



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

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

May 21, 2019

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: Ms. Bowman (ABSENT), Ms. Dexter, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Kelly, Mr. Kimbrough
(~~ABSENT~~), Ms. Nolan, Mayor McGovern

Also Present: Mr. Grassi, Mr. Escallon, Student School Committee Representatives

Mayor McGovern 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 announced that Ms. Bowman is sick and will not be in attendance tonight and that Mr. Kimbrough will be joining the meeting late.

1. Public Comment:

The following individuals were heard:

- Mercedes Soto, Harvard Street, parent of G&P parent, in support of dyslexia screening, **#19-109**, she has met with the Mayor & Superintendent regarding the fact that not enough has been done to support the students and families with dyslexia. She does not want the program cut that supplies the intervention needed.
- Carolyn Callender, Griswold Street, in support of co-teaching, **#19-107**, She has seen the best and the worst of co-teaching. There are social/emotional gains for students when they are in a co-teaching environment.
- Nadine Gaab, Salem Street, in support of **#19-109**, dyslexia screening, she is an expert on this topic and she wants a plan put in place regarding who, what, when, and where the screening will happen. Medford has put a Dyslexia Task Force in place. Cambridge has done nothing on dyslexia screening, CPS relies on a deficit model. Cambridge is under-identifying children with a language based disability.
- Jen Richards, Aberdeen Court in support of **#19-107**, co-teaching, giving our educators what they need.
- Dan Monahan, Lexington Ave., CEA President, spoke on **#19-107**, he supports this motion and encourages all to ask questions and **#19-108** co-teaching is a powerful tool for supporting students with large needs.
- Christina Presley, FMA educator, support of **#19-107**, co-teaching, hoping it can be in some if not all schools.
- Caitlin O'Donnell, Goldstar Road, educator, in support of both **#19-107** and **#19-108**, primarily for **#19-107** against the advice of some coworkers. She believes that co-teaching implemented properly will make a big difference with the students. It will be less fragmented, more constant and welcoming environment. All teachers and principals are not for it, but

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to close public comment.

2. Student School Committee Report:

Mr. Kimbrough joined the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

There was a presentation of clocks made by Ben Attles and Seth Brewster, two students in our prestigious RSTA Carpentry Department for the two Student School Committee Representatives. Mayor McGovern thanked Anthony Grassi and Antonio Escallon for their service and expressed appreciation for their input, passion, and activism during their time as student Members.

Mr. Kimbrough informed the student members that they come from a long line of important people that once sat in the same seats they are getting ready to vacate as they move on to college. Their voices have been very valuable and appreciated. He indicated that when they both speak up for their colleagues, it makes it easier for the Committee of the Whole to do their work. On a more serious note, Mr. Kimbrough asked the two student members about the walkout in support of sexual abuse last Friday.

Mr. Escallon reported that in the beginning there was a threat from the administration of not being allowed to attend the prom if they participated in the walkout, which discouraged some students. He went anyway and it was sad to see the amount of girls and boys that have gone through instances of sexual violence, he was very surprised at the normalness and the amount of this abuse. One of the organizers stated that they didn't want to speak the names of the ones that committed the act, it was not about them, it was about the victims being able to release a burden. He thought the administration could have been more friendly with the students in their desires to attend the walk out.

Committee Member Dexter thanked them stating she appreciates their enthusiasm and energy.

Ms. Nolan stated that she learns lessons constantly on the importance of student voice. She invited them both to come back and share their college experiences with the high school students.

Mr. Fantini spoke about how well Mr. Grassi has handled himself from grammar school through grade twelve. He admires Mr. Escallon's wit and sharpness, and suggested there be a student Member for each elected Member.

Vice Chair Kelly commented that she appreciates the empathy for their fellow students. They have taken on a number of difficult issues, it was not an easy year for School Committee and they did not shy away from uncomfortable topics.

Mayor McGovern stated that everything has been said, he would be very proud to have see them both back in elected office. He thanked them for all they did.

Mr. Grassi thanked everyone for the kind words. He was very humble and stated it has been a real pleasure.

Mr. Escallon stated he learned how to sit for long periods of time; it will come in very useful in the lecture halls. He is grateful to have had the experience.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms Nolan, it was voted to accept the following Minutes as presented:

- Regular Meeting May 7, 2019

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports: Passed Over

C19-064 That the following be amended and referred to the Superintendent:

Whereas the School Committee worked to raise the level of instruction for all students through the Level Up initiative at CRLS; and
Whereas a recent Globe project on valedictorians documented a sobering and critically important question of whether high schools are preparing students for success; and
Whereas the recent report The Opportunity Myth by The New Teachers Project found that despite 71% of students in a national representative sample of audited classes met classroom expectations and succeeded on assignments, only 17% of those assignments were on grade level when evaluated; and
Whereas both the Valedictorian Project and The New Teachers Project identified the need for high expectations and intentional focus on rigorous curriculum, instruction and assignments as key to delivering on the promise of success in college and life; and
Whereas there were gaps by racial subgroups in performance on common assessment; and
Whereas nearly 1 in 3 CRLS students indicated that teachers do not have very high expectations of them;
Therefore, the School Committee directs the Administration to evaluate the Level Up ELA classes, to ensure that the initiative is as successful as possible. The School Committee requests the Superintendent submits a report no later than the August 6, 2019 Regular Summer Meeting.

7. Superintendent's Agenda:

7a. Presentations:

District Plan Framework Strategic Initiative 4:4

Dr. Salim presented an update of the district plan on partnerships. He introduced Ms. Nancy Tauber and Ms. Ellen Semenov. He walked the Members through the PowerPoint presentation (on file in the School Committee office). He explained the Agenda beginning with Family Policy, the Cradle to Career journey, Math Matters for Equity and Policy Council partnerships.

