



**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

January 5, 2020

Called for 6:00 p.m. held in and broadcast from the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of discussing any and all business that may properly come before the Committee.

Members Present: Vice Chair Bowman, Member Fantini, Member Rachel, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Member Wilson, Mayor Siddiqui

Also Present: Dr. Kenneth N. Salim, Superintendent of Schools; Nuriel Vera-Degraff, Anais Killian, Student School Committee Representatives

Mayor Siddiqui in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Chair provided a statement to the public regarding Governor Charlie Baker's Executive Order on guidelines for remote participation 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 sound check: Member Wilson PRESENT, Vice Chair Bowman PRESENT, Member Fantini PRESENT, Member Rachel PRESENT, Member Rojas PRESENT, Member Weinstein PRESENT, Mayor Siddiqui PRESENT.

The Chair stated that all votes will be by roll call and turned the floor over to Dr. Salim.

Superintendent Salim gave a statement on the devastating loss of Mr. Jimmy Ravanis, a longtime CPS employee who was connected to many people, worked in various buildings and offices and who tragically passed away from complications due to Covid-19. The Superintendent explained that unfortunately he has no way of knowing the origin of his infection; there is no way of knowing whether he was infected inside or outside of a school building. The Superintendent emphasized very strongly that everyone make use of the safety protocols of site based testing twice weekly, hand hygiene, masking and distancing.

On a motion by Member Fantini, seconded by Member Wilson, on the following roll call, the Rules were suspended to read a Late Order Resolution by Member Fantini for the family of Mr. James Ravanis: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini, YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

--IN SCHOOL COMMITTEE--

January 5th, 2021

WHEREAS: *Deep sorrow fills the hearts of the Cambridge School Committee with the unexpected passing of **JAMES (JIMMY) RAVANIS** on December 28, 2020, at 57 years of age, and we pause to consider his life;*

WHEREAS: ***JIMMY RAVANIS** grew up in Cambridge, attended the Cambridge Public Schools, graduated from Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School, continued his education at Franklin Pierce College, and;*

WHEREAS: ***JIMMY RAVANIS** married his beloved wife of thirty years, Kerry, a former teacher, moved to Pepperell where he was devoted to his children Nick, Lucas, and Rachel,*

demonstrated unconditional love to his entire family, and will leave a void in the lives of all surviving family, friends and coworkers, and;

WHEREAS: ***JIMMY RAVANIS** was very well known throughout Cambridge Rindge and Latin as the “Go to Guy” doing all things large or small with efficiency and humor, putting out all of the little fires that would have kept teachers from educating scholars, and;*

WHEREAS: ***JIMMY RAVANIS** was a dedicated worker for 35+ years in the Cambridge Public School System, primarily in the Rindge School of Technical Arts Department “RSTA” as a Technical Specialist, an Aide in Information Technology, Culinary Arts and Hospitality, First Work programs, and as a member of the Facilities staff at Russell Field, Thorndike Street, Berkshire Street, CSUS, and the King Open School, and;*

WHEREAS: ***JIMMY RAVANIS** used his ability to counsel, encourage and inspire all youth, many children flourished under his leadership, he will always be remembered and valued for his input in our children’s lives, and;*

WHEREAS: ***JIMMY RAVANIS** was very active in his home community as a little league coach and gymnastics supporter of Pepperell youth, and was recognized as a wonderful and influential mentor to many, and;*

WHEREAS: *Because of **JIMMY RAVANIS**’ strong work ethic, he has been a very successful and popular licensed bartender at Suffolk Downs, Harbor Lights, Gillette Stadium, Encore Casino, Bertucci’s and other area restaurants, and;*

WHEREAS: ***JIMMY RAVANIS**, was known for his wonderful quick wit, and humor which was guaranteed to always get a hearty laugh out of you, he will be remembered fondly by all who came in contact with him, and;*

WHEREAS: *While we pause to pay tribute to **JIMMY RAVANIS**, knowing he will be sorely missed and never forgotten by his family, friends and coworkers, we give thanks to his great spirit that endeared him to the lives he touched; now therefore be it*

RESOLVED: *That the Cambridge School Committee goes on record expressing its deepest sympathy to the family of **JAMES (JIMMY) RAVANIS** for his legacy of love of family, dedication, enthusiasm and outstanding public service to the youth of Cambridge and Pepperell and his career with the Cambridge Public School Community; and be it further*

RESOLVED: *That the Executive Secretary of the Cambridge School Committee be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this Resolution honoring his memory to the family of **JAMES (JIMMY) RAVANIS** on behalf on the entire School Committee in love and friendship on this fifth day of January in the year 2021.*

A true copy:

Attest:

Dosha E. Beard

Executive Secretary to the School Committee

On the following roll call vote, the Late Order Resolution for Mr. James (Jimmy) Ravanis was adopted: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

The meeting returned to the regular order of business.

1. **Public Comment:**

The following individuals were heard:

- Arielle Stanford, Sycamore Street, opposed to remote learning
- Susan Meagher, Union Terrace, opposed to remote learning
- Emily Pollock, James Wat, in support of Supt. Rec. **#21-01**
- Patrick Barrett, Pleasant Street, in support of **#21-01** Path to Zero
- Sandra Santos, Thorndike Street, opposed to remote learning
- Anne Bothmer, Cambridge Street, in support of **#21-01**
- Guy Rosenweig, Raymond Street, opposed to remote learning
- Elena Fagotto, Bigelow Street, School Metrics
- Elinor Actipis, Whittenmore Avenue, Metrics, opposed to remote learning
- Jen Mason Stott, Parkton Rd, JP, in support of **#21-01**
- Keith Ericson, Concord Ave, opposed to remote learning, in support of **#21-01**
- Cecilia Cotta-Ramusino, Broadway, in support of in person and Rec. **#21-01**
- Rua Kelly, Upton Street, in support of metrics proposal and reopening schools
- Nicole Campos, Standish Street, in support of revising metrics for school reopening
- Amanda Beatty, Franklin Street, thankful for honoring Jimmy Ravanis, in support of Rec. **#21-01**
- Maria Cruz Lopez, Rogers Street, in support of in person learning
- Maria Cortes, Cambridge parkway, in support of **#21-01**
- Pia Cisternino, Holworthy Street, in support of **#21-01**
- Susie and Omari Flynn Ziro, Sidney Street, in support of in person learning for upper grades
- Gabriel O'Malley, Alpine Street, in support of in person learning and Rec. **#21-01**
- Susan Moynihan, Ames Street, in support of report to zero, in support of remote learning
- Rose Levine, Wendell Street, in support of Rec. **#21-01**, honored Jimmy Ravanis' passing
- Tim Nicolette, Pearl Street, in support of **#21-01**
- Jillian Kalen, University Road, Brookline, in support of Joint Motion **#21-14**
- Pankaj Mehta, Harvard Street, opposed to remote learning
- Kristin Newton, Newport Street, Arlington, concerns on the reopening plan
- Lily Rayman-Read, Broadway Street, Watertown, Covid Update
- Jocelyn Marshall, Hemman Street, Boston, 4/5 in-person/remote model
- Giulia Fulci, Broadway, in support of **#21-01**
- Raymundo Baez, Peabody Terrace, in support of in-person learning
- Sarah Rosenberg, Putnam Ave, in support of **#21-01**
- Marta Bianciardi, Union Street, in support of in-person learning
- Vanessa Azzone, William Street, in support of in-person learning
- Kristin Huang, Worcester Street, in support of Recommendation **#21-01**
- Bridgette Sheridan, Acorn Street, in support of Recommendation **#21-01**
- Alex Gourevitch, Harvard Street, in support of Recommendation **#21-01**
- Angela Vierling-Claassen, Olive Place, in support of changes to in-person learning
- Catherine Reilly, Linnaean Street, School opening timeline
- Sabrina Zanella-Foresi, Cambridge Street, in support of remote learning
- Sydney Cash, Grove Street, in support of in-person learning
- Sarah Parker, Bowdoin Street, opposed to Dr. Salim's plan
- Daniel Bourque, Fayette Street, in support of path to zero report
- Laura Baecher-Lind, Norfolk Street, in support of reopening schools
- Lillian Rater, Fifth Street, opposed to the change from 6 feet to 3 feet
- Amina Sheikh, Erie Street, expanded in-person learning and path to zero
- Duncan MacLaury, Dover Street, concerned regarding the plan to increase in-person instruction
- Brittany Bychkovsky, Elm Street, concerned about school opening vs. remote learning
- Paola Grandi, Maple Avenue, in support of **#21-01** and path to zero framework
- Leonardo Glorioso, Maple Ave, in support of **#21-01** and in-person learning
- Erin Logan, Second Street, in support of Dr. Salim's recommendation **#21-01**
- Genevieve Daftary, Peters Street, in support of Dr. Salim's consent agenda
- Eli Tucker-Raymond, Elm Street North, 2nd semester plans to return to school
- Sucharita Varanasi, Royal Avenue, congrats to Baldwin teachers, opposed to re-opening plan
- Dan Stowell, Cedar Street, in support of **#21-01** and path to zero report

