



**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**(Official Minutes)**

**Regular Meeting**

**November 19, 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: Member Harding, Member Hudson, Vice Chair Hunter, Member Rachel (REMOTE), Member Rojas (REMOTE & IN-PERSON) Member Weinstein, Mayor Simmons

Others Present: Jennifer Amigone, Director of Research, Assessment and Evaluation; Student Member Urbana Barua; Raecia T. Catchings, City of Cambridge Chief People Officer; Dr. Heather Francis, Executive Director of Academics; Dr. Michelle Madera; Asst. Superintendent of Elementary Education; David Murphy, Interim Superintendent of Schools; Student Member Hermela Shimelis; 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 6:01 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, PRESENT, Member Hudson, PRESENT; Member Rachel, PRESENT; Member Rojas, ABSENT; Member Weinstein, PRESENT Vice Chair Hunter, PRESENT; Mayor Simmons, PRESENT

For the record, **Mayor Simmons** noted that Member Rojas was listening online and that he planned to join in-person at later time during the meeting. **Member Rojas** arrived at 7:20 p.m.

On a motion by Member Hudson, seconded by Member Harding on the following roll call vote, the rules were suspended to allow for agenda item Recommendation **#24-263** to be brought forward:

**#24-263 Recommendation: Approval of the Tentative Agreement between the Cambridge**

**School Committee & the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees Council 93, Local 1611 for a Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement For the Period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026 be adopted as follows:** That the School Committee approve the Tentative Agreement between the Cambridge School Committee & the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees Council 93, Local 1611 for a Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026.

Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, ABSENT; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

On a motion by Vice Chair Hunter, seconded by Member Hudson on the following roll call vote, **#24-263** was adopted: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, ABSENT; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA; Ms. Catchings, City of Cambridge Chief People Officer, YEA.

**1. Public Comment:**

The following individuals were heard:

- Dan Monahan, Lexington Ave., spoke regarding **#24-285** and the Superintendent's Presentation, MCAS Scores
- Nina Mitchell, Hilliard Place, spoke regarding **#24-259**
- Thomas Woodfin, Brookford Street, spoke regarding **#24-259**
- Cristina de la Cierva, Lexington Ave, spoke regarding **#24-259**
- Sonia Kowal, Market Street, spoke regarding **#24-259**
- Kenneth Reeves, Harvard Street, spoke regarding the Superintendent's Presentation, MCAS Scores

On a motion by Vice Chair Harding, seconded by Member Hudson on the following roll call vote, public comment was closed: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, ABSENT; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

## 2. **Student School Committee Report:**

Student Member Barua and Student Member Shimelis shared the following highlights:

- Ending First Quarter
- Opening of Winter Sports Registration
- Falcon Pride Day fostering school spirit
- Pathfinders – created by two senior students. It serves as a central hub for student information and support.
- SAT accessibility for juniors and PSAT accessibility for sophomores.

There was brief conversation with Committee members regarding the accessibility of taking the SAT for juniors and PSAT for sophomore. Interim Superintendent Murphy noted that funds were reprioritized so that all juniors were able to take the SAT for free so that every CRLS student would graduate with a score. He noted that he believed that there could be funding for both sophomores and juniors and planned to research the issue further.

## 3. **Presentation of the Records for Approval:**

- October 15, 2024, Regular Meeting
- October 15, 2024, Roundtable
- October 29, 2024, Special Meeting (Superintendent Search Timeline)
- October 29, 2024 Special Meeting (Interim Superintendent Contract)

On a motion Vice Chair Hunter seconded by Member Hudson on the following roll call vote, the records were accepted as presented: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, ABSENT; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

## 4. **Reconsiderations:** None

## 5. **Unfinished Business/Calendar:**

In the interest of time, **Mayor Simmons** passed over the following items on Unfinished Business/Calendar:

**Late Order 2024 Superintendent Search Timeline – June 17, 2024**  
**Joint Motion by Member Rojas, Member Rachel and Member Weinstein**  
**#24-227 Superintendent Search - Member Rojas, Member Rachel and Member Weinstein** with accompanying documents from **Mayor Simmons** (Late Order revised 9/17/24)

**#24-241 Six Minutes Public Comment CEA President – Member Weinstein and Member Rojas**

**#24-243 Superintendent Search Process – Member Hudson, Member Weinstein and Member Rachel**

**#24-245 Public Speaking Time – Member Hudson**

**#24-259 Tobin Montessori Preliminary Report – Member Hudson and Member Harding**

6. **Awaiting Reports:** None

7. **7a. Superintendent's Update:**

*Brief update on the work of the district administration in preparation for the 2024 state & national elections along with pertinent district updates subsequent thereto and a draft of the FY26 Operating Budget timeline as developed in coordination between the district administration & budget co-chairs.*

Mr. Murphy shared that the district was committed to being a welcoming environment where all children would feel safe and welcomed. He acknowledged the many students are families are experiencing a changed environment, but that CPSD would remain committed to its priorities to embracing and teaching all student.

