



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

April 2, 2024

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 Hunter, Member Harding, Member Hudson, Member Rachel, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Mayor Simmons

Also Present: Dr. Greer, Superintendent of Schools; David Murphy, Chief Operations Officer; Ivy Washington, Chief Financial Officer

Mayor Simmons in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and 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 Harding **ABSENT**; Member Hudson **PRESENT**; Member Rachel **PRESENT**; Member Rojas **PRESENT**; Member Weinstein **ABSENT**; Vice Chair Hunter **PRESENT**; Mayor Simmons **PRESENT**.

Member Weinstein joined the meeting at 6:05 p.m. Member Harding joined the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

1. Public Comment:

The following individuals were heard:

- Dan Monahan, Lexington Ave., spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Arjun Jaikumar, Richdale Ave, spoke regarding the Fiscal Year FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Chris Montero, Warrant Road, Framingham, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Laura Clawson, Richdale Ave, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Marissa Fried, Prospect Street, Somerville, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Kelly West, Franklin Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Keely Danielson, Exeter Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Evan MacKay, Linnaean Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Dan Totten, Bishop Allen Drive, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Guy Rosenzweig, Raymond Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Brook Hopkins, Cottage Park, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Rachel Eckles, Columbus Ave, Somerville, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Rebecca Lester, William Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Luisa Santos, Walker Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)

- Fabiane Noronha, Leighton Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Jacob Augenstern, Elm Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Kris Newton, Newport Street, Arlington, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Danielle Mulligan, Tremont Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Alex Hines, Oxford Ave., spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Andrea Eichman, Holworthy Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Carolyn Magid, Reed Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Maritza Soto, Fresh Pond Parkway, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Trent Sandland, Fisk Place, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Anne Coburn, Otis Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Andrew King, Chilton Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Ximena Hasbach, Highland Ave, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Matthew Kennedy, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Alyssa Tyler, Main Street, Medford, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)
- Nora Grodzins, Parker Street, spoke regarding the FY25 Recommended Budget (#24-050)

On a motion by Member Rachel, seconded by Member Rojas, on a voice vote, public comment was closed.

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Member Hudson on a voice vote it was voted to suspend the rules to bring forward recommendation **#24-050**.

Committee members, Superintendent Greer, COO Murphy, and CFO Washington participated in a robust discussion regarding the budget planning process and related topics including:

- Appreciation for the work of those who led the budget process and recognition of the improved process involving caregivers and the community
- Appreciation of the important role of paraprofessionals and how their current salary contract negotiations relate to the FY25 and FY26 budgets
- The importance of targeted priorities/clear goals and how these are reflected in the budget
- Keeping children and families at the center of budget priorities
- Cambridge's bond rating and exercising caution regarding its capacity limit
- The configuration of FTEs
- Student Success Planning
- Full funding for athletics and visual & performing arts
- Special Start vs. Universal Preschool
- Special Start enrollment numbers
- CRLS safety concerns

The budget conversation evolved into a robust discussion regarding safety concerns at CRLS and a **Late Order** put forth by **Member Harding** and **Vice Chair Hunter**.

#24-050, Approval of Fiscal Year 2025 Recommended Budget, be approved as follows: that the School Committee receive and approve the FY 2025 General Fund Budget of the Cambridge Public Schools in the following Statutory Categories:

Salaries, Wages & Benefits:	\$	225,750,000
Other Ordinary Maintenance:	\$	40,755,325
Travel and Training:	\$	1,569,675
Extraordinary Expenditures:	\$	175,000
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Total	\$	268,250,000

On a motion by Vice Chair, seconded by Member Rojas, on the following roll call votes for **#24-050**, the FY25 Budget was adopted:

Salaries, Wages & Benefits: \$225,750,000: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson NAY; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA. (6-1)

Other Ordinary Maintenance: \$40,755,325: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

Travel and Training: \$1,569,675: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson NAY; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA. (6-1)

Extraordinary Expenditures: \$175,000: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

Total FY2025 Recommended Budget: \$225,750,000: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson NAY; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA. (6-1)

On a motion by Vice-Chair Rachel, seconded by Member Rojas it was voted to suspend the Rules for the purpose of moving reconsideration of the foregoing vote on all budget-related items: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

The Rules having been suspended, a motion to reconsider the foregoing vote, hoping the same would not prevail, was adopted: Member Harding NAY; Member Hudson NAY; Member Rachel NAY; Member Rojas NAY; Member Weinstein NAY Vice Chair Hunter NAY; Mayor Simmons NAY.

1. Student School Committee Report:

None

2. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

- March 14, 2024, Budget Workshop
- March 19, 2024, Regular Meeting

On a motion by motion for Vice Chair Hunter, seconded by Member Hudson on a voice vote, the records were approved as written.

