



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

October 20, 2020

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

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

Also Present: 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 from Governor Charlie Baker re Covid-19 and read the call of the meeting. The first item on the Agenda was a roll call for the purpose of a sound check. Vice Chair Bowman PRESENT; Member Fantini PRESENT; Member Rachel PRESENT; Member Rojas PRESENT; Member Weinstein PRESENT; Member Wilson PRESENT; Mayor Siddiqui PRESENT.

1. Public Comment:

The following individuals were heard:

- Rua Kelly, Upton Street, reopening plan for grades 4-12
- Edward (Angus) Moyer, Hawthorn Street, current remote learning regime in CPS
- Mary Shillue-Goldberg, Clifton Street, supports the Late Order on outdoor eating
- Dan Monahan, President of CEA, Lexington Ave, reopening
- Amara Donovan, Cambridge Street, Attendance Policy and chronic absenteeism
- Giulia Fulci, Broadway, Upper grades reopening plan
- Owen Lewis, Montgomery Street, C'Port Para Professional, reopening plan

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

2. Student School Committee Report:

Member Killian reported on an overview of how virtual Cultural Club Day went last week. On two separate days, CRLS students were able to join online meetings with CRLS clubs which had their own zoom links to learn more about diversity. The clubs presented a 30 second video of what their club represented and encouraged students to join.

The Student Members are thrilled to announce the *Meet the School Committee Event* on Thursday, October 29, 2020. This event is an effort to share the who, what, how and why and of the School Committee and to uplift student voice and encourage students to participate more in policy decisions and have a deeper input and influence on the policy making process. The Student Representatives are going to provide an informational presentation on the Student Representatives role while serving on the School Committee.

Member Vera-DeGraff reported that they have reached out to students through social media and asked them what kind of changes they want to see at CRLS, overwhelming response has been the asynchronous days on Wednesdays and the lack of them during weeks with Monday holidays. This will topic will be brought up again and go into more detail when the corresponding Motion about this comes up on the School Committee Agenda.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

- May 28, 2020 Special Meeting
- August 24, 2020 Special Meeting
- October 6, 2020 Regular Meeting – accepted with one correction on page 6, 18-20 **Pods** of students not 18-25 students.

On a motion by Vice Chair Bowman, seconded by Member Rachel, it was voted to accept the Minutes as presented with one correction as noted: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports: None

7. Superintendent's Agenda:

7a. Presentations: COVID-19 Response Update: Staffing & Budget.....Dr. Kenneth Salim,
Superintendent of Schools
Lisa Richardson,
Chief Talent Officer
Claire Spinner,
Chief Financial Office

Mayor Siddiqui turned the floor over to Superintendent Salim. Dr. Salim framed the presentation for the evening and introduced the team that will be presenting to the assembly this evening. The presentation can be viewed online.

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=0ef808350d&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1681175816821584038&th=1754bc7f86a0b0a6&view=att&disp=inline&realattid=f_kjjs8y20

There was a pause in the presentation for questions, comments and concerns and turned the floor over to the Chair who asked for the pleasure of the Committee.

Member Fantini stated that he did visit schools on opening day and the feedback was positive in general. He asked Ms. Spinner what was happening with the extended day schools funding.

- Ms. Spinner answered that the state has not passed its budget for FY21 yet, we are hopeful that there will be funding. She is projecting the full cost and CPS is currently paying the stipends. If we get any money from the state, it will be good.

Member Fantini asked what about the money that was turned over from the FY20 budget.

- Ms. Spinner answered that we left 2.5 million on our bottom line. At this point, it will not matter since there will be so much more spent and the city received an allocation of about 10 million dollars for the Corona Virus Relief fund from the state to take into account.

Member Fantini asked if City Manager De Pasquale and Assistant City Manager Kale have to approve more appropriation, it was confirmed as true by Ms. Spinner.

Member Fantini asked if we are 73% done with our hiring, how many more people are we going to be hiring?

