



## CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

**Special Meeting**

**October 27, 2022**

Called for 6:00 pm held in the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of a Retreat to discuss target settings within the CPSD district plan.

Members Present: Vice-Chair Rachel. Member Bhambi (Absent), Member Fantini, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Member Wilson, Mayor Siddiqui

Also Present: Dr. Greer, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent  
Dr. Edwards, Chief of Academics and Schools; Dr. Gittens, Assistant  
Superintendent of Secondary Education; Dr. Brown, Chief Strategy Officer; Dr.  
Madera, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education; Dr. Mullen, Assistant  
Superintendent of Student Services; Manuel Fernandez, Chief Equity Officer;  
Claire Spinner, Chief Financial Officer; Sujata Wycoff, Dir. of Communications;  
Maureen MacFarlane, Legal Counsel; Corey Dotson, Chief Talent Officer;  
Ammarah Rehman, Mayor's Education Liaison and Michelle Shannon, Facilitator

Mayor Siddiqui in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

The Chair read the call of the meeting and explained that this meeting is not being televised, votes will not be taken, and there will not be public comment.

The meeting started with a roll call of members present: Member Bhambi: ABSENT, Member Fantini: ~~ABSENT~~, Vice Chair Rachel: PRESENT, Member Rojas: PRESENT, Member Weinstein: PRESENT; Member Wilson: ~~ABSENT~~; Mayor Siddiqui: PRESENT.

Member Fantini joined the meeting at 6:14 p.m.

Member Wilson joined the meeting at 6:37 p.m.

**Mayor Siddiqui** explained the purpose of this Retreat was to provide an opportunity for the Members and the administration to discuss target settings within the CPSD district plan..

**Dr. Greer** passed the floor over to Dr, Brown who presented the facilitator – Michelle Shannon.

Facilitator Shannon gave a brief introduction of herself and the Leadership Academy and discussed the meaning of equity and how it connects in an urban municipal school setting.

The facilitator passed the floor back over to Dr. Brown who began a presentation on the target setting with the CPSD district plan and discussed the potential agenda for the evening. The presentation focused on the three different types of target approaches (status targets, improvement targets, and gap-closing targets).

The meeting was turned back over to Facilitator Shannon who led a group exercise about target setting. She asked participants to write down (or think about) the reasonings why target setting is important and how target setting aligns with the district and the children it serves.

**Member Rojas:** Targets will guide the Committee and administration to double down to see what is/is not working and can assist with the budget process

**Vice Chair Rachel:** Target **assists** the Committee and district in being held accountable for ensuring student success after high school.

**Member Wilson:** Targets assist the district in ensuring that all students are successful

**Member Weinstein:** Targets close gaps between students and create strategies to help the administration get to where they want to go

**Member Fantini:** Target setting ensures the district and the Committee commit to the excellence of student achievement in four years

**Mayor Siddiqui:** Targets show where gaps exist (shows where the district has disparities) and highlight where the district can improve on achieving those gaps.

**Dr. Greer:** Has conflicting feelings on target settings because the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) sets targets so the district may need to have additional conversations surrounding targets, however during the decision-making process, target setting proves to be extremely beneficial.

Facilitator Shannon summarized the sense of agreement from the conversation that everyone is aware of the importance of target settings. She then led a group discussion on the following questions:

- What are the inherent tensions built into setting targets?
- How do you balance setting aggressive AND attainable goals?
  - How will we use this process to ensure an Excellence and Equity education for all students?
  - How can we ensure that the targets we set do not unintentionally mask inequities in the system?
  - What are the implications for students, families, and educators?

A robust discussion amongst the Committee and the ELT regarding the discussion topics occurred which included a discussion on the targets set from the previous district plan, and setting aggressive goals. District responsibility, and ensuring that the targets in the new district plan are equitable for all students in the district.

After the discussion, the meeting transitioned to setting the approach for target settings with a group exercise led by Dr. Brown. then led a group exercise on target setting and focused on setting targets for chronic absenteeism. The exercise fielded questions from several members and the ELT that included the reasoning for high chronic absenteeism rates, improving student engagement, and whether chronic absenteeism should be set as status targets, improvement targets, or gap-closing targets. The exercise was a bit of a challenge as target settings can be different depending on the person and has a lot of complexities.

Facilitator Shannon gave a recap of the evening's activities and gave her observations, - and after convening with Dr. Greer, Dr. Brown, and Mayor Siddiqui, it was recommended that the target settings be tackled by the Superintendent and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Once the Superintendent and the ELT identify target settings, they will bring any recommendations to the School Committee for discussion and final review.

**Mayor Siddiqui** summarized the next Steps/action items. The administration will work on target settings to present to the committee at a later date and the committee will work on coming to unison regarding aggressive and achievable goal settings.

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Mayor Siddiqui adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Attest:

*Ariel B. Kennebrew*

Ariel B. Kennebrew  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee