advocacy council.

Members of the School Committee each praised the student members on their ongoing advocacy work.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

- September 12, 2022 Special Meeting
- September 13, 2022 Retreat Meeting
- September 20, 2022 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Member Bhambi, seconded by Member Rojas on a voice vote, the records were approved as written.

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports:

#C22-230 Joint Motion by Vice Chair Rachel, Mayor Siddiqui, and Member Fantini

WHEREAS: The Superintendent and School Committee have been working with the Department of Human Services Programs to expand access to afterschool programs; and

WHEREAS: Cambridge Public Schools have increased access to space for programs within school buildings, and have recruited district staff to apply for DHSP afterschool positions; and

WHEREAS: A waiting list of over two hundred families remains for city-run after-school programs this school year; and

WHEREAS: Many students attend afterschool programs run by community partners; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public Schools transportation policy has made extended considerations for students in grades 6-8 beyond the state requirement; and

WHEREAS: The School Committee requested a plan for transporting students to after-school programs last year (21-311, Members Wilson and Fantini); and

WHEREAS: Cambridge Public Schools provided additional funding to community partners last year to address the transportation needs of their participants; and

WHEREAS: The administration has examined options for bus routes and policies, including those outlined in the Student Transportation Assessment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge Public Schools will work with the contracted transportation company to address student transportation to afterschool programs, including but not limited to allowing students to ride buses that have the capacity, and exploring adding stops along/near existing routes; be it further

RESOLVED: That the administration will provide the School Committee with an update on related efforts no later than October 31, 2022.

With no further update on this awaiting report from the Superintendent, this item was passed over and remains as an awaiting report.

7. Superintendent's Agenda:

7a. Superintendent's Update: COVID-19 Update

7b. Presentations:

Mayor Siddiqui passed the floor to the administration for a presentation on updated COVID-19 guidelines. The full presentation can be found on the [website](#).

Following the presentation, Mayor Siddiqui opened the floor to the Committee for discussion.

A robust discussion followed on the updated COVID presentation that included the updated mitigation strategies, the removal of the booster requirement for extra-curricular and after-school activities, testing, air filtration system and air quality and the district's encouragement of initial vaccinations to halt the spread in the virus.

7b. CPS District Plan: None

7c. Consent Agenda:

Member Rojas pulled #22-242.

On a motion by Member Fantini, seconded by Member Bhambi, on the following roll call vote, items **#22-241, and #22-243** through **#22-246**, were adopted: Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA;

Member Bhambi YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Vice-Chair Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#22-241 Day & Residential Program Services not Available from the Cambridge School Department be adopted as follows: That Superintendent's Recommendation #22-241, Day & Residential Program Services not Available from the Cambridge School Department, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee contracts to the institutions as detailed in the list in amounts not to exceed the shown rates, funds to be provided from the General Fund and/or Grant Fund Budget, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Program	#	Amount
Day Program Tuition Contracts	1	\$102,568.00
Residential Program 45 Day Program		
Total	7	\$102,568.00

#22-243 Contract Award: Colonial Ford Inc.: 2022 Ford F250 Truck be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Colonial Ford Inc., 61 Camelot Drive, Plymouth, for the period of September 23, 2022 to June 30, 2023 in the amount of \$55,087.00.

#22-244 Contract Award: FMC Ice Sports: Facility Rental, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

FMC Ice Sports, 100 Schoosett St, Bldg. 3, Pembroke, for the periods of:

November 28, 2022 to June 30, 2023 in the amount of \$56,400.00

July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 in the amount of \$58,800.00

July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$61,200.00

Total amount: \$176,400.00.

Description: This contract is for Ice rental at the rink located at 155 Gore Street, Cambridge, MA for the CRLS' Girl's & Boy's Hockey Teams. FMC Ice Sports was the low bidder.