- Ms. Richardson answered about 22 additional staff members.

Member Fantini requested to see the numbers also, not only the percentages on slide/page seven, it would be very helpful.

Vice Chair Bowman asked about the staffing ratio, wanting to know how many classes to not fit into that right now.

- Ms. Richardson answered she hopes to be fully staffed as quickly as possible. She anticipates another couple of weeks – by early November before we will be fully staffed.

Vice Chair Bowman asked how many classrooms are not in alignment with the ratios that have been presented, requesting that the families involved be notified of plans to rectify the problem.

- Dr. Salim replied that there are outliers that fall below, however, schools have been able to use other staff to fill in at different schools and to use building subs to cover also.

Vice Chair Bowman asked about in person teaching in real time, and if this is another outlier

- Dr. Salim answered in person learners are supported by in person teachers and remote learners are supported by remote teachers. They are trying to expand to teach in person to both remote and physical learners simultaneously.

Vice Chair Bowman requested clear communication for how and why we are planning and if there are any outliers. She also asked how we are thinking about the FY21 budget since we seem to be stuck in the virus phase for a longer amount of time than this academic year. The one-year staff choices currently in place will be needed longer than just the one year if we are not able to get relief from the pandemic.

- Dr. Salim responded that we are in the same shape as the rest of the country, we will continue to be in conversation with the City Manager and hopefully there will be a stimulus relief package similar to the one that happened during the great recession. As this pandemic continues to evolve, we will learn what safety measures will be important factors. We are still being very intentional as crafting these positions as one year positions.

Vice Chair Bowman asked about the crossing guards since they are not in our budget, she asked the Mayor about how to get a guard at places where are needed.

- Mayor Siddiqui answered that she will find out from the City Manager and get back to the Committee of the Whole.

Member Weinstein asked about the planning and family engagement budget. He reflected back to Motion 20-119 on funding for the Parent University.

- Dr. Pinkus Brown answered that the numbers Ms. Spinner covered earlier in the presentation did not include coverage for Caregiver University. Motion 20-119 was brought forward after the budget process was completed.

Member Weinstein suggested CPS think about how to make it fit into our future budget requests.

Member Wilson asked about the 3 million dollars on testing.

- Ms. Spinner answered that it was just an estimate. Last week was our first time of having two days of testing. She believes this estimate will be refined as soon as we know how many people are being tested and it will be impacted by how many in person staff increases and whether or not we go fully remote again.

Member Wilson asked about the turnaround time on getting test results. She knows of someone that has not received his result in approximately a week.

- Dr. Salim and Mayor Siddiqui both agreed this is not usual. They will troubleshoot and follow up.

Member Wilson stated that if someone does not receive a result, they should know who to follow up with, she also asked if we are still functioning with hotspots.

- Ms. Spinner stated that some families are still using hotspots and have not switched to Comcast.

Member Wilson suggested following up with families and asked for updates on the employment status for the major positions of the Chief Equity Officer and the Family Engagement Specialist. How much longer will those positions remain vacant/and or on hold?

- Dr. Salim answered that it is hard to answer for the Chief Equity Officer, however the administration is working on it. As for the Family Engagement Specialist, Ms. Debbie Bonilla has been selected for that position.

Member Wilson wants to know when the Chief Equity Officer and the Incident Reporting position will be filled.

- Dr. Salim answered that it is hard to predict, but the staff are working hard on getting the positions filled.

Member Rachel asked if the student enrollment numbers for students of color has grown in relation to the general student population.

- Dr. Salim answered in the affirmative and the numbers continue to be updated.

Member Rachel if it is possible to separate the SEI and substantially separate groups along with separating the JK – grade 1 demographics to know whether or not the children with the greatest needs are getting those seats.

- Dr. Salim stated that the process is laborious but it can be done.

Member Rachel is concerned about the staffing budget, where is the childcare for the parents that have to work.

