



**#26-041**

CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
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March 17, 2026

WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee meets in the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room at the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School; and

WHEREAS: Henrietta S. Attles, Ed.D. was the first Black woman elected to serve on the Cambridge School Committee, first elected in 1979, reelected in 1981 and serving as a School Committee Member from 1980 to 1983; and

WHEREAS: The School Committee meeting room was dedicated and named in her honor in 1989, ten years after she was first elected to the School Committee, and features a portrait of Dr. Attles; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee believes that there is value to the children of Cambridge and the community as a whole in knowing and understanding a full history of our community and the people who have shaped it; and

WHEREAS: Cambridge Public Schools strives to support greater knowledge and understanding of that history through celebrations of Black History Month in February and Women's History Month in March, and, importantly, throughout the year; and

WHEREAS: The naming of a Cambridge Public Schools space should not be the end of the recognition of and learning about the person for which the space is named, but instead should be an ongoing tribute and prompt for learning and reflection; and

WHEREAS: Henrietta S. Evans Attles was born in Harlem, New York. After graduating from PS 10 in New York City, she attended the University of West Virginia. While in college, she met her husband Rev. Dr. LeRoy Attles who attended Wilberforce University. After college, the newlywed couple moved to Rev. Dr. LeRoy Attles's hometown of Newark, New Jersey, where he had accepted a position. Dr. Henrietta S. Attles began teaching in the Newark Public Schools, and in 1962, she became the second Black speech therapist in the Newark School system; and

WHEREAS: In 1975, Attles received a master's degree in vocational and technical education from Rutgers University and was soon working as the Assistant Administrator for Career Education in Newark. In 1978, LeRoy accepted the position of pastor of St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church and the Attles moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts. Upon arrival, Henrietta Attles took the position of Educational Specialist for the Office of Equal Education in the Massachusetts Department of Education; and

WHEREAS: Dr. Attles earned her doctorate in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, had two children in the Cambridge Public Schools, and was the Executive Director of the Henry Buckner School in Cambridge for 21 years; and

WHEREAS: Dr. Attles was very active in the AME church, from serving as First Lady of St. Paul AME Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts to President of the New England Women's Missionary Society; and

WHEREAS: At the time of her passing in 2012, Dr. Attles was an active member of the New Bethel AME Church in Lakeland, Florida and the Lively Missionary Society, and was Robed an AME Missionary Church Mother in Zambia; and

WHEREAS: After her retirement, Dr. Attles founded and was President of "Our Golden Years;" she was a member of Alpha Kappa Sorority, Inc; and she was inducted into Phi Delta Kappa National Honor Society, Harvard Chapter, as one of the Nation's Outstanding Educators; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee is grateful for the assistance of the Cambridge Black History Project, the Cambridge Historical Commission, and the Cambridge Public Library in researching the life of Dr. Henrietta S. Attles and locating related archival materials; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee is on record recognizing and reaffirming Dr. Henrietta S. Attles, the first Black woman elected to the Cambridge School Committee, as a Cambridge trailblazer and an inspiration to those who seek to serve the children of Cambridge; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a copy of this motion and copies of related archival materials about Dr. Attles be made accessible in the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room so visitors can learn more about this remarkable woman and her legacy in Cambridge, and that these materials be shared on the School Committee website as well; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a suitably engrossed copy of this motion be sent to members of Dr. Henrietta S. Attles' family on behalf of the Cambridge School Committee.