3. Reconsiderations: None

4. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

5. Awaiting Reports: None

6. Superintendent’s Agenda

7a. **Superintendent’s Update:**

7b. **Presentations:**

Office of Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Update.....Manuel J Fernandez,

Chief Equity Officer
Dr. Leslie Jimenez,
Director of Equity
Dr. Raymond Porch,
Director of Family & Community Engagement

On a Motion by Member Harding seconded by Member Rachel the presentation by the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Belonging was postponed to a future meeting: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas ABSTAIN; Member Weinstein NAY; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA (5-2).

7c. **CPS District Plan:** None

7d. **Consent Agenda:**

Member Rachel pulled **#24-051**, Member Weinstein pulled **#24-060**, and Member Harding pulled **#24-054**. On the following roll call vote, items **#24-052, #24-053; #24-055; #24-056 #24-057, #24-058, #24-059, #24-062** were adopted: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

#24-052 FY23-24 General Fund Budget Statutory Transfers be adopted as follows: That the School Committee approve the following statutory transfers of appropriation within the General Fund budget for FY2023-2024.

Statutory Coding

Salaries, Wages & Benefits (SW)	(\$192,000)
Other Ordinary Maintenance (OOM)	
Travel & Training (TT)	\$192,000
Extraordinary Expenditures (EE)	
NET TOTAL	\$0

Description:

During the course of the school year, transfers between statutory categories may be necessary to meet the educational and operational needs of the School Department. The net effect of these transfers on the General Fund Budget is \$0.

#24-053 Contract Award: Amplify: Instructional Materials & Professional Development be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Amplify, 55 Washington St., Suite 500, Brooklyn, NY from April 5, 2024 to June 30, 2025, in the amount of \$903,329.92.

#24-055 Contract Award: Community Art Center: Student Tuition be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Community Art Center, 119 Windsor Street, Cambridge, MA from July 1, 2024 to August 30, 2024, in the amount of \$39,690.00.

#24-056 Contract Award: East End House: Student Tuition be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

East End House, 105 Spring Street, Cambridge, MA from July 1, 2024 to August 30, 2024, in the amount of \$35,910.00.

#24-057 Contract Award: Baldwin Community Center: Student Tuition be adopted as follows:

that the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Baldwin Community Center, 20 Sacramento Street, Cambridge, MA from July 1, 2024 to August 23, 2024, in the amount of \$30,800.00.

#24-058 Gifts/Miscellaneous Receipts be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the following donation as described:

- 1.) \$1,750.00 made by the National Center for Civic Innovation/Springpoint Schools to CRLS to cover costs associated with staff participation in the Transformative Leaders of Massachusetts fellowship.

#24-059 Grant Award: FY2024 SEL & Mental Health Grant-Additional State Allocation (SC24833) be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY2024 SEL & Mental Health Grant – Additional State Allocation (SC24833) from State, allocation in the amount of \$14,375.00 for the period of March 25, 2024 to June 30, 2024.

Description:

This grant aims to build capacity of school districts to develop comprehensive, integrated multi-tiered systems for student, family, and educator social-emotional and/or mental health supports. This funding reflects an additional, state-funded allocation to our FY24 SEL & Mental Health Grant (SC24832). The original federal grant was \$63,000 and funded coaching, professional development, and professional subscriptions for SEL staff. All new activities in SC24833 are aligned with SC24832. This increased allocation will support SEL curriculum and related resources.

#24-062 Grant Award: FY24 Homeless Emergency Support (SC24860) be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY24 Homeless Emergency Support (SC24860) from State, allocation in the amount of \$105,704.00 for the period of April 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024.

Description:

The goal of this targeted Homeless Emergency Support grant is to provide funding for programs that ensure students who are homeless enroll in and attend school, and have racially equitable and culturally responsive opportunities to succeed in school. English learners are heavily represented in CPS's new un-housed student population and new resources are needed to best meet their educational needs. Grant funds will be used to:

- Purchase newcomer curricula for grades K-12 exclusively for English learners who are identified

- as newcomers or as students at beginning, entering, or emerging levels;
- Purchase a companion curriculum and materials for English learners for the new English Language Arts curriculum that CPS is rolling out in SY 2024-25;
 - Purchase book kits for unhoused students;
 - Purchase additional Chromebooks for students in emergency shelter(s).

8. Non-Consent Agenda

#24-051 Approval of the Appointment of the Chief Financial Officer be adopted as follows: That the School Committee approve the appointment of Ivy Washington as the Chief Financial Officer.

Description:

After a comprehensive search and interview process of six candidates, Ms. Ivy Washington was the top candidate for the Chief Financial Officer position. Ms. Washington has served as the Interim Chief Financial Officer since December 2023 and has worked collaboratively with her colleagues and caregivers to deliver an inclusive FY25 budget process

A discussion followed **#24-051**.