Member Rojas asked how many of the six that were redeployed from the central office were volunteers?

- Dr. Salim stated that he believes two or three were volunteers.

Member Rojas asked for an update for headsets for students, staff and faculty

- Dr. Salim responded a key part of the live instruction using headphones is going to happen, however, they are on back order.

Member Rojas wanted to know about whether or not a Mental Health Manual will become part of the Safety and Facility Manual.

- Dr. Salim stated that it seems to be the two manuals will remain separate.

Student Member Vera-DeGraff asked about the transportation procedure for drop off and pick up to and from school for in person learning.

- Dr. Salim stated that they continue to use safe distancing and the buildings are not open to parents and caregivers. The drop off period is not much earlier than the start of school so there will be no unsupervised students lingering outside of the schools.

The meeting returned to the presentation beginning at part 4. Dr. Salim in the Chair.

Presentation, part 4: Discussions, comments and concerns:

Mayor Siddiqui underscored the issue of testing children ages 10 years and up. There should be a timeline for getting answers to questions and being more clear on how we operationalize will be a great asset. There is a lot of planning to be done.

Member Rojas asked about communication around test results. He would like to know why we do not report on our website when someone is positive?

- Dr. Salim answered that we do report to DESE but in order to consider the privacy of individuals having a system wide communication is not recommended.

Member Rojas asked for staff testing updates, it was good to see the amounts of tests that happened, how many more may have been eligible.

- Mr. Maloney answered that it was around 1,000. They will see an emerging pattern once they settle into a normal routine.

Member Rojas asked about prioritizing all students on a rotating basis? Why can't every child have a chance to experience being prioritized?

- Dr. Salim responded that there are supervised and focused pods of students. The students in the 6th to 8th grades have relationships with teachers and know the administrators that are already in the building which creates a broad approach as opposed to the targeted approach of the younger grades.

Member Rojas, referencing page 29, asked for a sense of when the health and safety working groups and the task forces will begin to talk about the metrics.

- Dr. Salim responded that Mr. Maloney is in the process of reaching out to the scientific advisors to reconvene and talk about the metrics along with a few Committee Members.

Member Wilson asked about incident reporting with all families, specifically families of color. She also asked the question Member Rojas asked about using elementary spaces for the middle grades. The elementary children are a vulnerable population also. Parents of 4th and 5th graders legally cannot leave their children home alone.

- Dr. Salim understands the concern for all age groups. This is a pilot with a limit to the number of students that can participate. They are looking for more opportunities for more ages and expects to have more details next week. CPSD is also exploring whether or not there may be staff at DHS and other out of school time partners to support the younger grades.

Member Wilson asked about the younger grades in a pilot program and about a positive case in a classroom vs in a building.

- Dr. Salim clarified this relates to the difference being a staff member that is not classroom based.

Member Wilson asked about the 17 million dollars, and the fact that the funding is going to need to increase drastically when we get more scholars into a classroom, what does it look like for other districts?

- Dr. Salim answered that when looking at other communities, very few are hiring additional staff. We have made a considerable investment in staff. They are trying to figure out how to move this model forward not just from a financial standpoint, but also on a staffing ability. Some of the students that are in are only in for half of the day. The big takeaway as he speaks with superintendents across the state is that there is no perfect model. There is always a tradeoff somewhere. We have small schools and it does limit how we are able to create models.

Member Rachel asked about the pilot in the middle grades (upper schools) why are we not starting with 4th and 5th graders instead.

- Dr. Salim stated that we are still in the very early stages of planning this pilot and he does not want to get ahead of the Out of School Time Partners and their capacity is to support expanded in person learning for our scholars.

Member Weinstein asked if every adult working with children had a test before they started working with children.

- Dr. Salim responded that there were voluntary opportunities during the first week in September and prior to October 13th however the educators were working remotely before that.

Member Weinstein asked if there is a plan to learn how many have been tested once and how many have tested twice.