Ms. Tauber, Executive Director of the Family Policy Council, explained what the Family Policy Council does and who some of the members are. She walked the Members through the slides, explaining them along the way. She is extremely happy about the funding for MBTA passes. She spoke on some of the accomplishments, which includes creating Find it Cambridge.

Ms. Semenov picked up with taking what looks like spaghetti when listing a line of about 850 program services that bend in all directions and turning it into a map. Find it Cambridge turns that tangled line into a Cradle to Career (C2C) (education) Pipeline (C2C) that is insulated with health, safety, housing and employment support for families, peers and community. She explained some of the C2C models which brought the assembly to the slide on Local Children's Cabinet Network Summit.

Dr. Salim is very happy to have this strong collaboration and partnership that interacts with our youth.

The presenters spoke on math, financial literacy, and the Algebra Project.

The floor was opened for questions.

Ms. Nolan is thrilled with this presentation. She wants to make sure we help people who think they are not good at math realize that they are good at math. She shared what happened to her related to math during her high school and college years and what happens to a student when they are told they are not good enough.

Vice Chair Kelly agrees that math is a critical subject, and shared that she was not known for her expertise in the language of math. It is wonderful to hear about this, it has been a long time since she has sat in on a Family Policy meeting.

Committee Member Dexter asked to have the notes from their meetings provided to the Members.

Mayor McGovern admitted he is terrified of math and is thankful to his Educational Liaison, Liz Liss, for her ideas and encouragement.

Mr. Grassi gave a shout out to them for the work they are doing. He stated that math is one of the most inequitable subjects in CRLS.

Ms. Nolan asked what is the thinking that will include the families that do not speak English as a first language. It was answered that the members that are part of the planning process have found that math is easy to communicate regardless of ethnic language barriers.

The presentation and questions concluded.

7b. CPS District Plan:

7c. Consent Agenda:

Ms Nolan moved, seconded by Vice Chair Kelly, to bring the Superintendent's Consent Agenda forward for discussion and adoption.

Mr. Kimbrough removed **#19-101**. Ms. Nolan removed **#19-102**.

On the following roll call, items. **#19-100**, **#19-103**, **#19-104** and **#19-105** were adopted: Mr. Kimbrough YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman ABSENT; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor McGovern YEA.

#19-100, Special Needs Contracts for Day and Residential Program Services not Available from the Cambridge School Department, that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions as detailed in the list in amounts not to exceed the shown rates, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget and/or Grant Fund Budget.

#19-103, Gifts/Miscellaneous Receipts, that the School Committee accept approval of a trombone, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve an in-kind donation of a trombone for the Visual & Performing Arts Department.

#19-104, Grant Award, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

Gene Hass Foundation-RSTA Manufacturing Program (SC19145) in the amount of \$5,000.00 for the period April 3, 2019 to June 30, 2019.

Description: This grant will be used to provide scholarships for graduates of RSTA's Manufacturing Program entering post-secondary study in machining-based engineering fields (\$2,500) and also to support student participation in the Robotics competitions (\$2,500).

#19-105, Grant Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

Mental & Behavioral Health (SC20830) in the amount of \$100,000.00 for the period July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020.

Description: This grant will be used to support a 1.0 FTE district K-5 Social Worker who will build relationships across the community network of providers and work with school staff to improve their ability to identify and support students experiencing behavior and mental health challenges. The Social Worker will assist with identifying resources and coordinating with outside service providers. Stipends and Subs are included to support time at the K-5 schools for staff to meet to collaborate on this coordination of services.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#19-101, Contract Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Professional Development, funds to be provided from the General Fund, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Disruptive Equity Education Project, 555 Canal Street, Manchester, NH for the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, in the amount of \$30,000.00.

Discussion followed on **#19-101**.

Mr. Kimbrough asked the Superintendent how many hours will be spent on this contract with DEEP and whether or not there are enough extra hours being considered for this amount of money.

Dr. Salim explained that they will work in specific schools, the leadership team will plan schedules around Dr. Amante and the schools. There is no specific number of hours because there are different levels of work.

Dr. Adams was able to provide the totality of services with DEEP. The work varies and they have added services from other organizations to help support it.

Mr. Kimbrough mentioned that he calculated the rate with the amount of money to come out to about 12 days. This was confirmed by Dr. Adams.

Mr. Kimbrough asked if we can do more. It was explained that this is not for the upcoming year, just to the end of the school year.

Mr. Fantini asked if it is required to bid on this service. Dr. Salim answered that it is a sole source contract as part of professional development.

Mayor McGovern and Vice Chair Kelly feel that she does a job that is very reasonable and worth keeping her.

On the following roll call vote, **#19-101** was adopted: Mr. Kimbrough YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman ABSENT; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor McGovern YEA.

#19-102, Contract Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Assessment Software, funds to be provided from the General Fund, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

FastBridge Learning, 150 South Fifth Street, Minneapolis, MN, for the period, July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, in the amount of \$31,632.30.

Discussion followed on **#19-102**.

Ms. Nolan asked if this was an unbounded assessment with no floor or ceiling.

Dr. Adams explained that these assessments are universal screeners that try to determine which students are at risk for literacy and math to be identified for additional supports. It is not to be used with the adaptive term.

Ms. Nolan would like to look at adaptive testing instead of relying on parents to identify the need for support and asked if these are incorporated into ASPEN for easy access for families and staff.

Dr. Adams stated we have good systems that will be on the School City platform, at which time you will be able to see the whole picture of a child.

Ms. Nolan also questioned why we cannot look at adaptive testing instead of these.

Dr. Salim stated that this is part of a larger question that will be addressed in another presentation. To his knowledge there is no single adaptive tool that can answer her questions. They are looking for a way to strike that balance, they want to leverage the ideas on adaptive approaches adding this is for next year.

Ms. Nolan asked if she calendared it, is there any reason they cannot look for something better. She is hoping to obtain a better product that does this and is unbounded.

Mayor McGovern asked if they looked for a better tool or did they just Google it and pick the first one.

Dr. Adams stated that this is not a new tool; they have been using it for about three years. The price went up when we added the Upper Schools which is why it is before the Committee of the Whole now.

Ms. Nolan wants an adaptive tool. She is hoping there is a better one.

Ms. Dexter stated that we also use the benchmark assessment which is an adaptive test.

On the following roll call vote, **#19-102** was adopted: Mr. Kimbrough YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman ABSENT; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor McGovern YEA.

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

Mr. Kimbrough moved, seconded by Vice Chair Kelly, to bring forward all items for discussion and adoption.

Ms. Dexter removed **#19-106** through **#19-109**.

On a voice vote, Sub-Committee Reports **#19-110** and **#19-111** were accepted as presented.

#19-106, that the School Committee review and approve the draft process for the Superintendent's evaluation for 2019, per attached document.

DRAFT

2019 EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT
CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Proposed process/timeline The proposed steps and timeline below is presented as a draft for discussion and approval by the School Committee.

Step	Process/comment	Dates
Evaluation Instrument	Ad hoc committee on evaluation meets and drafts an instrument for review by School Committee and superintendent, based on prior evaluation tool. School Committee receives draft instrument, input sought for finalization and approval	June 2019
Process	Each member gathers information for the purpose of evaluating the superintendent's performance. Gathers input from all sources they deem relevant. Supt. completes self-evaluation School Committee individual members complete evaluation forms which are given to co-chairs of goals and evaluation Task force.	Ongoing To SC by July 15 By summer meeting

	Evaluation forms collated and combined evaluation written.	By mid-August
Public hearing	Massachusetts ruling on conducting evaluations includes a public hearing component.	Summer 2019
School Committee deliberation	Following public hearing, the School Committee convenes in open session followed by executive session for the purposes of conducting the supt. evaluation.	Per above, date TBD -by end of summer or early September 2019

Discussion followed on **#19 -106**.

Ms. Nolan stated that Vice Chair Kelly, Mr. Fantini and Ms. Nolan are triple co-chair Members of the Evaluation Ad Hoc Sub-Committee and that they met with Dr. Salim a few weeks ago, adding they wanted to make sure the Members know the timeframe of the process in order to move forward in an appropriate manner.

Vice Chair Kelly suggested that one of the Chairs be the person that compiles all of the individual evaluations into one comprehensive evaluation.

Mr. Fantini commented that the evaluation of the Superintendent is very important, we need to set the tone.

On a voice vote, **#19-106** was adopted.

#19-107 Motion by Committee Member Dexter, that whereas Cambridge Public Schools strives for all students to attain grade level skills or higher, and
 Whereas some Cambridge Public Schools have implemented co-teaching and had positive results, including at the elementary, middle, and high school level, and
 Whereas recommendations from the Elementary Program Review included implementing co-teaching, That CPS will have a televised Roundtable on co-teaching, to be held before December 20, 2019, with an agenda to be determined by the Curriculum and Achievement Sub-Committee. One or more CPS educators will participate in the discussion.

Discussion followed on **#19-107**.

Ms. Dexter stated that the eloquence from tonight's public comment covers everything. She asks that the Curriculum and Achievement Chair put an Agenda together.

Mr. Kimbrough spoke as Chair of Curriculum and Achievement, stating he fully supports this motion.

Mayor McGovern asked about the 2nd whereas, he wants to know if Committee Member Dexter wants the other options included or just the one spelled out in her motion. There is family model and grade level lead teacher model to be considered.

It was offered to amend to include Dr. Salim and Dr. Morgan in the determination of the Agenda.

Committee Member Dexter spoke on co-teaching. She wants the Curriculum & Achievement to have the control of forming the Agenda.

Mayor McGovern reiterated on including Dr. Salim or his designee.

Mr. Fantini asked what the Elementary Program Review concluded on co-teaching.

Dr. Salim refreshed Mr. Fantini's memory on what was decided. On a voice vote, on the amendment, **and Dr. Salim or his designee**, item **#19-107** was adopted. On the main motion as amended, item **#19-107** was adopted as amended.

#19-107, Motion by Committee Member Dexter, that whereas Cambridge Public Schools strives for all students to attain grade level skills or higher, and
Whereas some Cambridge Public Schools have implemented co-teaching and had positive results, including at the elementary, middle, and high school level, and
Whereas recommendations from the Elementary Program Review included implementing co-teaching, That CPS will have a televised Roundtable on co-teaching, to be held before December 20, 2019, with an agenda to be determined by the Curriculum and Achievement Sub-Committee **and Dr. Salim or his designee**. One or more CPS educators will participate in the discussion.

#19-108, Joint Motion by Mayor McGovern, Vice Chair Kelly and Mr. Fantini, whereas the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) recently acknowledged that a racially insensitive question appeared on the 2019 10th grade English Language Arts MCAS exam that called for students to take on the perspective of a racist character after reading passage in Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*; and
Whereas this highlights the need for inquiry into MCAS test questions creation, review, and approval process as well as the developmental and cultural appropriateness of the MCAS as an effective and unbiased assessment measure; now therefore be it
Resolved that the Cambridge School Committee invites representation from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to join them in a Roundtable discussion on the MCAS test including, but not limited to, question creation and approval process, the developmental appropriateness of tests, and the training of the sensitivity and bias committee, as well as additional action steps DESE is taking to safeguard against future errors of racism and bias, and, be it further
Resolved, that with the goals of Engagement, Equity and Access in mind, the School Committee direct Administration to include assessment information on the CPS website including a basic overview of Statewide Standardized Tests requirements with a link to DESE that provides DESE's policies and positions.