- Barbara Dorritie, Monument Street, Medford, **#21-01**
- Melissa Baldwin, Sunset Road, opposed to retuning to in-person learning
- Shirley Kuhlmann, Franklin Street, in support of path to zero report, there is no risk free choice
- Sam Musher, Pinckney Street, Somerville, in support of Path to Zero
- Jeff Gavornik Rindge Terrace, the plan to have 4/5 educators teach both in person and remote
- Kate Skubecz, Thorndike Street, sent condolences to the Ravanis family, in support of **#21-01**
- Pablo Argueso, in support of in-person learning and the consent agenda
- Sam Murphy, Thorndike Street, in support on in-person learning
- Alisa Khan, Third Street, condolences to the Ravanis family in support of path to zero report
- Dan Monahan, Lexington Avenue, reopening plan
- Jo Quest-Neubert, Alpine Street, regarding racial disparities of in-person vs. remote learning
- Jenny Chung, Washing Street, supports **#21-01** and the path to zero framework
- Laurie Ferhani, Sunnyside Avenue, Winthrop, opposed to the path to zero framework
- Bernette Dawson, Edward T. Sullivan Road, condolences to Ravanis family, CEOCC & Covid-19
- Kirsten Wright-Cirit, Whittenmore Avenue, in support of in-person learning
- Emie Michaud Weinstock, CEOCC, the impact of Covid-19 on families of color
- Alissa Cogfgins, Harvard Street, condolences to Ravanis family, in support of in person learning
- Tina Lieu, Huron Avenue, read a letter on behalf of 38 parents opposed to hybrid learning
- Bill Folman, Vassal Lane, **#21-01**
- Michael Batt, Vogel St., W. Roxbury, read letter of concern for in-person teachers at Amigos School
- Martin Aryee, Standish Street, in support of **#21-01**
- Isun Malekghassemi, Mass Ave., Arlington, supports **Joint Motion #21-14**
- Nili Pearlmutter, Harlow Street, Arlington, CPS district plans in response to Covid-19
- Michele Lippens, Thorpe Street, Somerville opposed to 4/5 graders reopening
- Christin Burke, Allston Street, opposed to **#21-01** because of the lack of trust
- Corrado Botto, Broadway, opposed to remote learning
- Robyn Towner, Victoria Heights Rd. opposed to 4/5 graders return to in-person learning
- Witney Christie, Dutchland Ave, Brockton, opposed to the **#21-01** recommendation
- Tsekai English, Fairmont Street, educator, supports remote learning
- Cheryl Keane, Plymouth Street, in support of in-person learning
- Matt Thoman, Washington Street, Boston, opposed to the path to zero report
- Amara Donovan, Cambridge Street, opposed to in-person learning
- Rebecca Bailey, Clay Street, thanked the remote teachers for their extraordinary work, concerned about the proposed hybrid plan for February

On a motion by Member Rachel, seconded by Vice Chair Bowman, on the following roll call vote, it was voted to close public comment: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

The Chair thanked all public comment speakers and explained that the main objective tonight is to adopt the Schools Path to Zero framework as a whole, not the emerging models. There will, more than likely, be additional meetings on the emerging models for discussion and answer questions.

2. **Student School Committee Report:**

Member Vera-Degrass expressed his condolences to Jimmy Ravanis's family, and reported that many students remained local over the break, with no traveling or large gatherings; winter sports began before break, its going well; there will be a Winter Arts Festival in January with many different projects; visual and performing arts will be on display. Most students are looking forward to and are focused on in-person learning.

Member Killian reported that there have been ongoing discussions in classes regarding going back to school in-person; there are rumors, creating questions without answers. She suggested an email to the scholar community at large to give a brief overview of what is actually going to happen.

Vice Chair Bowman thanked the student members for sharing the feelings of our students and explaining their need for accurate information. Communication and accurate information is critical to build trust.

Member Fantini stated he is very curious to know how the Fundraising for Food Campaign with Club 4 turned out. Member Vera-Degraff replied it went very well, Mayor Siddiqui and Member Fantini both came by; the fundraising campaign donated a lot of clothing and canned goods to homeless shelters, it was very successful.

Member Wilson echoed that transparency and communication is important.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

- June 2, 2020 Regular Meeting
- August 27, 2020 Superintendent Evaluation Special Meeting
- December 15, 2020 Regular Meeting
- December 22, 2020 Special Meeting

On a motion by Member Rojas, seconded by Member Weinstein, on the following roll call vote, it was voted to accept the Minutes as presented: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports:

Both items, **#20-308** and **#20-309**, on Awaiting Reports were passed over:

#20-308 Joint Motion by Member Fantini and Mayor Siddiqui,

Whereas, the Cambridge Public Schools participate in the Journey into Education and Teaching Program, known as JET, to provide a pathway at little cost for paraprofessionals to get their bachelor's degrees and Massachusetts teacher licensures; and

Whereas JET (www.jetintoteaching.org) supports the goals of building local teacher pipelines and developing an educator workforce that reflects the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of our students; and

Whereas JET provides the program structure for recruitment and support such as: advising, guiding in application procedures for college admission and financial aid, participating in cohort groups, providing local educator mentors, and professional and career development opportunities; and

Whereas Cambridge must commit to providing and compensating mentors as part of our commitment to JET Paraprofessionals; and

Whereas JET is an education program of the Massachusetts Foundation for Teaching and Learning; and

Whereas Massachusetts is unique in providing a state education grant that funds the undergraduate education of employed eligible paraprofessionals who commit to becoming teachers; and

Whereas, JET already has demonstrated a record of success; and

Whereas meeting application deadlines is critical; now therefore be it

Resolved that the Superintendent collaborate with JET and report on how the program will operate in Cambridge.