- Dr. Salim answered that most energy and efforts are focused on working on getting the tests to the Broad institute and they are also working on the flu clinics.

Member Weinstein stated that if we cannot tell how much it has been taken advantage of we won't know how useful it is. What have we done to make sure bus drivers and others that are not classroom teachers can take advantage of testing.

- Mr. Maloney stated that there is a certain demand on the staff and they are not welcome to be in the building when the students are there, they have been made aware of it and they are still working on the logistics.

Member Weinstein asked about when there is a real need for supervision why is February 8th the date for expanding the in person reopening plan.

- Dr. Salim responded there are requirements of families to make a selection, CPS need to carefully look at staffing and decide on accommodations for remote/non remote. The timeline is too aggressive to have a model any earlier.

Member Fantini also mentioned about the February 8th deadline to bring students back, he is hoping it can happen faster. The state says we can go to three feet and we are still at six feet. Are we going to safely lower the distancing?

Vice Chair Bowman asked for clarification on the pilot model. Is this pilot a partnership with the City?

- Dr. Salim answered that there have been many conversations on the city side. The city is not available for this. The Out of School Time Providers may be able to give support during the school day for supervised remote learning spaces.

Vice Chair Bowman feels if we can get our students into a space, they need to be in that space with our educators that have degrees in education to actually share that space with our students rather than

childcare providers. Although she respects the work that has been done, this amount of energy and time should be geared toward our educators who have significant salaries to be with CPSD scholars.

Member Rachel agrees with the Vice Chair. She wants to see the data of how many families are in dire need of childcare.

Member Fantini does not believe we can move forward with this conversation without impact bargaining with the CEA.

7b. CPS District Plan: None

7c. Consent Agenda:

Member Fantini moved, seconded by Member Rojas, to bring the Superintendent's Agenda forward for discussion and adoption. Member Fantini removed **#20-258, #20-260 and #20-264.**

On the following roll call vote, items **#20-256, #20-257, #20-259, #20-261, 20-262, and #20-263** were adopted: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas, YEA, Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#20-256, Day & Residential Program Services not available from the Cambridge School Department, that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions on the attached 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 grant fund budget.

	<u>#Active Contracts</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Day	3	\$194,462.44
Residential		
45 Day Program		
Total	<u>3</u>	<u>\$194,462.44</u>

#20-257, Contract Award,

that the School Committee approve the amendment with the following vendor, funds to be provided from the General Fund. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with.

CDW Government LLC 230 N. Milwaukee Ave Vernon Hills, IL 60061, for the period October 8, 2020, to October 7, 2021 in the amount of \$50,000.

#20-259, Contract Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for rental of ice; funds to be provided from the General Fund. Procurement procedures for this contract have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

Public Consulting Group 148 State St. 10th Floor Boston, MA 02109, for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, in the amount of \$83,300.00.

#20-261, Contract Award, be adopted as follows:

that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for rental of ice; funds to be provided from the General Fund. Procurement procedures for this contract have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

Impact Fire Services 26 Hampshire Drive Hudson, NH 03051, for the period: September 1, 2020 to August 31, 2021 in the amount of \$25,560.00; September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2022, in the amount of \$25,560.00; September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023, in the amount of \$26,280.00.

Total Contract: \$77,400.00.

#20-262, Approval of Gifts to Cambridge Public Schools that the School Committee accept and approve the following gifts and receipts as described.

1. A gift of \$1,500.00 to CRLS made from an individual donor through the Cambridge Community Foundation's Social Justice Works! Fund for the Kimbrough Scholars Program.

#20 263, 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:

McKinney Vento Homeless Students, for the period September 1, 2020 to August 31, 2021 in the amount of \$15,000.00. Project/Grant SC21707.