Discussion followed on **#19-108**.

Ms. Nolan wonders if they will send a representative or come themselves. It was answered that they do not know, however, it will be coming back to us and the information will come to light at that time. On a voice vote **#19-108** was adopted.

#19-109, Joint Motion by Vice-Chair Kelly, and Mr. Fantini, Due to legislation passed by the State Legislature that requests early screenings of students to identify if they have dyslexia,
That the Superintendent take appropriate steps to ensure that students are screened and that students who are identified receive appropriate and timely supports.

Discussion followed on **#19-109**.

Vice Chair Kelly motioned, seconded by Mr. Fantini, to amend her motion, **and that training and support for teachers is in place. Superintendent will report back on how the district will comply with the present law**. On a voice vote the amendment was adopted. On a voice vote on the main motion as amended, **item #19-109** was adopted as amended.

#19-109, Joint Motion by vice-Chair Kelly and Mr. Fantini, Due to legislation passed by the State Legislature that requests early screenings of students to identify if they have dyslexia,
That the Superintendent take appropriate steps to ensure that students are screened and that students who are identified receive appropriate and timely support **and that training and support for teachers is in place. Superintendent will report back on how the district will comply with the present law**.

#19-110, that the Report of the April 24, 2019 Special Education and Student Supports Sub-Committee be accepted as presented:

**Special Education and Student Supports Sub-Committee
April 24, 2019**

Called for the purpose of discussing the student and parent experience of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process and meetings.

Members Present Ms. Kelly, Chair; Ms. Dexter, Mr. Kimbrough

Also Present: Dr. Morgan, Ms. Spera, Ms. Phillips, Ms. Grace

Ms. Kelly in the chair, a quorum of the Sub-Committee being present Ms. Kelly called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and read the call of the meeting then turned the meeting over the Dr. Morgan.

Dr. Morgan introduced the staff at the table and started the presentation (on file in the School Committee office). She announced there will be three strategic planning meetings on April 25th, May 18th and June 13th.

Dr. Morgan gave an Overview of the Special Education Laws regarding IEP's. The Purpose of the Individuals Disability Education Act (IDEA) is to insure that all students with disabilities have available to them a free, appropriate education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living. It gives parents a voice in the education of the child and protects their rights.

She spoke about the IEP Timeline which begins with a referral for the child to be evaluated. The child must be evaluated within 5 school days. A multi-disciplinary team does the assessment and has 30 days from when they receive the consent form to assess the student. Optional Assessments could be Health, Psychological, or Home Assessment.

Ms. Spera spoke about student's language processing especially if the student has limited English Proficiency. They work with the bilingual department and have 45 working days for the evaluation process. Next they convene a team, determine whether the student requires Special Education and provide the parent with a copy of the team summary meeting which happens at the conclusion of the IEP team meeting.

The Eligibility Determination has ten categories. If a child has a disability but is making progress in the general education setting, they aren't eligible for special education. If later they require accommodations, a 504 plan will be done for the child to get extra help. If a student is eligible they develop an IEP plan, send it to the parent who reviews it and accepts, partially accepts or rejects the plan. If a parent responds no, we will notify the parent that we will not act on it.

The IEP identifies a student's special education needs and describes the services a school district shall provide to meet those needs. The IEP development relies on the judgement of all the team members. All IEP's are different.

The IEP includes: Parent and/or Student Concerns, Student Strength, Vision Statement (for the next 1-5 years), Present Levels of Educational Performance (PLEP) (general curriculum and other educational needs), Current Performance Levels/Measurable Annual Goals, Service Delivery Grid, Non Participation Justification, Transportation Services, Participation in State/District Assessments, Accommodations for State/District Assessments, Additional Information, and a Placement Consent Form.

Ms. Phillips read more specific examples of the above sections of an IEP. A Measurable Annual Goal must be about skill building and not a subject area, must contain a target behavior, condition and criteria. The IEP is written to say what the staff is going to do and goals are written to reflect what the student will do; not what service is provided.

Ms. Spera spoke about examples of Non-Participation Justification which documents why a student might need to be removed during core subject areas, removed for all subjects or removed for significant and intense behavioral needs. It will state how a disability is justified and why those types of removal are made. It needs to be in the best interest of the individual student. We are required to do annual reviews of the IEP plan and three year re-evaluations, sometimes it is done sooner if requested by a parent or to intervene if students aren't progressing.

Ms. Phillips added we have been developing a guide for Special Educators because we are hiring many new staff members.

Dr. Morgan interjected that we are also providing on line video resources for our general education teachers so they can support the students.

Ms. Spera added that the state is looking at re-vamping the IEP which includes more interaction while writing an IEP so it is more controlled and focused on a student and they have more flexibility.

Ms. Grace commented that special education is not a one size fits all because children are individuals. She likes to have a picture of the child in their portfolio to bring it back to the individual. She reviewed necessary conditions for successful IEP development. She stated the members of the student's IEP team and what they need to do, including the general education teacher, the sending school district case manager, parent or guardian, student (at age 14 is required to attend meetings, or they can come when younger), the special education teacher, clinicians (PT, OT, BCBA, Speech Therapist, transition services agency representative, as appropriate) and the ELL provider (as needed).

Dr. Morgan added in the future we are going to be working with students to self-advocate in the Upper Schools.

The floor was opened to questions or concerns from the public.

Mr. Kimbrough asked are there universal interventions in place before a request for special education services is done? Dr. Morgan responded there are several assessments that can be given and kids that aren't working on grade level will be seen by an interventionist. There are several things students can do for 6-8 weeks and if a student is not making progress then a referral is made and the team will discuss. If there is a social emotional problem, there are screeners that can be done which is not as distinctive. The district is forming a STSS team to put systems in place so everyone is on the same page to support kids. The state is focused on STSS and training that looks at a tier system of support, and how we are giving strong tier levels. Ms. Phillips commented that she is on the Math think tank at the high school. The high school does not have interventionists but we do have a pilot where two Specialists that work on spelling and comprehensive strategies seminar.

Ms. Spera and Ms. Grace are on the instructional council and looking at how we choose curriculum and building in the universal design across the board with special education with learning styles in mind.

Ms. Rosenberg, Kennedy Longfellow Parent, stated the general education teacher referral form does not have enough space to write everything on it. Can they have access to an on-line form? Ms. Spera responded that they do have access to the form online because we wanted to make sure it was legible. We will send out a reminder so all teachers know they have access to it. Ms. Phillips receives these forms and has been reminding teachers and administrators that it is part of the child's official education file. Ms. Rosenberg stated some of her child's goals overlap. How is the focus driven? Ms. Spera explained the team decides what to focus on first so we can build a good foundation and move on from there. Ms. Grace added assistive technology may be needed for support. Ms. Phillips added at the secondary level we feel like we are running out of time and that drives how we prioritize what we are focusing on.

Ms. Soto was impressed that the child can self-advocate. As far as the system consistency, as an example, when a family requests an IEP meeting you have 30 days to meet, are you meeting the legal

requirement? Is it up to the parent to know their legal rights? Are you tracking referrals to the more sub-separate programs?

Dr. Morgan responded yes, we are tracking and monitoring the data every month. Individuals are observing the child in the classroom to see how he is progressing in that environment. No two schools are alike in this district. What a child experiences in one school looks vastly different at another school. We have done a lot of work with the Specialists and Principals. Ms. Spera added yes we do track when we get a request for a referral and get them done and out within the five days. We are always checking the timelines. We also have periodic reviews where the State comes in and randomly checks files with specific areas to verify that things are done within a certain time frame. We have a lot of staff and if we have a high level of referrals we can send another person to another school that needs help. Dr. Morgan added there is a lot of collaboration. Ms. Phillips added Coordinators get reports every other month about evaluations and every other week the Case Manager gets an updated list of IEP's that are coming up or are overdue. Ms. Spera noted we have one person in each building to keep track of the assessments and I meet with Psychologists and let them know if they need to get new forms signed.

Ms. Palmer, CSUS and Out of District Parent, asked about out of compliance reports that are received is that supposed to be passed along to the parent? Ms. Phillips answered it is not that it is supposed to be passed along but when I get the report I will contact them to be sure we are not delinquent in meeting those guidelines. Ms. Palmer's older child is out of district if he is not making progress do you pass that information to my case manager? His school reports in quarters and the third quarter progress report is the same he is not making progress. Do I go back to my case manager? Ms. Spera answered usually they send the data to us. You can ask to see the data and reconvene a meeting.

Ms. Soto asked should a parent request in the IEP that the team meet, for example, three times a year? Ms. Spera responded that she has seen that in IEP's and it is appropriate. You and the team can request a re-evaluation anytime.

Ms. Phillips assured you can refer requests to the Coordinator of the school based team if you are not seeing progress. If you don't get results you can contact us. We have a district student consultation meeting every month and if a student is struggling to make progress we may be able to get additional resources or out of the box ideas that teams can use.

Ms. Dobak SEPAC Co-Chair and Parent out of district, asked when the team meets what instructions are they given when making decisions that are out of the box, what is typical? Somebody will say we don't know if Cambridge does that. My understanding is that is not supposed to be the process. We are not hearing that the child doesn't need that, how do you respond? Ms. Spera replied she would tell them don't ever do that because it is your responsibility for whatever the discussion was. We try to meet with people early so that doesn't happen because that is not what the regulations say. Sometimes we need to take another look and bring a group of people with us that has more experience about what we are speaking about. They know that the team makes decisions and I cannot overrule their decision. They can ask for guidance and we give our best advice based on our experience. We have people that call and say we are looking at 3-4 private schools what do you think of them? I can respond because I have had interactions with many schools. Ms. Dobak asked are parents invited to the District consultation team meetings? Ms. Spera replied no. Ms. Dobak asked are they informed about them so they could go if they wanted to? Ms. Spera replied they have been. Dr. Morgan interjected we are required by law to have an administrator or designee on the IEP team that can authorize those decisions.

Ms. Palmer was specifically told to go back and ask Ms. Spera. There have been times when they are out of compliance and Ms. Grace was at the meeting and nobody on the team said anything.

Ms. Kelly responded there are a lot of regulations built into the law and when a student goes thru transitions and as a parent I felt pressure to make a decision about a transition plan post high school. Ms. Spera stated our high school has focused on making connections with agencies early and involving them early about transitions and to get the guardianship piece in place. Now we can use that with other students that are out of district through the liaisons.

Mr. Kimbrough left the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Ms. Soto asked what can we expect when transitioning from K-5 to middle school? Ms. Phillips replied we have added 5 to 6 and 8 to 9 projection meetings so we understand what is needed. We schedule mapping meetings so student's schedules are coordinated because students have multiple teachers. Students with disabilities get their first choice electives and classes aren't overloaded with students with disabilities. We build a bridge by giving portfolios. In sub-separate classrooms teachers visit the grade the student is coming from to observe what is going on in that class.