#20-309 Joint Motion by Mayor Siddiqui, Member Fantini and Member Wilson,

Whereas equity and access are of highest priority for the Cambridge Public Schools and Cambridge School Committee, including postsecondary success for all of our scholars; and

Whereas extensive research nationally found that Early College is a promising model that narrows educational opportunity gaps, and that existing programs were a powerful foundation from which to build a broader statewide Early College Initiative; and

Whereas the Massachusetts boards of Elementary and Secondary Education and Higher Education jointly launched an initiative in 2018 to establish an Early College designation for districts specifically

attempting to recruit underrepresented students, to allow cohort-based models that provide high-need and

low-income students with the opportunity to complete college level academic coursework on a clearly articulated pathway while simultaneously gaining exposure to a variety of career opportunities; and **Whereas** 37 different high schools and 19 colleges and universities have partnered to offer Early College programs to thousands of students across the commonwealth, with enrollment projected to hit 4,200 students in FY21 and students earning an estimated 25,000 college credits, securing tuition and fee savings at an estimated \$5.4 million; and **Whereas** the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School offers a Dual Enrollment program in partnership with Bunker Hill Community College but has not received the state's Early College Designation, which requires very specific advising metrics and a scope and sequence demonstrating that a school can offer at least 12 fully transferable college credits; and **Whereas** Dual Enrollment, while often conflated with Early College, serves any students who self-select and therefore are already high-performing; now therefore be it **Resolved** that the Superintendent work with the Principal of CRLS to provide a report on the current participation of the Dual Enrollment program by demographic, courses, and number of credits by year since its inception before the next Regular Meeting of the School Committee on Tuesday, January 5th, 2021.

Mayor Siddiqui returned the floor to Superintendent Salim for the PowerPoint presentation.

Dr. Salim expressed his disappointment at the comments from educators that felt they were not included in decision making processes. He explained there are over 1000 educators, it is hard to hear from everyone individually, so there have been a number of working groups and teams set up for all educators; educators were surveyed in partnership with the CEA President Dan Monahan (with whom the Superintendent speaks on a daily basis). The production of the Health and Safety Manual, and the rollout of the twice weekly Covid-19 testing were done in partnership with educators. There is still ongoing work to be completed which will involve educators.

Member Wilson asked how many educators have been engaged throughout this process so far.

Dr. Salim answered that there have been many different types of engagements: there has been the Superintendent Advisor Committee where educators representing all schools share their concerns on remote and in-person learning, mini retreats on hybrid models with 6 or 7 educators at a time, surveys at both the school and district levels, and there are more triad groups coming. There were over 100 participants in a session with 4th and 5th grade teachers. There were three hour mini retreats with upper school educators and another one with the elementary educators, there were info sessions, and Q and A's on Wednesday mornings.

Member Wilson stated she appreciates the extra complex work done so far, however, listening to the educators' voices about being left out and with trust issues, it is not enough.

Noting the time, Mayor Siddiqui asked for the pleasure of the Committee to suspend the Rules. On a motion by Member Wilson, seconded by Vice Chair Bowman, to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting to 11:30 p.m., on the following roll call vote, the Rules were suspended for the reason stated: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

The meeting returned to the regular order of business and Superintendent Salim proceeded to the presentation.

7. Superintendent's Agenda:

7a. Presentations: COVID-19 Response Update.....Dr. Kenneth N. Salim,
Superintendent of Schools

The presentation can be viewed online.

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=0ef808350d&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1688082506407689256&th=176d461881fb3c28&view=att&disp=inline&realattid=f_kjkiexy0

Dr. Salim paused the presentation and turned the floor back to the Chair.

Mayor Siddiqui moved the Rules be suspended to bring Rec. **#21-01** forward for discussion and adoption. On a motion by Member Rojas, seconded by Vice Chair Bowman, on the following roll call vote, the Rules were suspended for the purpose stated: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-01, Approval to Align School Opening and Closing with “Schools & Path to Zero” Framework: that the School Committee accept and approve the recommendation to Align School Opening and Closing with the “Schools and Path to Zero” Framework.

Discussion followed on **#21-01**.

Member Rojas asked what recommendations are there for safety guidelines to follow when students and families are not in school.

- Mayor Siddiqui answered that the CDPH has robust information about safety on various topics that can be shared with the School Department
- Dr. Dobberteen confirmed they have a robust campaign for strategies for safety. They can create a thoughtful approach to tie their strategies to the schools and the community and keep everyone safe at all times.

Member Rojas asked for clarification the Advisory Council situation

- Dr. Salim responded that the Health and Safety Working Group plans to expand mental health expertise and scientific expertise

Member Rojas asked to hear more about recommendations for educators to use high quality surgical masks or other types of masks

- Dr. Salim answered that in the last meeting there were comments on masks and there are ample masks purchased by the District for staff use.
- Nurse Tracy-Rose-Tynes responded that Dr. Crittenden has done some extremely thorough research on this topic and according to her research, the school department has purchased the safest masks.

Member Rojas asked for comments and thoughts on the new variant of the virus

- Dr. Dobberteen replied that we do not have a lot of information on the new variant yet, but they are all paying close attention to everything they hear and will share anything they learn.

Member Weinstein asked how the Path to Zero Framework will be impacted by the new variant Covid-20?

- Dr. Dobberteen answered that we know the current strategies already in place are doubly important with the new variant. We need to continue to test the staff and begin testing students. It looks like the vaccine will be effective on the new variant also. She is being transparent and admits that we do not know a lot about this variant yet.

Member Weinstein asked if we will have to change our plans due to the variant

- Dr. Dobberteen agreed that we may need to refine, tweak, and improve on our existing plans along the way as we have been doing all along. We will have to be flexible and quickly pivot when necessary.

Member Weinstein asked if we are ready to launch the Infection Control Teams and the Situation Rooms on the February 8th expansion for in-person learning and where are we with testing our 4th and 5th graders and PreK through 5th graders.

- Dr. Salim answered that they are still looking at this and what it will look like, i.e. who will be on the teams and how do we create this culture. Crossing different staff roles still needs to be figured out for the different schools.

- Nurse Rose-Tynes responded to the fact that there is progress on testing plans for grades 6-12. They are beginning to look at testing plans for 4th and 5th graders. There are no solid answers tonight. The District is still being governed by the CDC guidelines and the CDC has not dropped their testing plans as low as fourth grade yet.
- Dr. Dobberteen added that we want to focus our resources on the older ages that are at the greater risk of transmitting the virus rather than the younger ages. They will start at the high school, expand to six through twelve and add in the younger grades last, unless something changes and it becomes necessary to test the younger ages sooner.

Vice Chair Bowman asked for a timeline for our high school students to receive the vaccine

- Dr. Dobberteen answered that the state has received shipments of two different vaccines: the Pfizer Vaccine (which is stored in a deep freezer), and the Moderna Vaccine (which is stored in a regular freezer). The Moderna Vaccine has been tested on ages as young as sixteen year olds and up, so when the vaccine is available to the general public, those students will be eligible to receive it. This may not be available until late March and into the spring. There is no vaccine for younger students at this time.
- Mayor Siddiqui also responded to the vaccine issue and mentioned the many emails she receives stating that teachers should be prioritized for the vaccine first. The Chair made it clear that the Mayor, Cambridge Public Health Department, nor the School Committee have that authority, the vaccine rollout comes from the state.

Vice Chair Bowman challenged the CEA President and the Superintendent to collaborate more strongly. We have been at this too long for our educators to feel the way they do. Since there is a signed Union Agreement, and these two leaders speak every day; Mr. Monahan and Dr. Salim need to figure out how to communicate clear solutions that will move the educators, staff, students and families forward.