Description: This grant provides referral services for homeless children and their families through the services of two Homeless Outreach Workers who connect families with resources and services throughout the school year and summer. It also provides after school tutors, scholarships for summer camps, training by Transition House on domestic violence issues for school and community staff, and MBTA cards for families. Title I includes an additional \$10,000 for supplies and basic necessities for homeless students

#20 263, Grant Award, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

McKinney Vento Homeless Students, for the period September 1, 2020 to August 31, 2021 in the amount of \$15,000.00. Project/Grant SC21707.

Description: This grant provides referral services for homeless children and their families through the services of two Homeless Outreach Workers who connect families with resources and services throughout the school year and summer. It also provides after school tutors, scholarships for summer camps, training by Transition House on domestic violence issues for school and community staff, and MBTA cards for families. Title I includes an additional \$10,000 for supplies and basic necessities for homeless students

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#20-258, Contract Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for rental of ice; funds to be provided from the General Fund. Procurement procedures for this contract have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

uAspire 31 Milk Street, Suite 900 Boston, MA 02109, for the period of September 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, in the amount of \$50,00.00.

Discussion followed on **#20-258**.

Member Fantini asked Principal Smith to help with this contract. Is an additional \$50,000 being matched by Bio-Gen which is partnering with us and is this just for seniors. He also wanted to know if seniors are not being admitted to colleges because of a lack of interaction with guidance counselors and other initiatives?

Dr. Salin answered that the focus is certainly on seniors. He is not able to answer about Bio-Gen but he can check with uAspire to find out. What he had read about enrollment decreases on the college level is more about not wanting to learn in a remote college experience. We are supporting our students as strongly as possible with applications.

Principal Smith responded to the uAspire part of the questions stating that this contract is certainly being used for supporting our seniors. Advisors and Guidance Counselors are working with students from individual to small groups to virtual meetings with uAspire.

Member Fantini asked if Bio-Gen is still giving \$50,000.00 to uAspire. Principal Smith also did not know the answer to this. Member Fantini also wants an update on how many students are filling out the Fascia forms.

On the following roll call vote, item **#20-258** was adopted: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#20-260, Contract Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for rental of ice; funds to be provided from the General Fund. Procurement procedures for this contract have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

Overdrive, Inc. Overdrive Way Cleveland, OH 44125, for the period of October 5, 2020 to October 4, 2021, in the amount of \$30,000.00.

Discussion followed on **#20-260**.

Member Fantini stated that he believes this a great idea for the students, parents and staff for these e-books, and is curious as to how it will work.

Dr. Salim asked Mr. Steve Smith, Chief Information Officer, to explain how devices will be used with this technology.

Mr. Smith responded that students will have access to overdrive available through the library catalogue to check out e-books to their chrome books. He is going to have to do some follow up on the mechanics of how it will work for families and staff to use overdrive also and get back to the Committee on this issue.

On the following roll call vote, item **#20-260** was adopted: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA, Member Rachel YEA, Member Rojas, YEA, Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#20-264, 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:

Occupational Education Vocational Skills, for the period September 29, 2020 to August 31, 2021 in the amount of \$87,068.00 Project/Grant SC21606.

Description: The Perkins grant will be used to purchase equipment and supplies for student use in the RSTA carpentry program for new units in Construction site and Workplace Learning (WPL) and for sophisticated computer hardware and software used in WPL in Graphic Design, CAD, Computer Science, and Engineering programs. In addition, funds will support contracts for professional development workshops as well as stipends for an Internship Coordinator to research & secure internships and other employment placements and Workplace Learning opportunities in and around Cambridge in high-wage, high demand careers.

Discussion followed on **20-264**.

Member Fantini stated that since we have the software and the talent in place, this should be the year that we have plenty of internships at the high school. This is the year that CPS model be an outstanding internship model. He would like updates on this as well.

Member Rachel agrees with Member Fantini and feels that remote Wednesdays may be a good day to look at post-secondary planning on this model

Member Wilson asked for someone to speak to remote opportunities on this grant.