Ms. Dobak asked is there a certified language specialist translator? Ms. Spera stated that is on the DOE task force and Friday we will have a final recommendation around interpretation that will go to the legislators. It will include a proposal for a tiered level system which will include guidelines for a certified person and will be done with UMASS Amherst and DESE is going to develop some modules which will include confidentiality training.

Ms. Palmer feels that the school has not been able to collect accurate data regarding behavior because my child has not had a neuro psych evaluation. We are in the process of looking for another placement, my concern is what is the school telling the other schools where my child may possibly end up at? Ms. Phillips responded parents can see what paperwork is sent in the packet to the receiving school and can tell them not to include certain paperwork. Ms. Spera added usually we send the most recent IEP and you can say I don't want to include, for example, the psych evaluation. Ms. Palmer exclaimed I did not know I could ask to see what's in the packet. Ms. Phillips explained if we receive only certain papers we can call the school and they tell us that's all the information we have permission to send.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Dexter seconded by Ms. Kelly at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Gist
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee

Documents on file in the School Committee Office
Special Education IEP Presentation

#19-111, That the Report of the May 8, 2019 Attendance Violation Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee be accepted as presented.

**Attendance Violation Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee
May 8, 2019**

Members Present: Ms. Dexter, Chair; Ms. Kelly, Ms. Nolan

Also Present: Dr. Turk, Mr. Smith, Mr. Tynes, Mr. Prince, Ms. DeClemente, Ms. VanBlaricum, Ms. Espinosa, Mr. Souliotis, Ms. Cameron, Ms. UyHam, Mr. Monahan, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Liss

Called for the purpose of discussing the CRLS Attendance Violation Policy (AV Policy).
A quorum of the Ad-Hoc Committee being present Ms. Dexter called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM and read the call of the meeting.

Ms. Dexter turned the meeting over to Dr. Turk who gave a brief description of the ongoing work being done by the high school regarding the Attendance Violation Policy. We have been having this discussion and the work has evolved over time since beginning two years ago. She spoke about parameters, responsibility and the balance falls under supports and consequences depending on the situation.

People are not just looking at the numbers but know that behind every number is a student, family and being able to work with those families is always different.

Mr. Smith introduced the team that has been meeting weekly about the Attendance Policy. He began the Presentation (on file in the School Committee office) by reviewing the Agenda including; Framing, Response to the Motion and Data, Broader Context and Next Steps. He continued by reading Motion #19-51 by Ms. Dexter, Ms. Kelly, and Ms. Nolan.

Mr. Tynes explained the first slide showing data regarding the number of students absent and tardy for Semester 1 for SY2018-2019 which includes excused absences.

Ms. VanBlaricum added the 2nd slide includes the total number of students (209) who met AV Criteria (but have not been assigned an AV due to extenuating circumstances) at least once for Q1 and/or Q2 of SY18/19.

Mr. Prince commented that in Q1-42 students did a buy back and in Q2-71 students bought back after meeting AV criteria. They did not get the ten-point deduction.

Ms. DeClemente spoke about the next slide which includes the number of students whose grade was reduced because they received an AV in Q1:119 and Q2: 101.

Ms. UyHam mentioned that the Clerks participated in collecting the data.

Ms. Espinosa explained the updated procedures include creating a plan to support teachers, a data dashboard, and the High School Extension Program has developed personalized learning plans. We now communicate earlier in the day every day with families; reviewed comparable programs/districts; started to identify gaps in support, and held design sessions with freshmen.

Mr. Tynes continued the next slide shows the Chronic Absence Percentages to date in May 2019 was 23% and in 2018 it was 26%. The percentage was reduced, which is good news.

Mr. Prince spoke about a Multi-Tier Attendance Plan. He explained the Proposed Revision to Student Attendance/AV Policy which includes the Buy Back, enroll in student workshops and individual support plans. If a student does not successfully complete the support plan, they may receive a 10-point reduction.

Ms. DeClemente stressed the next slide is the "proposed" policy, the Learning Community will continue to work with and support students, students will enroll in workshops for time management, and work with the MBTA to increase frequency of transportation services and create incentives for all students to improve attendance.

Mr. Souliotis stated at the High School Extension Program we are working with Harvard regarding personalized learning. We started with all students having a support plan, which is a lot. We have 15 students that we are working 1:1 with.

Mr. Smith added we are calling it an Individual Support Plan (ISP) and the Deans work with students who we know have individual extenuating circumstances. We are trying to formalize the process with the ISP and will be working with the HSEP so they are as close as possible.

Dr. Turk commented the Student Attendance Policy is many pages long and this revision is part of the last section of the Attendance Policy now and it currently states that any student will receive a 10-point reduction so this is to bring to the forefront the supports and interventions that have been discussed during the year. The buy-back was a student generated option and the group has tried to balance what the students wanted and what the group wanted.

Ms. Dexter asked what are some examples of supports for ISP students.

Ms. VanBlaricum explained that one student was late in the morning because his Mom worked nights and he had to help his autistic brother and get him on the bus. Also he could not stay after school because he had to pick up his brother which was out of his hands so we work with the teachers to make alternative arrangements. Also homeless students that need to take busses from Boston and make connections. Mental health and anxiety are also examples and we are working with outside providers. How can the Community/City support students? Continue the buy back, student workshops, ISP, work with MBTA, Increase awareness and support, encourage students to improve attendance, and create incentives to improve attendance.