Member Fantini asked when the three-foot distancing will be used.

- Dr. Salim answered we are only using it for K-5; he added that the report includes this info.
- Nurse Rose-Tynes added that the determining factor is because the rate of infection is much lower in K-4, the rate of infection gets higher in ten year olds and up.
- Dr. Dobberteen responded that we are still committed to the three-foot distancing. We need to fit the right students into the correct spaces to keep everyone where they should be to remain safe. Some of this is going to be determined by how many students choose to return to in-person learning. We expect this to be a safe adjustment to the classroom plans without putting the staff at risk.

Member Rachel thanked all that testified, called and emailed. She believes we all want the same outcomes even if we have different ideas on how to proceed; she offered some common ground questions of finding ways to provide our children with in-person time for social and academic experiences while protecting the health of staff and maintaining high quality remote learning. Member Rachel agreed with Member Wilson that educators need to be included on every level of decision making.

Member Rachel asked the following: which individuals make the decisions in the Path to Zero Framework to open or close schools and how? Which decisions are school based, which decisions are district based? Is there a way to find out if any of the six infected staff with in school transmissions brought in the virus or was it from a student? Will school nurses get a health aide when more students come to class? What is the plan when we do not have staff coverage, can we anticipate it and avoid the same problem coming up again going forward? She does not expect answers to all questions tonight and will accept written answers.

- Dr. Salim answered that the following people made the decision last week to close schools this week: Nurse Rose-Tynes, Dr. Dobberteen, Dr. Turk, Ana Kaplan, from the health department, Mr. Maloney and Dr. Salim. These same people will continue to determine whether or not the School Committee should make a recommendation about next week. The Superintendent continued to the question of staff that need to quarantine or who are sick; noting it is very challenging. The question of staff coverage depends on the availability of substitutes: that availability will make or break the plans to keep schools open. Those staff availability decisions are made at the district level in collaboration with the schools. Is robust contact tracing still possible? The question of whether or not contact tracing is possible was turned over to a public health official.

- Nurse Rose-Tynes answered yes, public health dept. has several nurses that do contact tracing, and its overwhelming and hard, and it's a lot of juggling, however its' not impossible and they get it done.
- Dr. Dobberteen added that the comment about contact tracing becoming overwhelming at 25 per 1000 is theoretical. They have employed retired nurses; they have all hands on deck and have not exceeded their ability to contact trace.

Member Wilson asked for reiteration when the vaccine will be rolled out for educators, students and families?

- Nurse Rose-Tynes answered that regarding youth there is not enough research yet for anyone under the age of sixteen to be vaccinated.
- Dr. Dobberteen responded that teachers and all school staff are in the 2nd category. CPHD have to follow the guidelines from the state.

Member Wilson asked about the vaccine campaign and the safety of it. What are the reactions, what about folks that are scared of the vaccine?

- Mayor Siddiqui answered that she will share information from the City Council to increase trust in this vaccine. Although it is a very important question, it is not actually on the agenda.

Member Wilson asked if it is possible for more parents to opt in before Feb. 8th for in-person learning? Dr. Salim responded no, however, they can opt in after Feb. 8th re-opening.

Member Fantini asked if the metrics are still going to be used for decision making, he is asking because the administration still decided to close schools even though the metrics said we could stay open. Was the health department involved?

- Dr. Salim explained that as cases come in there is a lag in updating the metrics.
- Dr. Dobberteen stated that she is mindful of the Chief Public Health Commissioner, based on what was going on around us during that time, they were looking at the state level to make recommendations and advise and implement procedures to keep the community safe.

Member Weinstein asked if this recommendation is the correct move to make from a public health perspective.

- Dr. Dobberteen answered in the affirmative, they are doing their best to implement it from A to Z.

Member Rachel moved an amendment to include trust building. With no second, the motion failed of adoption.

On a motion by Member Fantini, seconded by Vice Chair Bowman, on the following roll call vote, Superintendent's Recommendation #21-01 was adopted: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

The meeting returned to the regular order of business. Mayor Siddiqui turned the floor back to the Superintendent. Dr. Salim returned to the PowerPoint Presentation at Second Semester Planning.

The Presentation ended and the Chair asked for the pleasure of the Committee to extend the meeting a little longer. Vice Chair Bowman stated she has a lot of questions and recognizes that there is still a lot on the Agenda.

Member Fantini offered that the Committee go forward to adopt the Superintendent's Agenda and write their questions to the Superintendent.

Member Rachel asked to send the questions publicly with the meeting materials to Dr. Salim

Member Rojas stated that we need to share information from the scientist, advisors and public health experts to give context to the families and staff.

Vice Chair Bowman agreed with Member Rojas and wants to include staff and students as well.

Member Rachel is glad Member Rojas brought that up because if the Committee does not know what families are choosing, how can the Committee make a decision?

Dr. Salim stated we want the preferences from families for electing for in-person or remote so that we can attend to class sizes, this is a strong need. There are so very many variables, this is really hard and we are asking folks to make the best decision that they can with what we know. We are training interpreters for outreach by phone and on foot.

Member Rachel urges the district to prioritize a deadline for families to choose a learning plan. Dr. Salim answered that the hardship clause is still in place.

Member Weinstein stated that we need to learn from past experience from the fall semester and we should make sure we have no hidden pieces. The concerns around the model and the health & safety need to be transparent.

7b. CPS District Plan: None

7c. Consent Agenda:

Member Fantini moved to bring the Superintendent’s Agenda forward for discussion and adoption. Member Rachel removed item **#21-11**.

On the following roll call vote, items **#20-02** through **#20-13** were adopted: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

Recommendation #21-02, Approval Ratification of Vote Taken in Executive Session on December 2, 2020 be adopted as follows: that the School Committee ratify and confirm the vote take in Executive Session on December 2, 2020 regarding Cambridge Education Association Units A & B Grievance AB 04-19-20.

#21-03, Settlement Agreement between the Cambridge Education Association and the Cambridge School Committee Regarding Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations, Case Number MUP-20-8246, be adopted as follows: That the School Committee approve the settlement between the Cambridge Education Association and the Cambridge School Committee regarding Massachusetts Department of Relations, Case Number MUP-20-8246.

#21-04, 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 Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the general fund and/or Grand Fund Budget.

#21-05, Contract Award, School Transportation Services, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve an amendment to the following contract for regular student transportation services; funds to be provided from the General Fund. Procurement procedures for this amendment have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Period of Amendment</u>	<u>Negotiated Rate during Closures</u>
Eastern Bus Company PO BOX 514 Somerville, MA 02143	9/8/20-10/9/20	50% of daily per bus contract rate
	10/13/20-6/30/21	70% of daily per bus contract rate
	10/13/20-6/30/21	100% of monitor contract rate
	9/8/20-6/30/21	50% of daily per bus contract rate for buses not in use (continuity of service)

#21-06, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: That the School Committee approve an amendment to the following contract for school transportation services; funds to be provided from the General Fund. Procurement procedures for this amendment have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Period of Amendment</u>	<u>Negotiated Rate during Closures</u>
North Reading Transportation 230 Main Street N. Reading, MA 02141	9/8/20-10/9/20 10/13/20-6/30/21 10/13/20-6/30/21 9/8/20-6/30/21	50% of daily per vehicle rate 78% of daily per vehicle rate 100% of monitor contract rate 50% of daily per vehicle rate for buses/vans not in use (continuity of service)

#21-07, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for time and attendance system, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

NOVAtime Technology Inc., 1400 Bridgeway, Diamond Bar, CA, for the period of January 24, 2021 to January 23, 2022 in the amount of \$52,650.00.