Dr. Gittens answered that Dr. Ananis stated the in and out of students going to businesses and creating internships, folks are limiting who they have in person. We may have to open the economy more for that to create more opportunities for our students.

Member Wilson states that we should be creative and have our young people work remotely with internships at businesses.

Dr. Gittens will speak to Dr. Ananis again but the RSTA Department is hands on not remote. Member Wilson believes it should be some of both. Mr. Fantini is talking about the whole school as well as the RSTA Department.

On the following roll call vote, **#20-64** was adopted: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

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

Moved by Member Fantini, seconded by Member Wilson, the School Committee Agenda was brought forward for discussion and adoption. Member Fantini removed **20-258**, **20-260** and **20-264**. There was a discussion on all Motions.

#20-265 Whereas CPS strives to engage parents, students, educators, staff, and the community in CPS decision-making, the School Committee will televise the scheduled Roundtable discussion with Elementary School Principals (Oct. 27, 2020). On the following roll call vote, **#20-265** was adopted: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#20-266 Whereas health and safety, racial equity, and family partnerships are among the guiding principles of the Cambridge Public Schools Department in their back-to-school planning; and

Whereas chronic absenteeism is one of the District Outcomes that CPSD has been striving to improve; and

Whereas prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, students from disadvantaged populations were more likely to be chronically absent, need intervention, and produce lower baseline performance scores; and

Whereas pre-existing inequities are exacerbated by COVID-19 school closures; and
Whereas particularly hard-hit students will continue to be disproportionately vulnerable with regard to their physical, emotional, and educational wellbeing; and

Whereas there must be adequate data collected and shared to identify and support our most vulnerable youth; and now therefore be it

Resolved that the Superintendent share the number and percentage of students at each school who are chronically absent, at risk of dropping out, and in need of intervention with the School Committee monthly in his Weekly Update, beginning on November 6, 2020; and be it further

Resolved that CPSD will ensure any technology and database supports are put in place to support the collection, analysis and reporting of this data

Discussion followed on **20-266**.

Member Wilson stated that this motion is very important, the problem existed well before the pandemic and has exasperated further since we have been in the pandemic. We need to be able to identify what the numbers are, engage in problem solving will move this problem toward a positive end.

Member Weinstein stated that we need the numbers to target supports without burdening our staff. Member Rachel stated we need to revisit our Attendance Policy to make sure this motion is in order, otherwise we may end up with unintended consequences.

Vice Chair Bowman would like to see this motion be referred to a Sub-Committee. Dr. Salim believes that in terms of students needing intervention, Curriculum and Achievement would be a good place to start.

Dr. Gittens stated that patterns of attendance are most important during this new normal school experience. Students need to be present for 95% of the school year not to be considered in attendance trouble.

Member Fantini would like to engage families instead of punishing students. He would also like to redefine chronic absenteeism to 5% and nine days and set it at a high priority with a daily report to given the Superintendent, with deliberate action taken on missing classes.

Aspen was mentioned as a system that indicates when students are absent but does not address any solutions.

Member Wilson asked Dr. Gittens about the issue of the camera screen being on or off.

Dr. Gittens stated that attendance and participation are two different things. Attendance is a binding document that states the student is present. The two terms are not interchangeable.

Principal Smith stated that attendance and participation are distinct. There are different ways to engage students in class, cameras on and off can apply to interaction between student and teacher. Phone calls are going out daily when students are absent at 10:30 and again in the afternoon. Cameras on and Cameras off has been an instructional issue. Attendance and participation have different meanings.