In closing: Mr. Smith stated we want to address chronic absences and tardiness because 65% of students are one or both. We have trained the staff to do one and done attendance recording, we worked with our clerks on recording procedures, we make automated phone calls twice a day, and communicate with families about how important attendance is, including for Seniors.

Dr. Turk interjected that the conversation among this group is very different than two years ago. At one of the last meetings it went like this, what about so and so has anyone checked on her or this is how my Learning Community handled it.

Ms. Kelly stated it is about building relationships so students know they will get support.

Mr. Smith acknowledged the contributions of Ms. UyHam for helping us think differently. Also Ms. Amigone and Ms. Kimono who have helped with analyzing the data. We need data bases that can integrate and communicate with each other.

Ms. Dexter opened the floor for questions.

Ms. Nolan thanked Ms. Dexter for pushing the policy makers to work on this. What do we know about why students are absent or tardy? The Aspen dashboard can be broken down so the teacher can write the reason why a student is absent.

Ms. UyHam added the data dashboard is very helpful but the Deans know the students. Ms. VanBlaricum added the 9th graders gave us insight as to why kids are cutting specific classes. They don't have time to finish lunch, length of class, 4 minutes in between classes, having more control of subjects and electives, feeling welcome, feeling heard, some kids just want to do a 5th year, and being part of the community. There is not a one size fits all. Some have undiagnosed or misdiagnosed mental health issues which is a big one, no support, identification, and skills.

Ms. Nolan followed up with what is the next step regarding mental health if they don't need outside placement, a wrap-around approach is needed.

Ms. UyHam replied that is why we are coming to you; additional support is needed. Alternative pathways to graduation is a design challenge. Cambridge can be so resourceful. What ideas do you guys have? Who else can help?

Ms. Kelly stated there are certain obstacles in terms of referring to health at the high school and the way a student feels about their ability and the right supports.

Ms. Espinosa a 14-year-old does not know they need help with mental health.

Ms. Dexter appreciates the work they have done; how have the teachers been involved?

Mr. Smith replied the 10-point reduction piece has concerned teachers and contributed to the climate of accountability. Teachers believe we are making a mistake to not have a certain level of accountability. Two years ago we gave out tardy slips and you could see these kids being accountable. Now we have some teachers at the door greeting the kids which is a great way to start the day. There are more kids

coming in between 8:05-8:15 than we had when we had the tardy line. They are less stressed because they don't have to wait in line. Staff members don't want to be the one to monitor the kids being late because the Deans should be doing that. We are not doing what we are supposed to if we aren't holding them accountable knowing they need to be at a certain place at a certain time. We are still applying the 10-point piece. It was automatic before now it is less automatic. We don't see lists of kids getting AV'd because we keep that private. It is lack of accountability.

Mr. Tynes added in the past when students were coming late and had to wait in the tardy line they may be annoyed because they had to wait but that was an opportunity for us to say hey what's going on? I like to be in front of the school, when I can, to greet the students to see who's out of character. It might not be diagnosed but you can diagnose right there if something is wrong.

Mr. Prince commented that the buy-back has been positive for building relationships because teachers are more willing to get involved. They check up on the kids to be sure they get things done.

Ms. Dexter asked has there been any conversations about passing time, or lunch time?

Wendy McAlliston a parent stated that the 9th graders want more choice. I know scheduling is a big issue, but why not make the elective first period? Ms. UyHam responded that one of the Deans has been doing pop up electives, would it be better if they were the last period of the day. All freshman cannot have electives for first period.

Mr. Smith stated we run courses all day and some students have electives during the first block. Breakfast is an important challenge for us. Next year the new Cambridge Street building will be open and will impact the bus transportation. We have spoken to the MBTA and requested flipping the #69 dedicated bus from the afternoon to the morning. There is only one electric bus for students #72 on Huron Ave. that runs at 7:30 and the kids will be here at 7:45 AM. It doesn't go to Harvard Square it stops on Felton Street. We can radio staff if it is going to be late. The #83 bus leaves from Broadway in the afternoon but does not come in the morning. It is helpful to teams. The #68 bus on Broadway is not helpful for our kids because it does not run enough times which creates more traffic on #69 bus. The City has created more bike stations and I requested as many around CRLS as we can get. We got stuck on helmets because blue bikes don't require them.

Mr. Fantini and Ms. Liss joined the meeting at 9:30 AM.

Ms. Nolan mentioned this year we are giving MTBA bus passes to low income student's which is included in the City's budget. Ms. Dexter will call the Mayor about busses #69 and #83. Ms. Liss added the City has spoken to the MBTA and this has been recommended by Jen Lawrence, the City Blue Bikes rep.

Mr. Monahan agrees with what has been said but the educators are all over the map on this. Accountability is not going to get our kids into the classrooms. You need to come to a common understanding if not people will implement it differently. The faculty need to see the benefits of it. The conversations need to be with the educators. Why? Engage students and push deeper and quantify that data with focus groups in a systematic way, explain in a clear way this is why and provide the solutions.

Ms. Dexter agrees with bringing the teachers into the conversations, are they happening? Ms. VanBlaricum answered we are constantly having these conversations. That is an informal ISP that are already in place and we have a Teacher Assistance Team (TAT) where we get together to diagnose what is going on with a kid.

Ms. UyHam stated this was an AV Presentation not a tiered support proposal but in the two links at the end of the presentation you can find information.

Ms. Dexter asked where is the 4-minute passing time? Mr. Smith responded we have a working group regarding scheduling time during the school day that is still in process. Ms. Dexter asked what role can we play with the City and what would that look like?

Ms. Kelly had to leave the meeting to go to work at 9:40 AM.