#22-245 Contract Award: Minuteman Regional High School: Student Tuition be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Minuteman Regional High School, 758 Marrett Road, Lexington for the period of September 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 in the amount of \$26,312.50.

Description: This contract is for SY 22/23 Tuition for one student to attend Minuteman Regional High School.

#22-246 Gifts/Miscellaneous Receipts be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the following donations as described:

1. A gift of \$433.70 was made to the Baldwin School from the Massachusetts Cultural Council Big Yellow School Bus programs. Funds are being transferred from the Baldwin School's student activity account and will be used for field trips.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#22-242 Contract Award: Roessel Joy Staffing LLC: Temporary Staffing Services be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Roessel Joy Staffing LLC, 99 Summer Street, Suite 1520, for the period of October 11, 2022 to March 31, 2023 in the amount of \$31,000.00.

A discussion followed on **#22-242**.

Member Rojas asked Superintendent for an update on staffing and how the district is overcoming any challenges it is facing in terms of hiring. Dr. Greer responded that the district is not the only district experiencing staffing shortages. Districts across the country are experiencing hiring and staffing challenges. CPSD has about 90% full-staffed teaching positions and 80% full-staffed paraprofessional positions. The administration will come before the Committee in November with a staffing update that will include strategies, they have identified tied to hurdle the challenges and a staffing report will be sent soon. Currently, the district is well-staffed with a 1:8 student-to-teacher ratio at the elementary level and a 1:10 student-teacher ratio at the secondary level.

Claire Spinner provided more clarity on **#22-242**. The contract awards staffing services to fill a temporary 6-month vacant position due to a permanent staff member on leave.

On a motion by Member Rojas, seconded by Member Wilson, on the following roll call, **#22-242** was adopted: Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Member Bhambi YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Vice-Chair Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

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

#22-247 Joint Motion by Member Weinstein, Mayor Siddiqui, and Vice Chair Rachel

WHEREAS: Climate change and air quality have significant impacts on the health, well-being, and future of the children the Cambridge Public School District (CPSD) serves; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee is committed to the health, well-being and future of the children of Cambridge; and

WHEREAS: Electrification of CPSD's school bus services would have a positive impact on climate change and reduction of particulates in the air, benefiting our children and everyone in our Cambridge community; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public School District has been a leader in school bus electrification, participating in a pilot project in 2016 with two other Massachusetts school districts, funded through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and administered by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), which included a \$400,000 grant to Cambridge to purchase an electric school bus and a charging station, which are still in service in Cambridge; and

WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge has been a leader in reducing transportation-related emissions, including a Green Fleet policy requiring all municipal departments requesting new vehicles compare options on the basis of fuel economy and emissions, recognizing that a significant percentage of climate-change emissions in the city result from transportation; and

WHEREAS: The [Cambridge Climate Working Group Findings and Recommendations Report](#) recommends that all leased and owned school buses be electric vehicles; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That CPSD explore every opportunity to electrify our school bus fleet and school bus service taking into account the expiration of CPSD's current school bus contract on August 31, 2025; and be it further

RESOLVED: That CPSD will explore and pursue any potentially beneficial funding opportunities including state and federal programs; and be it further

RESOLVED: That CPSD will seek intermediate steps that advance us towards the goal of full electrification, including taking full advantage of the electric bus owned by CPSD; and be it further

RESOLVED: That CPSD will establish a plan, including a timeline, for full electrification of the CPSD school bus fleet and school bus service by September 2030 or sooner if feasible; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Superintendent will present an update on this plan by June 30, 2023.

Member Weinstein provided context and background regarding the motion. The objective of the motion is to start the initiative and implementation of utilizing electric school bus services in the district as well as positioning the district to take advantage of grants that can assist in electrifying school buses. CPSD has been a leader in school bus electrification and currently has own electric bus fleet in possession. The motion also supports air quality and aligns with ongoing green initiatives.

Vice Chair Rachel expressed her support of the motion and shared a suggestion she received from her child about the possibility of piloting the current electric bus in the winter to determine how well electric buses fare in cold climates and snow conditions.