#21-08, Contract Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve the contract with the following vendor for custodial supplies & equipment, funds to be provided from the General Fund, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Casey EMI, 8 Panas Road, Foxborough, for the period of January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$300,000.00.

#21-09, Approval of Gift to Cambridge Public Schools of \$3,1000 from the Microsoft Workplace Giving Program as a match for employee volunteers' time in the TEALS Program at CRLS to support computer science programs at CRLS be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the above donations as described.

#21-10, Grant Award be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grand award in the amount and for the period indicated:

Coronavirus Relief Fund (CVRF) School Meals Program for the period of March 20, 2020 to December 30, 2020 in the amount of \$14, 523.11. Grant SC21204.

Description: The federal reimbursement provides additional support for public school meal programs for costs incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency from the period of 3/1/20 to 12/30/20. The grant will be used to partially pay for enclosed rolling racks used to transport meals from the kitchen to each classroom for lunch.

#21-12, Grant Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY21 IDEA Program Improvement for the period of December 21, 2020 from August 31, 2021, in the amount \$50,401.00

Description: The first IDEA Program Improvement grant available since 2017, this grant will provide professional development for educators and administrators in order to improve programs and systems to increase equity and access to special education services. With these funds, educators will engage in professional learning in non-biased assessments of racial and/or linguistic minorities and work with compliance specialists to ensure fidelity to state regulations. Additionally, staff will engage in professional learning on the collection, analysis and use of data to inform decision on Individual Educational Plans. Principals, APS, and Deans will be provided a workshop on Legal Issues for Special Educators, detailing updating and practices, the principal's role, as well as disability and its intersection with race, language, and socioeconomic status.

#21-13, Grant Award, be adopted as follows:

that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated.

FY21 Early Childhood Special Education Program Improvement, for the period of December 15, 2020 from August 31, 2021. Grant SC21103.

Description: This is the first Program Improvement grant available since 2017. With these funds we will purchase the Ortiz Picture Vocabulary Assessment Test (PVAT), an effective assessment for students with limited language (both English speakers and English learners). We will also be purchasing materials and training in loose parts play from the Beautiful Stuff Project. In this type of play, children use environmental materials to explore, make connections, problem solve and assign meaning. Loose parts play builds creativity and also promotes equity and family engagement.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#21-11, Grant Award, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated.

FY21 Integrating SEL into Academic Subjects for the period of December 9, 2020 to August 31, 2021, in the amount of \$10,000.00. Grant SC21168.

Description: This grant to the High School Extension Program will support a team of teachers (in history, arts, library, technology, social work, and health) in creating a new unit that integrates Civics, Service Learning, and Social Emotional Learning standards. After receiving training in developing podcasts, students will interview their peers and other community members to explore the impact that the public health crisis and the movements for racial justice have had on our community. In the process of carrying out this service learning project, they will intentionally focus on strengthening SEL skills as they develop and share their podcasts with the community at large. This grant will cover teacher stipends, laptops and training on podcasts.

Discussion followed on **#20-11**.

Member Rachel stated that this grant is very exciting for the HSEP and she would like to hear how they are using this idea of creating podcasts to integrate civics, others can also learn from this and she hopes it will be shared across the district

On the following roll call vote, **#20-11** was adopted: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

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

Moved by Member Fantini, all items on the School Committee Agenda were brought forward for discussion and adoption. Member Fantini placed **#21-14** on the Calendar.

#21-14 Joint Motion by Member Wilson and Member Rachel

Whereas: The Cambridge Public Schools District Plan commits to supporting the whole child; and

Whereas: Children's' basic needs must be met if they are to reach their full potential; and

Whereas: The Commonwealth's data from 2019 reflects that over one quarter of Cambridge Public School scholars are economically disadvantaged and nearly one half have high needs; and

Whereas: The pandemic has resulted in a dramatic increase of families struggling to secure basic needs, and underscored how positive partnerships between schools and families are critical to reimagining the school system post-pandemic; and

Whereas: The CPSD Food and Nutrition Services Department, Food for Free, The Spot, individual family liaisons and teachers, and others are working to support students and families; now therefore be it

Resolved: That at the Regular meeting on March 2, 2021, the Superintendent will report to the School Committee and the public on existing systems for how the district identifies and responds to the needs of scholars and families in the district; and be it further

Resolved: That, at that meeting, the Superintendent’s team will bring to the School Committee recommendations for measurable, actionable strategies the department could take for proactively attending to the needs of scholars and families.

#21-15 Joint Motion by Budget Co-Chairs Vice Chair Bowman and Member Fantini:

Whereas: the Cambridge Public School district budget process has been guided by the three- year District Plan of 2017- 2020; and

Whereas: Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic impacts on CPSD, the Superintendent and School Committee has not been able to develop a three-year district plan that guides the budget process; and

Whereas: COVID-19 will continue to have a significant impact on the budget process and has a direct effect on the 2021 CPSD budget; therefore be it

Resolved: That the School Committee develop budget guidelines for the 2022 budget process and adopt the attached budget calendar.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE SCHEDULE OF FY 2022 BUDGET MEETINGS

DATE*	MEETING TYPE	DESCRIPTON
Jan 5, 2021	Regular Meeting	Adoption of Calendar for FY22 Budget Development
Jan. 14, 2021 Thursday	Budget Retreat	FY22 Budget & Enrollment Projections Budget Process & Key Dates School Committee Budget Guidelines
Jan 26 th , 2021	Budget Retreat	Finalize Budget Guidelines
Jan. 28, 2021 5:30 p.m. -7:30 p.m.	Community Meeting-#1	Community Meeting on FY22 Budget Priorities
Feb. 2, 2021	Regular Meeting	Update on FY22 Budget Development
Feb. 3, 2021 3 p.m.-5 p.m.	Community Meeting -#2	Community Meeting on FY22 Budget Priorities- <i>For Staff</i>
Feb. 6, 2021 Saturday (Time TBD)	Community Meeting -#3	Community Meeting on FY22 Budget Priorities
Feb. 9, 2021	Joint Roundtable with City Council	School Committee /City Council Discussion of Budget Priorities
Feb. 11, 2021 Thursday	Budget Retreat	Update on FY22 Budget Development & Feedback from Community Meetings

Mar. 18, 2021 <i>Thursday</i>	Special Meeting	Presentation of FY22 Superintendent’s Proposed Budget
Mar. 23, 2021	Budget Workshop	School Committee Review of FY22 Proposed Budget
Mar. 25, 2021 <i>Thursday</i>	Public Hearing	Public Hearing on FY22 Proposed Budget
Mar. 30, 2021	Budget Workshop	School Committee Review of FY22 Proposed Budget
April 6, 2021	Regular Meeting	School Committee Review of Adjustments to Proposed Budget
April 13, 2021	Special Meeting	School Committee Vote of Adoption of FY22 Budget
May 19, 2021	City Council Hearing	City Council Budget Hearing on CPS FY22 Adopted Budget

On a motion by Mayor Siddiqui, seconded by Member Wilson, the Rules were suspended to extend the meeting for ten more minutes to 11:40 p.m. On the following roll call vote, the Rules were extended for the purpose stated: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

On the following roll call vote, **item #21-15** was adopted as presented: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#21-16 Report of the December 11, 2020 Buildings & Grounds Sub-Committee

That the following Report of the Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee on December 11, 2020 be accepted as presented:

**Virtual Buildings & Grounds Sub-Committee Report
Friday, December 11, 2020
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA**

Called for the purpose of discussing safety policies as part of the plan for expanding in-person learning and the health metrics to ensure they reflect the disproportionate risk of COVID-19 to some communities.

