



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Roundtable Meeting

June 27, 2023

Called for 6:00 p.m. broadcast from the Media Arts Studio, 454 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of discussing the efforts toward RSTA program improvement.

Members Present: Vice-Chair Rachel, Member Fantini, Member Hunter, Member Rojas (Absent), Member Weinstein, Member Wilson, Mayor Siddiqui

Also Present: Dr. Greer, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Gittens, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools
Damon Smith, Principal of CRLS
Linda Radzvilla, RSTA Director

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 read the call of the meeting and explained that this meeting is being televised, votes will not be taken, and there will be no public comment. The meeting proceeded with a roll call of members present:; Member Weinstein PRESENT; Member Wilson PRESENT; Member Fantini PRESENT; Member Hunter PRESENT; Vice-Chair Rachel PRESENT; Member Rojas ABSENT; Mayor Siddiqui PRESENT.

Mayor Siddiqui turned the floor over to Dr. Greer who provided a brief overview of the purpose of the Roundtable Meeting, which was for the district to discuss the efforts toward RSTA program improvement as we conclude the 2022-2023 school year.

Dr. Greer then turned the meeting over to Ms. Radzvilla who lead a presentation on current improvement efforts to the RSTA program. The full presentation can be found on the [website](#).

After the presentation, Vice Chair Rachel (in Mayor Siddiqui's brief absence) passed the floor over to the Committee for a questions and comments. Discussion on the following two discussion prompts:

- What excites you about what you heard?
- What questions do you have about what you heard?

Member Fantini inquired about the block scheduling for the RSTA program and if there are any anticipated problems with it. Ms. Radzvilla responded that block scheduling provides an opportunity for the RSTA programming to be creative. Dr. Greer mentioned that there will be an audit on the high school schedules soon. **Member Fantini** also asked if there were any expansions of the Chapter 74 programming such as plumbing and electrical. Ms. Radzvilla has given thought in expanding programs and has not decided on specific programming; however, she would like to hear the suggestions of the students to get feedback on programs that they are interested in exploring.

Member Weinstein expressed his excitement on the details that was shared in the presentation and inquired about greater coordination with community partners such as DHSP and what are the next steps in ensuring more collaboration with them. Ms. Radzvilla responded that there has been some success in targeting students and collaborating with community partners.

Member Wilson inquired about credentialing including the OSHA 10 and the CPR trainings and asked the reasoning why these trainings are specific to CNA students only and not others. Ms. Radzvilla responded that students at the upper levels already receive those trainings so she found it important for students in exploratory courses to receive the trainings as well. **Member Wilson** also asked for the credentials each student can receive and the student success rates for them. Ms. Radzvilla read loud a few examples of some credentials including automotive safety, motor oil 101, first aid child/infant, infant and preschool certifications etc.

Mayor Siddiqui discussed the important of DEI in the real estate industry. She noted that people of color are often left out of development deals at every level – architecture, contract work, etc. Given the city's development expansion, she is committed to intentional efforts to including people of color in this work and noted the Alewife development project. She offered to work with Member Wilson on these efforts. Dr. Gittens noted that preparing CPSD students for career pathways goes beyond RSTA and leaders need to keep at the forefront that students should be informed of all available opportunities.

Vice Chair Rachel praised Ms. Radzvilla on her inspiring presentation and inquired about clarification on competency attainment – what does it mean and what does it look like? Ms. Radzvilla shared that all of the career programs have frameworks created from the Department of Education. The frameworks translate to a competency (i.e. student ratings based on their understanding on their area of study). Competency is a direct correlation of frameworks. **Vice Chair Rachel** also inquired about internships for students who are not in RSTA programming. CRLS Principal Smith shared some internships currently provided for CRLS students including the Enhanced Senior Year Program. Principal Smith and Ms. Radzvilla are collaborating to create more opportunities for students to have work-based learning experiences. Principal Smith noted that some students are involved with internships outside of school and highlighted the opportunities outlined as part of MyCap. Dr. Greer noted that the position that the School Committee approved will be dedicated to creating partnerships with companies and organizations and align stakeholders within CPSD.

Member Hunter praised the administration for their presentation for the evening and inquired about any anticipating additions to the healthcare program including dental and medical assistance, animal science, phlebotomy, etc. that will provide more compensation for students when they transition from high school. Ms. Radzvilla shared that phlebotomy is not allowed at the high school level, however the district is working on a partnership with CVS Health for pharmacy techs, and a partnership with Corporate and Partnership Outreach at Regis College that has a bridge program for high school students to obtain certifications for certain health care areas such as phlebotomy and medical assistance. **Member Hunter** also inquired about the types of tech-based areas of study for students in RSTA and she noted the importance of keeping updated on the high-paying career trends in helping to inform RSTA's offerings Ms. Radzvilla shared the types of technical areas of study that are provided in RSTA. In addition, she noted that she needs to hire an engineer for a RSTA position and asked the Committee to spread the word, Ms. Radzvilla also shared the offerings of the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology (BFCIT). Dr. Gittens shared a brief overview on a state grant awarded to CPSD related to the BFCIT but the details are evolving. Over the past 2 years, 2 students participated in BFCIT. Currently 3 students are interested in attending BFCIT next year. Member Hunter highlighted the importance of connecting in the earlier grades with CPSD students regarding the wide swath of career trajectories av

Member Fantini also expressed his excitement in the improvement in the programs and believes in due time there will be major student interests and a waiting list. He also shared the School Committee once had a RSTA subcommittee and believes that reestablishing this subcommittee could be helpful. **Mayor Siddiqui** cited the importance of evaluating the programs for continuous improvement, SMART goals, and sharing positive highlights with the community. Ms. Radzvilla noted the importance of evaluation and keeping updated on the data statistics of the labor market. She promised to revisit this important conversation.

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Member Wilson asked for additional clarification on the RSTA positions available. Ms. Radzvilla shared information regarding the positions available and her future goals for building a RSTA department.

Member Hunter asked about how parents are informed of the RSTA opportunities. Principal Smith shared that this information is shared through guidance counselors, his weekly email update, and StudentSquare and ParentSquare provide this information. He noted that he and Ms. Radzvilla are collaborating and committed to improving outreach

Mayor Siddiqui closed out the roundtable by thanking the administration for their efforts in the ongoing improvement to the district's RSTA program.

On a motion by Vice Chair Rachel, seconded by Member Rojas, on the following roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned: Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Hunter YEA; Vice-Chair Rachel YEA; Member Rojas ABSENT; Mayor Siddiqui YEA (7:43 p.m.).

Attest:



Ariel B. Kennebrew
Executive Secretary to the School Committee