Mayor Siddiqui spoke about initiatives done in other cities and districts such as the Boston Public Schools to determine what steps and initiatives that district is doing to electrify their school fleet by 2030. Dr. Greer inquired about the motion and what the motion makers are requiring the district to do, will the district need to provide a plan and a timeline on how the district can electrify the school fleet by June 30, 2023. **Mayor Siddiqui** recommended possibly hiring a consultant to assist in the work to be added to the budget.

Member Fantini inquired if that timeline is feasible for the Superintendent and administration. Dr. Greer thinks that a more phased approach when creating a timeline and implementation would be more feasible. **Member Weinstein** thinks that the goal of implementing in 2030 is feasible, and thinks the goal should be maintained although it may need to be more flexible based on bidding, timeline, etc.

Mayor Siddiqui discussed the option for the Superintendent to give any feedback or suggestions to the Committee on the timeline of the motion should things need to change.

Based on the feedback from the Superintendent regarding the timeline of deliverables stated in the motion, **Vice Chair Rachel** proposed to amend the motion to read:

WHEREAS: Climate change and air quality have significant impacts on the health, well-being, and future of the children the Cambridge Public School District (CPSD) serves; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee is committed to the health, well-being and future of the children of Cambridge; and

WHEREAS: Electrification of CPSD's school bus services would have a positive impact on climate change and reduction of particulates in the air, benefiting our children and everyone in our Cambridge community; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public School District has been a leader in school bus electrification, participating in a pilot project in 2016 with two other Massachusetts school districts, funded through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and administered by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), which included a \$400,000 grant to Cambridge to purchase an electric school bus and a charging station, which are still in service in Cambridge; and

WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge has been a leader in reducing transportation-related emissions, including a Green Fleet policy requiring all municipal departments requesting new vehicles compare options on the basis of fuel economy and emissions, recognizing that a significant percentage of climate-change emissions in the city result from transportation; and

WHEREAS: The [Cambridge Climate Working Group Findings and Recommendations Report](#) recommends that all leased and owned school buses be electric vehicles; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That CPSD explore every opportunity to electrify our school bus fleet and school bus service taking into account the expiration of CPSD's current school bus contract on August 31, 2025; and be it further

RESOLVED: That CPSD will explore and pursue any potentially beneficial funding opportunities including state and federal programs; and be it further

RESOLVED: That CPSD will seek intermediate steps that advance us towards the goal of full electrification, including taking full advantage of the electric bus owned by CPSD; and be it further

RESOLVED: That CPSD will establish a plan, including a timeline, for full electrification of the CPSD school bus fleet and school bus service by September 2030 (or sooner if feasible;) and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Superintendent will *present an update and any recommendations for the plan for buses in CPS by June 30, 2023.*

On a motion by Member Weinstein, seconded by Vice Chair Rachel **#22-247** was amended via a voice vote.

On a motion by Member Weinstein seconded by Vice Chair Rachel **#22-247** was adopted and referred to the Superintendent via a voice vote.

#22-248 Report of the September 15, 2022 Curriculum and Achievement Sub-Committee

A brief discussion followed on **#22-248**.

Member Weinstein gave an overview of the Curriculum and Achievement Sub-Committee Meeting that took place on September 15th, which included a review of two district policies: academic achievement the education of English language learners.

#22-249 Report of the September 28, 2022 Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee

A brief discussion followed on **#22-249**.

Member Rojas gave an overview of the Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee Meeting that took place on September 28th which included the updated covid mitigation strategies discussed earlier in the evening, update on the Long-Range Building study and priority policy review for the student transportation and school safety policies.

#22-250 Report of the October 3, 2022, Special Education and Student Supports Sub-Committee

A brief discussion followed on **#22-250**.