He pivoted his remarks to the upcoming presentation noting that it was the third of three presentations focused on MCAS results. He underscored the district's pride in the achievements of its scholars while also noting the importance of being transparent in the areas that need improvement.

After his opening remarks, he turned the floor to the presenters.

**7b. Presentations:**

*CPS district administrators will brief the School Committee on the administration's analysis of the most recent state achievement & accountability data, with particular focus on areas in which the district administration believe significant & improvement and/or change is vitally necessary for the purpose of improving student outcomes.*

David Murphy, Interim Superintendent of Schools  
Jennifer Amigone, Director of Assessment & Accountability  
Dr. Heather Francis, Executive Director of Academics  
Dr. Michelle Madera, Asst. Superintendent of Elementary Education

The group gave the following presentation which can be found on this [website](#).

Following the presentation, the Committee and the presenters discussed the following topics:

- Variability in outcomes between schools.
- Disparate impact on student demographic groups.
- District spending of \$40K per pupil
- Emphasizing the importance of minimizing student transitions.
- Addressing the role of the School Choice Policy as it relates to concentrating high-needs and low-income students.
- Ensuring that space capacities do not dictate the placement of high-needs programming.

- Learning from Fletcher Maynard Academy’s success with Black and African American students’ growth.
- Targeted coaching for educators at all levels.
- Ensuring fidelity in the implementation of the curriculum.
- Promoting high expectations for all students among educators.
- Involving caregivers in these important discussions.
- Using additional data points beyond MCAS, such as iReady and Universal Screenings (conducted three times per year).
- Exploring the possibility of scheduling a roundtable discussion to continue addressing these topics.

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

7d. **Consent Agenda:**

On a motion by Member Weinstein seconded by Member Rachel the items **#24-264, #24-265, #24-266, #24-267, #24-268, #24-269, #24-271, #24-273, #24-274, #24-275, and #24-277** were adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-264 Recommendation: Approval of Revisions to the Food Service Policy (First Reading) be adopted as follows:** That the School Committee approve the revisions to the Food Service policy as detailed in the [attached document](#). (First Reading)

**#24-265 Recommendation: Contract Award: 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 laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts funds to be provided from the General Fund and/or Grant Fund Budget.

Description: SY24-25 Placement of students in private schools for implementation of educational plans in accordance with Chapter 766.

	#	Amount
Day Program Tuition Contracts:	5	\$247,064.41
Residential Program Contracts:		
45 Day Program Contracts:	1	\$25,738.65
Total	6	\$272,803.06

**#24-266 Recommendation: Contract Award: Apple: Staff Devices, Student iPads & Other Apple Accessories 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.

Apple, 1 Apple Park Way, Cupertino, CA for the period of January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025 in the amount of \$500,000.00.

**#24-267 Recommendation: Contract Award: B & H Photo Video, Inc.: Multi Media Equipment & Services 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.

B&H Photo Video, Inc., 420 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, New York, NY for the period of

March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2026 in the amount of \$30,000.00.

**#24-268 Recommendation: Contract Award: CDW Government LLC: Computer Hardware & Supplies 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.

CDW Government LLC, 230 N. Milwaukee Ave, Vernon Hills, IL for the period of January 24, 2025 to January 23, 2026 in the amount of \$60,000.00.

**#24-269 Recommendation: Contract Award: Center for Leadership & Educational Equity: 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.

Center for Leadership & Educational Equity, 40 ½ Rice Street, Providence, RI for the period of November 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$26,773.00

**#24-271 Recommendation: Contract Award: Keylingo Translations: Translation Services 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.

Keylingo Translations, 99 Derby Street, Suite 200, Hingham, MA for the period of December 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025 in the amount of \$65,000.00.

**#24-273 Recommendation: Contract Award: DJT Transportation: Student Transportation 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.

DJT Transportation, 121 Hazelton Street, Mattapan, MA for the period of November 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$97,905.00.

**#24-274 Recommendation: Contract Award: NCS Pearson, Inc.: Assessment Materials & Software 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.

NCS Pearson, Inc., PO Box 599700, San Antonio, TX for the period of November 1, 2024 and August 31, 2025 in the amount of \$37,952.87.

**#24-275 Recommendation: Contract Award: Perkins School for the Blind: Special Education Services 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.

Perkins School for the Blind, 175 North Beacon Street, Watertown, MA for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$33,000.00.

**#24-277 Recommendation: Gifts /Miscellaneous Receipts be adopted as follows:** that the School Committee accept and approve the following donations as described:

DONATION - \$1,000 unrestricted donation from the EOS Foundation to Fletcher Maynard Academy. This is a "Healthy Start Award" recognizing the school and food services staff for their efforts to reach and maintain 80% or higher school breakfast participation.

DONATION - \$5,000 donation from the Estate of Kevin B. Higgins (Class of 1959) to the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School. Funds are intended to support student needs.

IN-KIND - American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) in Cambridge will partner with Cambridge Rindge and Latin School during the 2024-25 school year through its Lavine Learning Lab. Cohorts of students and teachers will participate in a deep exploration of the humanities through in-school workshops, attending A.R.T. performances, and professional learning inspired by A.R.T.'s productions and related programs. In addition to accepting this in-kind donation of programs and services, the school committee is asked to approve that the A.R.T. be able to use the Cambridge Public Schools' name publicly in connection with the Learning Lab Program.

IN-KIND — A community member donated photography equipment including four lights, three soft boxes, and several remote triggers and light modifiers for use by the CRLS photography classes.

## 8. Non-Consent Agenda

**#24-270 Recommendation: Contract Award: Epoch Healthcare LLC: Special Education Transportation Services 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.

Epoch Healthcare, LLC, 1 Central Street, Suite 113, Norwood, MA for the period of November 5, 2024 to August 31, 2025 in the amount of \$57,240.00.

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Member Rojas, **#24-270** was adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, PRESENT, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-272 Recommendation: Contract Award: Minuteman Regional High 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.

Minuteman Regional School 758 Marrett Road, Lexington, MA for the period of September 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$54,582.34.

A brief discussion followed **#24-272**.

Interim Superintendent shared that students attending Minuteman were enrolled in the cosmetology program.

On a motion by Member Rachel seconded by Member Weinstein, **#24-272** was adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-276 Recommendation: Contract Award: Public Consulting: Medicaid Reimbursement Claiming Services 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.

Public Consulting Group, 148 State Street, Floor 10, Boston, MA for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$97,000.00.

A brief discussion followed **#24-276**.

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Member Rojas, **#24-276** was adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-278 Recommendation: Grant Award: FY25 Early College Support Grant (SC25831) be adopted as follows:** that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY25 Early College Support Grant (SC25831) State in the amount of \$75,000.00 for the period of September 13, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

A brief discussion followed **#24-278**.

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Vice Chair Hunter **#24-278** was adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-279 Recommendation: Grant Award: FY25 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (SC25605) be adopted as follows:** that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY25 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (SC25605) Federal through State in the amount of \$2,922,628.00 for the period of August 29, 2024 to September 30, 2026.

A brief discussion followed **#24-279**.

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Vice Chair Hunter **#24-279** was adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-280 Recommendation: Grant Award: FY25 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Early Childhood (SC25607) be adopted as follows:** that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY25 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Early Childhood (SC25607) Federal through State in the amount of \$64,111.00 for the period of August 29, 2024 to September 30, 2026.

A brief discussion followed **#24-280**.

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Vice Chair Hunter **#24-280** was adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-288 Recommendation: Approval of the FY2026 Draft School Committee Budget Process/Meeting Calendar be adopted as follows:** that the School Committee Approve the FY2026 Draft School Committee Budget Process/Meeting Calendar.

A brief discussion followed **#24-288**.

Chief Financial Officer Washington gave a brief overview of the draft calendar noting the process for community involvement would be scheduled earlier than last year. The Committee agreed about the importance of expanding the venues for community involvement, including soliciting student feedback.

On a motion Vice Chair seconded by Member Rojas on the following roll call vote, **#24-288** was approved on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

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

- #24-281** October 22, 2024, Governance Subcommittee Report
- #24-282** October 23, 2024, Curriculum and Achievement Subcommittee Report
- #24-283** October 30, 2024, Communications and Community Relations Subcommittee Report

On a motion by Member Rachel seconded by Member Weinstein the following roll call vote, the subcommittee reports were accepted as presented: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-284** Dr. Carolyn L. Turk Auditorium – Member Rachel, Mayor Simmons, and Vice Chair Hunter

WHEREAS: Dr. Carolyn L. Turk retired from the Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) after 46 years of service in 2023; and

WHEREAS: Dr. Carolyn L. Turk is a lifelong Cantabrigian who was educated in the Cambridge Public Schools, attended the Russell Elementary School and then the Tobin, graduated in 1973 from Cambridge High and Latin School, before proceeding to institutions of higher education; and