Members Present: Member Rojas, Chair; Vice Chair Bowman, Member Fantini

Also Present: Mayor Siddiqui; Mr. James Maloney, COO; Ms. Claire Spinner, CFO; Joanne Johnson, Operations Assistant; Vedad Konjic, Facilities Director; Maisha Rounds, Fletcher Maynard Principal; Principal Sarah Marrero of Amigos; Robin Harris, Family Engagement and Partnerships; Maureen MacFarlane, Legal Counsel; Tracy Rose-Tynes, Nurse Manager CPHD; Dan Monahan, CEA President; Mary Elizabeth Cranton, Working Group; Eva Valenzuela, Working Group; Rosalie Rippey, Working Group; Christine Gerber, Principal; Dr. Alisa Khan, pediatric hospitalist; Elinor Actipis, parent.

Member Rojas is the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. The Chair read the call of the meeting and proceeded to outline the meeting. There will be public comment.

Mr. Maloney explained what happened at the working group last Wednesday. He explained that the new policy for quarantining will be changed from 14 days to 10 days, the high maintenance issues required to maintain the CO2 monitoring and that desk distancing can be reduced from 6 feet to 3 feet for grades PreK-5. The working group has been invited to the Regular Meeting to expand on the issue. Ms. Tynes

mentioned how on the 11th day, people could come out of quarantine but people should still self-monitor for COVID symptoms for 14 days in total. Mr. Maloney then discussed how the group has talked about using the field house at the High School with the doors open for events such as athletics and social/emotional activities and the high school auditorium could be used for smaller groupings. The consensus on humidifiers is that they are not necessary. The administration has come to an Agreement with the CEA about CO2 monitoring. Then the discussion moved to changing the social distancing requirements in grades Pre-K through 5th grade from 6 feet to 3 feet. The Superintendent will discuss on the Tuesday (12/15) regular meeting about that matter to start the discussion. Not recommending the 3 feet for high-schoolers. There are talks about expanding surveillance for students at the high school and middle school level, the PILOT program was supposed to start last week but the schools went remote. Ms. Tynes discussed how the PILOT program is focused on grades 6-12 because of the higher rate of transmission. The conversation touched upon on the administration's efforts to increase their staffing. Mr. Maloney explained how classrooms have been divided into pods and the protocol if someone in the pods tests positive. Ms. Tynes discussed how she has been working closely with the Cambridge Health Alliance to onboard health aides, they have hired five health aides and have nurses that can double up. They have been prioritizing schools based on the number of students attending.

Member Fantini moved for a 10-day quarantine recommendation be submitted to the Committee of the Whole. There was a discussion about the reasoning from changing it from 14 days to 10 days. Member Bowman asked for clarification about changing the 14 day quarantine period. Chair Rojas stated there are two set of guidelines: the state and the CDC. Ms. Tynes discussed how the guidelines changed since last meeting when they were not recommending 14 days. Mr. Maloney stated that last week the state was requiring a test out, the state is now in sync with the CDC. Mr. Maloney stated that they could not force any of the staff to take a test. Vice Chair Bowman commented that if the recommendation is to move to the 10 day quarantine, there should be a strong recommendation of testing. Chair Rojas asked the reasoning behind the change, Ms. Tynes commented that if someone isn't ill by the 9th day, there is a small chance of them having the virus on the 10th day.

The administration's goal is to re-open all the schools on February 8th, 2020. Member Fantini discussed how he was pleased about the extra safety precautions that have been added such as CO2 and surveillance testing. Vice Chair Bowman asked for clarification about the surveillance testing specifically what will they be doing for grades K-5? She also wanted clarification about changing the social distancing guidelines. Mr. Maloney stated the members of the medical advisors group felt comfortable to change pre-K from 6 feet to 3 feet, there has been no determination made about Grades 6-8. Not recommending the change for high-schoolers. The Superintendent has not formally recommended that change yet, starting the discussion on Tuesday's regular meeting.

Chair Rojas opened up the meeting for questions.

Dr. Khan asked if there was a plan to update metrics. Mr. Maloney discussed how the working group has started that conversation.

Elinor Acipitis asked for further clarification on the metrics beyond COVID, discussed mental health issues and the difficulty of parents being able to keep their job. Mr. Maloney has stated that the working group has been talking through that issue as well. Vice Chair Bowman discussed the challenges of the metrics in the context of being able to collect the data and how they could get different data points. Chair Rojas reviewed the roundtable explaining a discussion about changing whether metrics decide if schools remain open to instead using metrics to see what safety precautions need to be taken in order to keep schools open.

Kate Subecz discussed the mental health of the students' needs to be considered and if there were any updates about the schools re-opening and how the administration would let families know. Dr. Khan discussed about how at her hospital, there has been a rise of mental health disorders in kids, advocated for having a more holistic view and that the family survey and the listening sessions have been a good start.

Dan Monahan from the CEA discussed how the metric is a 7-day average to create more stability and discussed the operational difficulty of changing the humidity in schools, advocated for looking at the humidity data and looking at other mitigation factors such as additional CO2 monitoring. Urged the administration to speed up the process of hiring health aides and to look at the hiring from an equitable point of view rather than a quantitative view and to reflect on the POD closing process.

Mayor Siddiqui stated that the city is testing more than they have been in the past and if the Public Health Department could explain that impact on the current numbers and considerations on how to provide a more stable metric.

Principal Christine Gerber discussed staffing issues, the confusion over the numbers and emphasized that the opening/closing is not ideal. She then asked for clarification on the recommendation of changing guidelines from 6 feet to 3 feet would shift if other mitigation practices such as opening windows and kids not going outside cannot be implemented. Her ability to keep windows open is diminishing and she wonders what impact that will have on safety. Vice Chair Bowman discussed how the administration staffing issue is a top priority and will impact the number of students that they can serve.

Eva Valenzuela, a member of the task force, provided an update that the task force will be adding an expert from CHA mental health staff. Scientists are working on updating the metrics to be more holistic.

Liz Hill, kindergarten teacher at Haggerty, reiterated how essential it is that schools remain open and the effects that the closing has had on her students and their families. Ms. Hill discussed the issues of staffing and urged the administration to be ready for February 8th re-opening.

Chair Rojas asked for an update about changing to the policy for out of state travelers and pointed out how the district cannot be stricter than the state. Ms. Tynes has to consult with the Public Health department on changing the rules and then noted the uptick of cases after Thanksgiving.

Chair Rojas asked if there was way on the dashboard to show the low rate of transmission that has been happening at the schools to show the public how safe it has been. Mr. Maloney said that they will be putting up the in-school transmission data.

Mr. Maloney discussed the policy for out of state travelers, providing context on the increase of transmission stating it is not clear if they were all travelers and the data is mixed on who tested positive after Thanksgiving.