Member Wilson gave an overview of the Special Education and Student Supports Sub-Committee that took place on October 3rd, which included the updates to the new structure of the Office of Student Services, and the review of the district policies for inclusion of individuals with disabilities in out-of-school time programs and programs for students with disabilities.

On a motion by Vice Chair Rachel, seconded by Member Weinstein **#22-248**, **#22-249** and **#22-250** was adopted.

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

#22-251 Joint Motion by Vice Chair Rachel, Member Wilson, and Member Rojas

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public Schools exist to educate children, to prepare them for success in their careers, families, communities, and lives; and

WHEREAS: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has declared November 20 as [World Children's Day](#), marking the adoption of the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#); and

WHEREAS: The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world, outlining civil rights, access to healthcare and education, and freedom of speech and thought all people under 18 years old deserve; and

WHEREAS: The Convention on the Rights of the Child explains how children are simultaneously individuals as well as dependents, reliant on adults and the State to protect them and their families; and

WHEREAS: The United States has signed the treaty, but has not ratified it, becoming the only country in the United Nations not to have ratified the Convention; and

WHEREAS: This year's World Children's Day theme is equality and inclusion, two values the Cambridge Public Schools shares; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge Public Schools goes on record recognizing World Children's Day, and be it further

RESOLVED: That, by forwarding this resolution to each member of our Congressional delegation, the School Committee requests that our federal representatives push for ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

A brief discussion followed on **#22-251**.

Vice Chair Rachel gave background on the resolution which was brought to her attention from a caregiver in the district. The United States is one of the countries that did not ratify World Children's Day and the reasoning of the resolution is for the Committee to go on record symbolizing the support of World's Children's Day to state delegates to gain future support in hopes to ratify it.

#22-252 Joint Motion by Member Wilson, Mayor Siddiqui, and Vice Chair Rachel in collaboration with Student Member Clemente and Student Member Escamilla-Salomon

WHEREAS: The transition from middle school to high school can be challenging for some; and
WHEREAS: This school year there was an emphasis to support the incoming 9th graders with a Bridge to CRLS orientation; and

WHEREAS: For three days at the end of August a collaboration between Cambridge Public Schools and Community Partners spearheaded by the Agenda For Children's Out of School Time Middle School Network Coordinator, Annie Leavitt to make a pipe dream a reality; and

WHEREAS: Roughly 260 scholars attended the workshops led by CRLS upperclassmen (including our Student School Committee Members Clemente and Escamilla-Salomon) and community partners from programs/opportunities, including ways to build community with their peers, to previewing challenges youth may face during the transition to high school; and WHEREAS: On the kickoff day, Principal Smith opened the space along with Deans, Guidance Counselors, and other staff mentioning "This is now a tradition"; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee goes on record honoring and appreciating Agenda For Children Out of School staff, Annie Leavitt, Khari Milner, and Shawn Proctor along with CRLS Upperclassmen and staff, a host of Community Partners including ACCESS, Cambridge Public Library, Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House, Office of Workforce Development, and many more. Find the complete list of Shoutouts [here](#), and be it further

RESOLVED: That a formal copy of this resolution be prepared by the Executive Secretary to the School Committee and be forwarded to Mrs. Annie Leavitt and the Agenda For Children.

A brief discussion followed on **#22-252**.

Member Wilson provided context on the resolution which recognizes the efforts from the Agenda For Children Out of School staff, Annie Leavitt, Khari Milner, and Shawn Proctor, on their well-received ninth-grade student orientation last month.