On the following roll call vote, item **#20-266** was adopted and referred to the Curriculum and Achievement Sub-Committee: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

#20-267 Whereas for every week that includes a Monday holiday, current CRLS procedure applies a Monday synchronous learning schedule to the Wednesday of that week; and

Whereas during remote learning, educators take advantage of Wednesdays by using the time for curriculum planning, educator collaboration, professional development, and schedule organization; and

Whereas many CRLS scholars feel that having school on Wednesdays during a week with a Monday holiday disrespects, invalidates, and delegitimizes the holiday; and

Whereas CRLS scholars use the asynchronous nature of learning on Wednesdays to take a break from the many hours of live classes; and

Whereas many CRLS clubs have been using the asynchronous nature of learning on Wednesdays to host club meetings; now therefore be it

Resolved that in each week that includes a Monday holiday, the Wednesday of that week remains an asynchronous learning day at CRLS.

Discussion followed **on #20-267**.

Member Vera-DeGraff stated that most students have a problem with losing the actual holiday; if we have to make up the day on another day, we actually do not get any day off.

Member Killian stated it is also important for educators so they can continue to have professional development and academic planning.

Principal Smith appreciates the Student School Committee Members for bringing this motion forward. We are striving to have four days of live instruction per week, they have decided to shift the schedule to Wednesday where there is an asynchronous day. It is a valuable part of the schedule. He wants to keep the focus on the core where the students and teachers interact with each other. He is happy to have more conversations about this.

Dr. Salim asked if the educators will have an option around the asynchronous experience.

Principal Smith responded that he is prioritizing core instruction over everything else.

Dr. Gittens commended Principal Smith for thinking this through and considering the weeks with holidays.

Vice Chair Bowman asked if Principal Smith, Dr. Gittens and parents were engaged when this motion was put together?

Student Member Killian answered in the negative.

Vice Chair Bowman suggested that the high school administration be engaged when these type of motions come up.

Member Wilson stated that the spirit of the motion is to uplift student voices. She asked Principal Smith about space for clubs at the end of the day.

Principal Smith likes the idea but does not want to interfere with the study he does not want to under-cut any planned experiences, explaining that they are trying to figure out how to do both. They will look into this issue at their school council meeting.

Dr. Gittens stated that although she commends the students for uplifting the students' voices and contributing to civic engagement, this motion is in contradiction to Principals Smith's leadership. It is a manager's right to set up schedules and the principals decision is not up for a vote.

Member Rachel applauded both sides of the aisle, commending the students for having the courage to put their first motion on the table and she also spoke in favor of Dr. Gittens for supporting Principal Smith's leadership. This has been a stimulating discussion.

Member Killian appreciates the feedback, she recognized trial by error as a type of learning experience.

Vice Chair Bowman stated that this is what a democracy should look like and is also proud of the students. She offered that this motion be referred to the Superintendent.

Member Fantini stated that he is happy the students put this motion on the Agenda and they did great, however, you need to go through the chain of command, it is a strong way to learn and to build relationships. He is looking forward to many more motions.

On the following roll call vote, item **#20-267** was adopted and referred to the Superintendent: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

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

#20-268 Joint Resolution by Mayor Siddiqui, Vice Chair Bowman and Member Wilson

Whereas October is Dyslexia Awareness Month, a month in which we come together to raise awareness, share resources, and tell stories about dyslexia successes; and

Whereas Cambridge school and community stakeholders are joining efforts to raise awareness in the City of Cambridge about dyslexia as the most common learning challenge; and

Whereas dyslexia is a learning disability that makes it difficult to learn or read accurately and fluently, affecting as many as 17% of people locally, nationally, and globally; and

Whereas while dyslexia is a lifelong condition that impacts learning, it is not related to intelligence, and students can improve key skills with the right community and educational supports; and

Whereas Cambridge City Hall was lit up red from Tuesday October 13, 2020 through Friday, October 16, 2020 in recognition of Dyslexia Awareness Month; now therefore be it

Resolved that the School Committee and Superintendent go on record recognizing October as Dyslexia Awareness Month in the City of Cambridge; and be it further

Resolved that a formal copy of this Resolution be prepared by the Executive Secretary to the School Committee and forwarded to the Cambridge Special Education Parent Advisory Council.