Chair Rojas discussed the possibility of creating infographics of the data to increase public understanding of safety. Vice Chair Bowman urged the administration to work collaboratively to define the terminology to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Mr. Maloney stated that the administration has implemented the changed 10-day quarantine policy. Chair Rojas, Vice Chair Bowman and Member Fantini will work on the 10 day quarantine recommendation. Chair Rojas has stated that they are moving towards their goal of being able to reopen on February 8th.

Vice Chair Bowman motioned, Chair Rojas seconded to adjourn at 5:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Daley,
Confidential Secretary to the
School Committee office

Documents on file in the School Committee office:
Agenda

#21-17 Report of the December 18, 2020 Buildings & Grounds Sub-Committee

That the following Report of the Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee on December 18, 2020 be accepted as presented:

Virtual Buildings & Grounds Sub-Committee Report
Friday, December 18, 2020
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA

Called for the purpose of discussing safety policies as part of the plan for expanding in-person learning and the ongoing review of the health metrics.

Members Present: Member Rojas, Chair; Vice Chair Bowman; Member Fantini

Also Present: Mayor Siddiqui; Mr. James Maloney, COO; Joanne Johnson, Operations Assistant; Vedad Konjic, Facilities Director; Rosalie Ripley, Working Group Member; Dr. Helen Jenkins, Working Group Member; Mary Elizabeth Cranton, Working Group Member; Tracey Rose-Tynes, Nurse Manager CPHD; Dr. Jillian Kalen, Working Group Member; Dan Monahan, CEA President; Ena Valenzuela, Working Group Member; Dr. Jamie Lichtenstein, Working Group Member; Dr. Keith Marzilli Ericson, Working Group Member; Dr. Holmes, Medical Advisor; Principal Gerber.

Member Rojas is the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. The Chair read the call of the meeting and proceeded to outline the meeting. Chair Rojas discussed how there will be a presentation regarding recommendations from the advisors on updating safety protocols and the metrics. There will also be public comment.

Chair Rojas then asked the administration if schools should be closed for all students at current health metrics or could we safely open them for our most vulnerable students and should the level of testing effect the thresholds.

Mr. Maloney updated the Committee on the working group meeting specifically passing along two of their recommendations. The first: changing the social distancing guidelines in pre-k through 5th grade from six feet to three feet. Dr. Jenkins provided context of the change explaining the low transmission rate of kids while encouraging mitigation measures to still be implemented and discussing the difficulties of remote learning. Dr. Khan discussed other challenges of schools closing such as food insecurity and the detrimental effects on student's mental health. Dr. Khan referenced a study from the CDC and concluded that it is safer for children to be in school. Mr. Maloney expanded on the safety steps that the administration has taken such as: increased air exchange levels, increasing the availability of PPE products and the possible expansion of a school safety team.

Mr. Maloney then discussed the recommendation of changing the safety manual from the quarantine period from 14 days to 10 days. Mrs. Rose-Tynes provided further background of the recommendation, believes a strict 10-day quarantine is a compromise. Ms. Rose-Tynes explained how a COVID test is not required after the 10 quarantine but still recommends it and people should still self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days. Mr. Maloney explained how the seven-day option would require a test. Dr. Griffin wondered whether changing the quarantine period would encourage more people to get tested. Ms. Rose-Tynes discussed the consistent messaging to encourage testing. Dr. Leitchensen asked for further clarification on the messaging and how to achieve higher testing compliances especially that students can get tested on the 5th day after exposure in school. Ms. Rose-Tynes discussed the confusion surrounding the changing guidelines and keeping the messaging of CPS consistent. Dr. Leitchensen then discussed metrics and tracking in-school transmissions. Dr. Ericson also encouraged testing on day 5 for students who have been exposed. Mr. Maloney discussed the challenges of messaging especially in a diverse community such as Cambridge.

Chair Rojas asked if there were other recommendations from the health and safety working grouping meeting. Dr. Leitchensen provided an update that there has been discussion on allowing the most vulnerable students back and that the low level of in school transmission would allow those students to go

back safely. Mr. Maloney provided more context to the discussion, talked about how these students are safer being in school than out of school. Chair Rojas clarified how there are still not formal recommendations, the purpose is to provide an update.

Mayor Siddiqui discussed the challenges of the district's youngest students in regards to remote learning. Mayor Siddiqui also discussed surveillance testing and commended the work the administration has done. The testing has been a key mitigation strategy. Dr. Ericson expanded on the working group's discussion of surveillance testing and the possibility of expanding in the spring. He further clarified that the working group's high need students are those with special needs receiving services, and that the scheduling of the meetings has stopped that from happening. He further commented that the youngest learners should be back in school and that CPS' guidelines for metrics are out of line with other scientific metrics. Vice Chair Bowman clarified further about testing explaining that the school department offers tests for educators and symptomatic students and how the City provides further testing infrastructure too.

Mayor Siddiqui discussed the report "Schools and the Path to Zero: Strategies for Pandemic Resilience in the Face of High Community Spread." Discussed how the report concludes that even if there are high levels of spread in a community that schools should be open, provided that there are strict mitigation strategies. Dr. Jenkins further clarified the report with a presentation (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u66N8LxfXydx8B3CRuDsoIEAdBIRE-de/view>). Vice Chair Bowman discussed how this is the beginning of the conversation. Chair Rojas opened the meeting for questions and comments.

Jenny Chang asked for clarification on how the district is defining "highest-need students." Chair Rojas discussed how that matter will be decided by education leaders in a different venue. Ms. Valenzuela further discussed the importance of bringing families' opinions into defining of "highest-need students."

Mr. Monahan asked if a better strategy for bringing high-needs students back would be to possibly put a number on it, discussed the difficulties of implementation. He further talked about the importance of messaging on the 6 feet to 3 feet recommendation.

Ms. Bianciardi commented on whether the administration could enforce the use of surgical masks instead of cloth masks to keep transmission rates low in schools. Marta also discussed changing the metrics from a six-day average to a fourteen-day average to provide a more stable number. Ms. Mahmud also discussed mask enforcement and emphasized the importance of testing. Dr. Leitchensen clarified that the CPS students who got COVID in school were caught very quickly and there was no onward transmission to other family members. Ms. Rose-Tynes discussed while there have been a handful of in-school transmissions, it never has spread due to their contact tracing and other mitigation strategies and educator's adherence to guidelines. Mr. Maloney emphasized the small number of in-school transmission. Dr. Kalen voiced her concern about cloth masks especially because of the recommendation of reduced distancing. Mr. Monahan emphasized the importance of messaging of changing from 6 feet to 3 feet and that there are other mitigation strategies that are strong such as testing.

Kristin Huang discussed that the data does show that elementary schools are very safe places and cautioned that the COVID dashboard does not reflect the pain felt by students and their families by schools being closed. Ms. Haung discussed how the data does show that the schools should be opened for highest-needs students and the youngest students.

Elinor Actipis discussed the difficulty of younger learners and remote learning and voiced her strong support of schools re-opening. She then asked for an update on the feasibility of the administration's goal to reopen the all schools on February 8. Chair Rojas discussed how the committee is meeting weekly, Mayor Siddiqui echoed the efforts made by the administration to reach the goal.

Elena Fagotto commended the administration's efforts on creating a safe environment for teachers and students, wondered if there was a way to communicate the safety success that schools have had with families of students, disclose the low risk of transmission in schools to the general public. Chair Rojas agreed that the message does need to get out. Professor Ericson discussed how comparisons to other bench markers would be an effective strategy to show safety.