WHEREAS: Dr. Carolyn L. Turk began her career with Cambridge Public Schools as an Extended Term Substitute, became a full-time teacher at the Tobin, served as Acting Assistant Principal at the Tobin in 1991, Assistant Principal at the Tobin in 1992; Acting Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction in 1998, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction in 1999, and finally, the Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning in 2002, a role in which she served tremendously for twenty-one years; and

WHEREAS: The 2022-23 [School Committee recognized Dr. Turk's contributions](#) to the students, educators, and families of Cambridge Public Schools and expressed intent to name a physical space in her honor; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the auditorium of the new Tobin Montessori and Darby Vassal schools will be named the Dr. Carolyn L. Turk Auditorium and will be adorned with appropriate signage.

A brief discussion followed **#24-284**.

Committee members and the Interim Superintendent shared their appreciation for Dr. Turk noting her impact on the district and its scholars. All recognized her as a role model and mentor to many educators and CPSD staff.



On a motion by Member Weinstein seconded by Member Hudson the following roll call vote, **#24-284** was adopted: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-285** Public Comment Time Limit – Mayor Simmons and Vice Chair Hunter

WHEREAS: The School Committee recognizes the importance of fairness and equality in its rules and practices, particularly regarding public comment procedures; and

WHEREAS: The School Committee Governance Subcommittee has determined that establishing a consistent time limit for all speakers in public comment would support equitable participation across all individuals; and

WHEREAS: A standard time limit of three (3) minutes for public comment was discussed and recommended by the School Committee Governance Subcommittee, ensuring that no individuals receive preferential time allowances; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee formally adopts a standard time limit of three (3) minutes for all individuals participating in public comment; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the School Committee Rules be amended to reflect this three-minute time limit standard, specifying that these rules shall apply uniformly to all individuals to ensure equal opportunity for community members to share their perspectives in public meetings.

A brief discussion followed **#24-285**.

**Mayor Simmons** shared highlights from the Governance Subcommittee meeting that addressed this issue. **Member Weinstein** shared that he believed that allowing the CEA six-minutes was appropriate given the constituents that it represents. **Member Rojas** asked for additional details that were outlined in the Governance Subcommittee report. **Member Rojas** exercised his charter rights and tabled the motion.

**#24-286** Bus Tracking – Member Harding

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public Schools aims to provide safe, reliable, and transparent transportation for all students, including those attending out-of-district placements; and

WHEREAS: Families and caregivers deserve peace of mind regarding the safety and location of their students during transportation to and from out-of-district placements; and

WHEREAS: There is a current lack of student tracking capability that limits the ability for families and caregivers to monitor the location of students who attend schools out-of-district; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee directs the administration to explore and evaluate the feasibility of implementing tracking solutions such as Apple AirTags or comparable technology to provide families and caregivers of out-of-district students with real-time access to their students' location while in transit; and be it further

RESOLVED: That this exploration should consider:

1. The cost, effectiveness, and limitations of Apple AirTags or similar devices.
2. Privacy and safety concerns for students and families.
3. Options for device management, data security, and adherence to relevant district policies and regulations.
4. Communication and support plans for families opting to use this service.

A brief discussion followed **#24-286**.

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Mayor Simmons the following roll call vote, **#24-286** was adopted: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

At 10:00 p.m., on a motion by Member Harding seconded by Mayor Simmons the meeting was extended to 10:20 p.m. on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

**#24-287** High School Graduation Requirements – Member Rojas, Member Hudson and Member Weinstein

WHEREAS: Passing the MCAS will stop being a state-mandated graduation requirement starting with the class of 2025, unless action is taken by the legislature; and

WHEREAS: Now districts will need to certify that students have mastered the skills, competencies and knowledge of the state standards; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) awaits guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on how to handle this change; and

WHEREAS: Former high school students who did not pass the MCAS tests but met all other graduation requirements may be eligible re-enroll to receive a high school diploma; and

WHEREAS: The District's mission is that CPS delivers an excellent education that inspires, acknowledges, empowers, and supports every student on their personal journey to achieve their highest potential in and beyond school and as productive members of their communities; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee and the CPS Administration will undertake a review of high school graduation requirements to establish any potential new requirements and to revise existing ones that might be needed to ensure the district is meeting its mission and vision for all of our graduates, in addition to certifying that students have mastered the skills, competencies and knowledge of the state standards; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Superintendent will present a plan for this review by or before February 24, 2025.

A brief discussion followed **#24-287**.