Mayor Siddiqui stated that City hall was lit up in red on three consecutive days from October 13, 2020 to October 16, 2020 in honor of dyslexia month.

On a motion by Vice Chair Bowman, seconded by Member Rojas, the following roll call vote, item **#20-268** was adopted: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

11. Announcements:

Mayor Siddiqui announced there will be a Resource Fair on the Library Lawn, Saturday from 10:00 to 12 noon.

The Mayor also announced that she put in a Policy Order to the City Council and as a result, Cambridge has created a pilot program for water testing specific to Cambridge; the City has allocated \$175,000.00 toward that program for East Cambridge, the Port and North Cambridge sewer systems.

Vice Chair Bowman asked if the student registration drive to vote is moving forward. Member Killian answered that yes, there is an information session and opportunities for voting.

Member Wilson announced that she will be chairing the Special Education and Students Supports Sub-Committee Meeting on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

12. Late Orders:

There was a discussion on the following:

Late Motion with respect to outdoor eating for in-person learners

by the Curriculum & Achievement Subcommittee

Whereas CPSD has begun in-person learning for some scholars and

Whereas the CPSD Safety and Facilities manual states in section C14 that "Students will eat outdoors or inside their classroom with at least 6 feet of social distancing maintained," and

Whereas eating lunch requires mask removal, and the science indicates that gathering outdoors is safer than gathering indoors with regard to risk of COVID-19 transmission and

Whereas bringing a classroom of children safely outside to eat lunch involves many logistical hurdles including maintaining distance from other classes, having a location to go with appropriate seating, ensuring children have clothing appropriate for the weather, and other factors, therefore

Be it resolved that the Superintendent will assess how many times each in-person classroom has eaten lunch outside over the 7 in-person days from October 13th through Friday October 23rd and ask the teachers and principals what if any obstacles they face to eating outside and

Be it resolved that the Superintendent will report back to the School Committee and/or the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee by Friday October 30th with that information and

Be it resolved that the Health and Safety Working Group and the Building and Grounds Subcommittee will review the recommendation that section C14 of the Safety and Facilities manual be revised to recommend or require eating outside whenever possible.

Discussion followed on Late Order by Curriculum and Achievement Sub-Committee.

Dr. Salim stated that it is going to be labor intensive to find out who ate outdoors and who didn't. Getting the data and putting in a form that makes sense by October 23rd is not possible.

Dr. Gittens stated that a few of our upper schools, which are shared with the elementary grades have taken lunch inside participating in physical distancing in large rooms with doors and windows open. The entire school has lunch at the same time; therefore it is not possible for all students to have lunch outside at the same time because of limited outside space. We need to be working toward figuring out how to eat lunch outside in the winter.

Member Rachel does not want to rule out the possibility of eating outside and she understands that it is very challenging. She is open to any amendments to make it easier. Member Weinstein is also open to amendments that are offered, he still would like to have a report to understand what is possible and what is not.

Member Fantini placed this late motion on the Calendar and suggested that it be referred to be addressed at the Roundtable with Principals on October 27, 2020. Member Fantini hopes the Principals will have the answers that member Weinstein is looking for in a report. This late Order was also referred to the Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee.

On the following roll call vote, the Late Order from the Curriculum and Achievement Sub-Committee was placed on the Calendar, referred to both the Principals' Roundtable on October 27, 2020 and the Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

13. Communications from City Officers: None

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

- Agenda
- PowerPoint Presentation Back to School Update

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

E-Mail communications:

- Dan Monahan Comments on school reopening
- Andrey Fedorov in support of late Motion on outdoor eating for in-person learners
- Gabriel Robinson in support of late Motion on outdoor eating for in-person learners
- Cristina Malatesta in support of reopening schools for more students

On a motion by Vice Chair Bowman, seconded by Member Rojas, on the following roll call vote the open session was adjourned: Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA. (10:00 p.m.)

Attest:


Dosha Beard
Executive Secretary
to the School Committee