#22-253 Motion by Member Fantini

WHEREAS: Janet Snedeker retired from The Cambridge Public Schools on October 1, 2022, after 18 years of dedication to the children and families of the City of Cambridge; and

WHEREAS: Janet grew up in Connecticut, making her way to Cambridge where she resides with her husband Rick, and their daughters Laura and Claire both attended the M.E. Fitzgerald School where she was an active parent; and

WHEREAS: Throughout her career as a Clerk Specialist for The Office of Student Services, Janet was known for her strong work ethic, meticulous attention to detail, integrity, commitment to equity, and advocacy for students with disabilities and their families and caregivers; and

WHEREAS: Over the years of her employment, Janet's work involved reviewing specific components of the IEP packets for accuracy and compliance, always taking the extra steps to ensure that accuracy, processing invoices, and managing special education transportation; and

WHEREAS: Janet carried out all her duties with diligence and integrity, and more importantly, the ability to maintain her composure under pressure and during emergencies which occurred pretty regularly; and

WHEREAS: Janet will be greatly missed as she truly made a difference in the lives of students with disabilities, their families and caregivers, the Office of Student Services school-based staff, fellow clerks fiscal managers, and administrators; a caring co-worker always willing to help out if needed with a sense of humor and quick wit sure to bring a smile to your face; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee go on record expressing appreciation to Janet for her 18 years of dedicated service and wishing her good health and happiness in her retirement; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a formal copy of this Resolution be prepared by the Executive Secretary to the School Committee to be presented to Janet Snedeker.

A brief discussion followed on **#22-253**.

Member Fantini gave some background in the resolution and congratulated Janet Snedeker on her recent retirement from the Cambridge Public School District.

On a motion by Member Wilson, seconded by Member Bhambi, **#22-251**, **#22-252** and **#22-253** were adopted via a voice vote.

11. Announcements:

Vice Chair Rachel thanked the Superintendent and the administration for the addition of quiet air filters in the Attles Conference Room and recognized National Coming Out Day, which took place on October 11th.

Mayor Siddiqui congratulated and recognized Dr. Greer for being listed as a Superintendent to Watch in Vision & Purpose Lifestyle Magazine's Annual Education Issue.

12. Late Orders: None

13. Communications from City Officers:

- Mayor Siddiqui and Vice Chair Rachel: Draft 2022-2023 School Committee Goals
- Mayor Siddiqui and Vice Chair Rachel: Superintendent Evaluation Timeline

Vice Chair Rachel gave an overview of five draft goals for the School Committee for this year. The five goals proposed were:

- By December 31, 2022, the School Committee will set student outcome goals in the District Plan to monitor annually.
- By May 2023, the School Committee will adopt an FY24 budget that incorporates student, family, educator, and community input regarding strategic initiatives in SY23-24.
- By June 30, 2023, the School Committee will complete negotiations with the CEA to help advance student learning.
- By June 30, 2023, the Committee will complete the annual review of the Superintendent.
- By August 31, 2023, the School Committee and its Subcommittees will complete a thorough review of district policies, revising many and identifying those that need additional attention in SY23-24.

Member Rojas mentioned that the School Committee should make a goal sometime in the upcoming year to do a self-evaluation. **Member Wilson** inquired about the wording of goal number five – “thorough review of the policies by August 31st” and asked for clarity on the language. A brief discussion on goal number five occurred around the timeline of the policy review and the Committee agreed to amend goal number five to read:

- By August 31, 2023, the School Committee and its Subcommittees will complete a review of priority district policies, revising many and identifying those that need additional attention in SY23-24.

Vice Chair Rachel also briefly discussed the Superintendent evaluation timeline:

- On November 15, 2022, the Superintendent will present her proposed goals and focus indicators.
- The Committee would do a formative evaluation on March 21, 2023
- The Committee would do a Summative evaluation on June 20, 2023

- The Committee will set goals for the Superintendent in August 2023

On a motion by Member Rojas, seconded by Member Fantini, both communications were placed on file via voice vote.

Email communications:

✓ Dan Monahan

✓ Lilly Havstad

✓ Anna Gosline

On a motion by Member Wilson, seconded by Member Weinstein, it was voted, on a voice vote to adjourn the meeting (8:09 p.m.).

Attest:

Ariel B. Kennebrew

Ariel B. Kennebrew
Executive Secretary to the School Committee