On a motion by Member Rojas, seconded by Vice Chair Hunter the following roll call vote, **#24-287** was adopted: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, NAY; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

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

**11. Announcements:**

**Member Weinstein**

- Highlighted the CRLS musical, the Drowsy Chaperone

**Vice Chair Hunter:**

- Highlight of her trip to Montgomery, Alabama with educators
- City's Veterans' Celebration
- My Brother's Keeper Lift Program on Thursday, November 21
- Notable sessions from the MASC Conference

**Mayor Simmons**

- Announced the official launch of the superintendent search and underscored her intention of an upcoming public meeting of the School Committee, tentatively planned for December 10 with public comment.

At 10:20 p.m., the meeting was extended to 10:25 p.m. on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA.

## 12. Late Orders:

Resolution Reaffirming the Values of CPS and Cementing its Status as a Welcoming District for all Students, Staff and Families – Member Rachel, Member Rojas and Mayor Simmons

WHEREAS: [Cambridge has been a Sanctuary City](#) since 1985, and we have reaffirmed our commitment to remain so as recently as 2016; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee wholeheartedly embraces its commitment to creating and maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for all Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) students, staff, and families; and

WHEREAS: CPS policies including but not limited to [JB - EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES](#), [GBA - EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY](#), [IB - ACADEMIC FREEDOM](#), [JICFA-E-1 - NON-TOLERANCE OF HATE CRIMES](#), [JKD - FREEDOM OF RELIGION](#) express the Committee and district's commitment to prohibit unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation on the basis of sexual orientation, gender or sex, gender identity, race or ethnicity, ethnic group identification, ancestry, nationality, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability, age, immigration status, marital status, registered domestic partner status, genetic information, political belief or affiliation, military status, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in the educational programs or activities the district operates; and

WHEREAS: All CPS staff and students are entitled to their First Amendment right to free speech, but harassment, discrimination, and bias-based harm have no place in CPS school communities and will not be tolerated; and

WHEREAS: Students deserve a safe and supportive space to learn, reflect, and develop critical thinking skills. CPS encourages educator engagement with students to discuss difficult, controversial, or emotionally charged topics in a safe and productive manner. In doing so, CPS provides guidance and resources for supporting, managing, and reflecting on student civil discourse, civic learning, and civic engagement. This includes recognizing the factors that have shaped perspectives, including life experience, family, culture, and identity. The purpose is to provide space where young people generate questions, explore their curiosities, strengthen their civic skills, and analyze aspects of our society and government; and

WHEREAS: CPS' students, staff and their families originate from many different countries, and may have received temporary legal status under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), may be undocumented, and/or may live in mixed status households; and

WHEREAS: CPS reflects the diverse population of the world, which the district celebrates in many ways through students' daily experiences; and

WHEREAS: CPS is committed to ensuring students have access to a high-quality, well-rounded, rigorous, and joyful education. To achieve this, CPS continuously works to ensure that students see themselves reflected in the curriculum by incorporating LGBTQIA+, disabled, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other historical figures into its lessons; now therefore be it

RESOLVED THAT:

1. CPS will work alongside its partners and immigration advocates to [provide training and support for students, staff and their families on immigrant rights](#), understanding various legal statuses, and the overall health and well-being of those affected.
2. CPS will provide multi-language resources for its students, staff, and their families in partnership with the City on legal assistance, immigrant rights, mental health care, and public safety.
3. CPS will include in any legislative agenda advocacy at the state and federal levels for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, Temporary Protective Status, and Refugee Settlement Programs, as well as oppose any
4. CPS schools will always welcome all students, staff and their families regardless of legal status.
5. CPS will not provide assistance to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in the enforcement of federal civil immigration law. Therefore, ICE will not be permitted access to CPS facilities or personnel except in the rare instances in which CPS is provided with a criminal warrant.
6. CPS will continue to honor changes in names and/or pronouns that students and families have requested, and will welcome individuals to use facilities that match their gender identities.
7. CPS will continue to teach about sexual and reproductive health, consistent with policies including [IHAM-1 - PARENT/GUARDIAN/CAREGIVER NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION](#)
8. The Mayor, Superintendent, and School Committee Members will publicly defend these values as circumstances warrant.

A brief discussion followed the **Late Order**.

The Committee noted the importance of continuing a more detailed discussion on the topic. **Member Rachel** exercised her charter right and the Late Order was tabled.

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

**Email communications:**

- o Jill Linnell
- o Dan Monahan
- o Sushama Scalera
- o James Wildash

On a motion by Vice Chair Hunter seconded by Member Harding on the following roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned: Member Harding, YEA, Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, ABSENT; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA. (10:25 p.m.)

Attest:



Katherine Christo

Executive Secretary to the School Committee