Principal Gerber asked for clarification regarding the change from six feet to three feet for grades Pre-K through 5, has concerns about 4th and 5th graders, and wants to see the data based on age. Principal Gerber discussed that her ability to implement mitigation strategies that the experts have recommended has shifted because of the cold weather and her concern on the inability to have fresh air exchanges. Dr. Jenkins provided clarification on how the data does support elementary age to change the distancing guidelines and that different considerations will have to happen for upper schools. Mr. Maloney provided context on the change and that the committee might move from three feet of distancing to other schools.

It was agreed that Chair Rojas extend the meeting for 15 minutes.

Vice Chair Bowman discussed the importance of getting the information of school safety out into the community and the importance of the district to understand that in-person may not work for all students.

Dr. Khan discussed the importance of hearing about teacher to teacher transmission rates and the public health messaging especially the importance of a culturally nuanced implementation of messaging. Mr. Maloney touched upon the risk of teacher to teacher transmission in school break rooms. Mr. Maloney iterated that it is the responsibility of the administration to work with employees to educate and enforce the rules to lower the risk.

Amanda Beatty voiced her concern about the community's concern about the development of the metrics and the substance of the metrics that led to schools closing. Chair Rojas discussed how the point of these meetings are to work through these issues.

Sarah Rosenberg discussed the importance of including educators in the conversations and the detrimental effects that COVID has had on teachers.

Jenny Chang emphasized Vice Chair Bowman's comments about equity and how families still might choose remote learning. Ms. Chang discussed her personal positive experience with remote learning.

Giulia Fulci emphasized the importance of accurate communication from the district. Ms. Fulci further commented on how the district needs to be careful in defining high-needs students just as students with special needs.

Sharon Mombro wanted clarification on the recommendation on going from six to three feet in regards to the timeline and the implementation. Mr. Maloney clarified that the implementation is expected to take a significant time.

Alfredo Alexander-Katz wanted an update on surveillance testing in schools. Mr. Maloney discussed the logistical issues and that it is in the discussion phase.

Kristin Haung discussed Dr. Danielle Allen's report and the clear recommendation of schools being open regardless of community spread. She asked what challenges the advisors think that CPS are facing implementing that recommendation. Chair Rojas discussed how the working group is working on these issues.

Vice Chair Bowman discussed how staffing is a huge component of being able to implement these potential recommendations. She further discussed Principal Gerber's concerns about her ability to implement mitigation strategies. Principal Gerber is worried about ventilation in all schools during the winter.

Chair Rojas ended the meeting at 6:13 pm.
Respectfully submitted,

Allison Daley

Documents on file in the School Committee office:

Agenda

Presentation: Schools and the Path to Zero Summary

Member Rojas thanked the School Committee office for getting these reports together.

On the following roll call vote, both Building and Grounds Sub-Committee Reports from December 11, 2020 and December 18, 2020, **items #21-16 and #21-17**, were accepted as presented: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

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

#21-18 Motion by Member Fantini for Mary Grassi

--IN SCHOOL COMMITTEE--

January 5th, 2021

WHEREAS: *In 1974 the National Association of Federal Education Program Administrators was established and its sole purpose was that of helping and supporting local school districts across the nation with their understanding and implementation of federal education programs; and*

WHEREAS: *The National Association of Federal Education Program Administrators is nationally recognized organization with over 3,000+ members; and*

WHEREAS: *Their mission is to support the leadership and management of federal education in America's schools and to be the trusted leader and resource for Federal Programs that support each student's success is their vision; and*

WHEREAS: *They annually award educators from around the country at their national conference and this year's National Association of Federal Education Program Administrators State Leadership Award has been awarded to Cambridge's own **MARY GRASSI** for her display of outstanding leadership and a strong degree of caring for children in need; and*

WHEREAS: ***MARY GRASSI** as the Title I Coordinator for the Cambridge Public School District has dedicated her entire career to ensure all students will achieve high academic standards; schools will be held accountable for annual growth and improvement; and*

WHEREAS: ***MARY GRASSI'S** many years of distinguished public service as an educator and administrator are a testament to the exceptional commitment and dedication to public education and to the children of Cambridge, and her years of service in her roles afforded her countless opportunities to impact public education; and*

WHEREAS: *This prestigious national recognition is just a highlight of the many accolades and achievements of **MARY GRASSI'S** over thirty year career in the Cambridge Public School District and she is as passionate today serving the neediest as she was when she was teaching in a classroom behind the stage at the Harrington School and therefore; now therefore be it*

RESOLVED: *That the Cambridge School Committee go on record congratulating **MARY GRASSI** on her national recognition and that the Executive Secretary prepare a formal copy of this resolution for **MARY GRASSI**.*

A true copy:

Attest:

Dosha E. Beard

Executive Secretary to the School Committee

Member Fantini stated that Mary Grassi has been with the school system for quite a while now. She always does an extraordinary job, is recognized in many venues and federal agencies; she does not expect any acknowledgement for all of the extra work that she includes in her daily workload.

On the following roll call vote, **#21-18** was adopted: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

11. Announcements:

Member Weinstein announced the CRLS Winter Arts Festival is underway. He was able to attend an improv performance, it was great, he was also able to explore the photography exhibit that is up for viewing. He encourages all that can to attend.

Member Rachel the following:

1. There is a GoFundMe for Jimmy Ravanis. [gofundme/love-for-the-ravanis-family](https://www.gofundme.com/love-for-the-ravanis-family)
2. Thanks to the CRLS History Department, former Celtic basketball player Enes Kanter will be in conversation with 9th graders on the topic Standing Up For Justice tomorrow at 11:30 a.m. on channel 98.

Member Wilson announced the following:

1. She, along with many community partners, will be hosting their fifth annual CRLS Senior Scholarship Workshops. It will begin on Thursday, January 21, 2021.
2. Tomorrow begins the Ethiopian Christmas; she extends Christmas greetings to all Ethiopian citizens in our community.

Mayor Siddiqui announced that you have until Saturday, January 9, 2021 to be part of the Participatory Budgeting Process, you can vote on line until 11:59 p.m. the website is pb.cambridge.ma.gov

12. Late Orders: James Ravanis Resolution

13. Communications from City Officers: None

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

- Agenda
- PowerPoint Presentation COVID-19 Response Update

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

- Robin Just pro in-person Mike Fowler pro in-person Eva Gottschalk pro in-person

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

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ✓ Tina Christodouleas | Maria Arlotto | Sarah Sikowitz |
| ✓ Christopher Ball pro #21-01 | Ross Moyer supports #21-01 | Andrea Normoyle |
| ✓ Ronda Bogart pro #21-01 | Becky Marmon pro in-person | Tim Groves anti in-person |
| ✓ Kristen Palma pro waiting | Elissa Gershowitz pro teachers | Amber Moulton pro metrics |
| ✓ Courtney Tuttle updated model | Karen Engels, pro updates | Jason Arroyo pro in-person |
| ✓ Shirley Oren pro hybrid | Sally Peterson pro in-person | Frany Sullivan pro in-person |
| ✓ Eddie Geisinger pro in-person | Tina Lieu pro teachers | Kate Skubecz pro in-person |
| ✓ Sam Murphy pro in-person | Laura Fontana pro in-person | Duncan MacLaury |

On a motion by Member Wilson, seconded by Member Rachel, it was voted, on the following roll call vote, to adjourn the open session: Member Wilson YEA, Vice Chair Bowman YEA, Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas YEA, Member Weinstein YEA, Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

Adjourned: (11:40 p.m.)

Attest:



Doshia Beard
Executive Secretary
to the School Committee