Members expressed their enthusiastic support for the appointment of Ms. Washington to the role of Chief Financial officer. They noted her leadership of the FY25 budget process and her collaborative spirit. Ms. Washington shared her enthusiasm for the district and assuming the new position.

On a motion by Member Rachel seconded by Member Weinstein on the following roll call vote **#24-051** was adopted: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

#24-054 Contract Award: Buckingham Browne & Nichols School: Student Tuition be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Buckingham Browne & Nichols School, 80 Gerry's Landing Road, Cambridge, MA from
June 24, 2024 to August 9, 2024, in the amount of \$57,000.00.

A brief discussion followed **#24-054**.

Member Harding inquired about the financial resources and tuition rates for summer camps partnering with CPSD. Superintendent Greer provided background information.

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Vice Chair Hunter on the following roll call vote **#24-054** was adopted: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Madam Mayor YEA.

#24-060 Grant Award: Genocide Education Grant (SC24-859) be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

Genocide Education Grant (SC24-859) from Trust to State, allocation in the amount of \$60,000 for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

A discussion followed **#24-060**.

Member Weinstein, Member Hudson and **Student Member Anjaria** would like to learn more about the curriculum being offered. Dr. Greer shared that she would include additional information in Friday's Weekly report. **Member Hudson** exercised her Charter Right and the Recommendation was not voted on and tabled for an upcoming meeting.

9. Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolences):

#24-061 Joint Motion by Member Rachel, Vice Chair Hunter and Mayor Simmons

WHEREAS: Cambridge native Khari Milner is the child of Poppy and Marshall Milner, themselves longtime community leaders, MIT/Upward Bound director-parents, consummate educators, and artists; and

WHEREAS: Khari went through the Cambridge Public Schools, distinguishing himself as a young person for his involvement in social justice work and as a star swimmer; and

WHEREAS: Khari has worked tirelessly for three decades to improve educational and life outcomes for Cambridge students; and

WHEREAS: Khari serves as the Co-Director of the Cambridge Public Schools - Department of Human Service partnership aptly named the Agenda for Children; and

WHEREAS: Khari and his colleagues have built a community of dozens of afterschool and summer programs, provided capacity-building and connections to the school department and City, and designed vacation week and Saturday programs; and

WHEREAS: Khari has modeled how to apply an equity lens to educational work, for example thinking proactively about students who might need supportive remote learning environments during the pandemic schooling period, drawing upon his strong relationships with community-based organizations to establish sites, and working with CPS to secure appropriate funding; and

WHEREAS: Khari was a central leader in the Building Equity Bridges movement, which convened students, caregivers, educators, and community members to make sense of educational data together, identify barriers to racial equity, and define strategies for taking down barriers; and

WHEREAS: The BEB movement has led to numerous improvements in Cambridge, including the establishment of the Cambridge Families of Color Coalition, as well as the Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging; and

WHEREAS: Khari keeps his focus on the racial equity work still needed in our schools and community; and

WHEREAS: Khari is a parent to three wonderful children, each of who have attended Cambridge Public Schools; and

WHEREAS: Khari had the good sense to marry Tanya Milner, one of the treasures of the CRLS administration and a leader in her own right; and

WHEREAS: Tutoring Plus named Khari Milner as the organization's 2024 Children's Champion; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee go on record congratulating Khari Milner for this well-earned recognition and thanking him for his continued dedication to young people and families in Cambridge; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Executive Secretary prepare a formal copy of this resolution and present it to Mr. Khari Milner.

A brief discussion followed **#24-061**.

All members spoke highly of Mr. Milner and his many contributions to the Cambridge community.

On a motion by Member Rachel seconded by Member Harding on a voice vote, **#24-061** was adopted.

11. Announcements:

- **Student Member Alailima** shared that CRLS Principal Smith was introducing new policies and he was soliciting student feedback which was well received by the student community.

12. Late Orders:

WHEREAS: The School Committee is committed to addressing the safety and security concerns at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee propose the addition of 3 full time employees (FTEs) under the umbrella of the safety and security department to be deployed by the Chief Operating Officer and the Superintendent.

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Vice Chair Hudson the **Late Order** was adopted (6-1) on a roll call vote: Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas NAY; Member Weinstein YEA; Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

13. Communications from City Officer: None

Email communications:

- Dan Monahan
- Pamela Blau
- Anna Anderson
- Amber Bifolck-Fisher
- Ann Coburn
- Christopher Cullen
- Andrea Eichman
- Sarah Figge Hussain
- Lauren Gibbs

- Kimberlee Gonsalve
- Nora Grodzins
- Lily Havstad
- Gaelle Lespinasse-Llambi
- Joel Patterson
- Gabriel Robinson
- Beverly Seidenberg
- Elisa Van Voorhis

On a motion by Member Harding, seconded by Member Weinstein on a voice vote the meeting was adjourned. (9:20 p.m.)

Attest:



Katherine Christo

Confidential Secretary to the School Committee