Mr. Smith responded MBTA and Blue Bikes Helmets, access points for social emotional problems we do have more social workers and counselors available but we have wait lists and we have increased services. Ms. Dexter asked is that because we don't have enough personnel? Ms. Espinosa responded yes. Ms. Dexter stated we can advocate for that in the budget. Mr. Smith added our community has a need to think about how does the city support city wide social emotional problems? May is mental health awareness month and last week we had assemblies for students.

Dr. Turk commented the city has been working with the community on mental health and wants to get everyone under one umbrella because more people are requesting more support not just in the schools, but across the city. Ms. UyHam added support organizations are listed in the link at the end of the Presentation.

Ms. Nolan asked what effect does the 10-point consequence have on our students that show up every day on time. When can we do this so we have it in place before the summer so we have one good policy next year not three which was the context of why this was brought up. I want to avoid that because the buy-back policy did not get out on time. We need another meeting of this Sub-Committee before I make a motion to the Committee of the Whole to accept this in addition to our existing policy.

Mr. Smith wants to present it to the staff but does not want to hold the process up and does not want to come to another Sub-Committee meeting. The 10-point reduction was student generated and the buyback are not changes to what already exists. We are still developing the Student Workshops. Ms. Nolan responded you can do your work with teachers and send changes to Dr. Turk who will meet with the Sub-Committee without you.

Ms. Dexter thinks a percentage reduction is more equitable than a 10-point reduction to buffer the lower achieving students. Ms. VanBlaricum stated in the beginning the policy was written as a percentage not 10 points and when we realized how it was written and we waited a full year to change it.

Ms. Nolan wants them to think about changing "if a student does not successfully complete **change the** to a support plan, **change** they **MAY** to **WILL** receive a 10-point reduction".

Ms. Dexter made a motion to accept this plan tentatively and that Dr. Turk will come back to us within a month so we can get this on the School Committee Agenda.

Mr. Monahan stated some staff will love it and some will hate it. Until you have deeper conversations so there is clarity around how this affects each Teacher's individual grading policy which could be double jeopardy.

Ms. Nolan asked Mr. Souliotis about his experience with the tardiness at the HSEP. Mr. Souliotis responded that most of our students are chronically absent. They struggle with trauma, social emotional issues, and being homeless. I have a small faculty that tries to support them before implementing a 10-point reduction to their grade. But I still have students that get an AV because they don't want to be there even though they have a support plan. I have had collaboration with the high school and think we can make some improvement with the chronically absent students.

Ms. UyHam is part of the CEA and teaches so there is some teacher voice included in this. I think broadening this with students and Teachers is really important.

Ms. Dexter wants to receive this data in a report at the end of every semester so we can keep track of it since you are already doing that. She asked Mr. Monahan to keep us informed from the Teacher perspective so we can keep this moving forward.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Nolan at 10:00 AM seconded by Ms. Dexter.

Respectfully submitted

Terry Gist
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee

Documents on File in the School Committee Office
CPS Attendance (AV) Update Presentation

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

Motion by Mayor McGovern, to express recognition to Jessie Wenning, CPS Kindergarten Staff Developer for her expertise and commitment to rigorous, joyful learning as well as authentic family engagement.

This Spring, under Jessie's guidance, Kindergarten students in several Cambridge schools began an "Our Cambridge" project. The students learned about construction and design, visiting with architects as well as talking about buildings in Cambridge where they go with their families, places that are important in their lives. Each class received a letter from Mayor Marc McGovern asking them for their ideas about how to make Cambridge a fairer and more interesting place for children and families.

The children brainstormed, discussed different proposals and each decided on a class project. They made plans and worked in teams on the capstone project – construction their ideas into a model using a variety of recycled materials and art media.

With Jessie's vision, support, and coordination amongst teachers, staff and the Mayor's Office the "Our Cambridge" construction models were on displayed this past week for the first time at City Hall. Hundreds of people came to visit, including multiple classroom trips and a student- family Open House at City Hall on Saturday. Congrats and thanks to Jessie for her work on the "Our Cambridge" project.

Motion by Mayor McGovern that the School Committee hereby goes on record in expressing its deep condolences to the family of of Elsa Wasserman for their loss; and that the Executive Secretary be and hereby is requested to forward a suitable letter of condolence to the family of Elsa Wasserman on behalf of the entire School Committee.

11. Announcements:

Tomorrow, May 22st is the Community Iftar event, the breaking of the fast, a multi cultural service at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall Sullivan Chamber

Monday May 27th is Memorial Day Parade

June 8th is the 30th 9-11 a.m. Annual Cambridge Pride Brunch and a celebration of Loving Day, at 1:00 p.m. recognizing the couple who legalized interracial marriage.

June 10th a Caribbean Culture event in the Mayor's Parlor, City Hall at 4:30 p.m.

12. Late Orders:

It was voted to adopt the following:

Motion by Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee, That the School Committee request an update on prior School Committee Orders related to building projects, C12-095 on space for hands-on programming including but not limited to Woodshop and Culinary Arts in the Upper Schools and C13-043 on appropriate athletic facilities available to all residents and high school teams. Further, that all current enrollment projections be shared with the School Committee and the City to ensure adequate space for the growing district population in future building projects.

13. Communications from City Officers: None

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

- Agenda
- District Plan Framework Strategic Initiative 4:4 PowerPoint Presentation

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

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

Piotr Mitros, support of Roundtable on Co-teaching

Katie Bruno, support of **#19-108**

Karen Engels, thanks for School Committee support of **#19-90** and **#19-91**

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to adjourn (8:05 p.m.)

Attest:



Dosha Beard
Executive Secretary
to the School Committee